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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Deacon Bob Little, St. Helena Catholic Church, St. Helena, California, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the beginning of this new day. Be fully with us today. Open our eyes that we might see goodness in what we do here in this room. Open our ears that we may hear the will of all Your people. Open our hearts that we might be compassionate in all that we do. Share with us Your wisdom, O Lord, that we may know the right decisions to make. Share with us Your strength, O Lord, that we might resist that which draws us away from good and fair judgment.

We humbly ask You to strengthen our courage and resolve to stand up for those issues we know to be just. We ask You, Father, to protect and watch over those who are today in harm's way that we might continue to do our work. Console the families of those heroes, domestic and abroad, who sacrifice their very lives that we might be free. For that freedom and Your love we are truly grateful.

Thank You, Father, for the gift of responsibility that You give to each of us as leaders of this great Nation.

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.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

GOVERNOR PERDUE OF GEORGIA PRAYS FOR RAIN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. This morning, the Washington Times has a story about the Governor of Georgia, Sonny Perdue, praying for rain. The Governor said, and I quote, ''It's time to appeal to Him who can and will make a difference.''

I find that ironic, coming from the Governor of the State of Georgia, a State that has no realistic plan about how it's going to use its water resources, has no understanding of what the demands are for the work that they have in place right now.

The good Lord might say, Sonny, why did you have a huge artificial snow mountain so people can ski in Georgia in the middle of the summer in the middle of a drought?

''I believe in miracles,'' one minister said. Perhaps that would be one solution.

But maybe it's time for people to respect and carefully use what God has given them. The good Lord does help those who help themselves.

SECURITY AT O'HARE AIRPORT

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to address a new development surrounding our Nation's airports. I represent Illinois' Sixth Congressional District, which is the home of Chicago O'Hare International Airport. O'Hare is the world's second busiest airport, and a week ago agents from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Unit, a division of Homeland Security known as ICE, as well as Cook County sheriffs deputies, raided warehouses and secured areas at O'Hare, arresting over 27 alleged illegal aliens who had received fraudulent identification badges from a local employment agency. These illegal individuals had access to the tarmac, to cargo, as well as other secure areas putting them in direct contact with aircraft.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of legislation introduced by my friend and colleague, Mr. KIRK from Illinois.

It gives authority for any airport Federal security director to designate airport areas that he or she certifies as a critical area for transportation security as a special security zone. Once an

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area at an airport is declared a security zone, it is off-limits to illegal aliens.

Once an area at an airport is declared a "special security zone" only the airport's Federal Security Director can issue security badges to these zones.

This legislation also states that only U.S. Nationals who have been cleared by Basic Pilot Program verification system can be given security access badges to these zones.

We must be tough when it comes to airport security because it is our first line in defense here at home against terrorists who want to kill more Americans.

I ask my fellow colleague in the House to join me in securing our airports and cosponsor this vital piece of legislation.

OUR IMMIGRATION POLICY

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, more than 21,000 foreign-born men and women currently serve on active duty, willing to die in defense of our Nation. U.S. Navy Second Class Petty Officer Eduardo Gonzalez is one of these brave men, a naturalized U.S. citizen who has served two tours in the gulf region. Despite his valiant service, Eduardo Gonzalez faces the deportation of his wife Mildred. At age 5, she was brought here from Guatemala. Now, in addition to confronting enemies from abroad, Gonzalez must confront a threat at home, losing the wife and mother of their 2-year-old child.

In his testimony before the Immigration Subcommittee, Gonzalez stated: As a citizen of the United States of America, it makes me wonder, if I can die for my country, then why am I not allowed to just be with my family?

Like Petty Officer Gonzalez, immigrant soldiers fight with vigor and valor to protect the American Dream. All of those who serve, regardless of country of origin, are recognized as American heroes. As heroes, they deserve an immigration policy worthy of their sacrifices and nothing less.

KNOW WHO WORKS AT O'HARE

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

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, you do not need a valid Social Security number to get a job at America's busiest airport. Recently, Federal inspectors reported that screeners at O'Hare Airport also missed 60 percent of all bomb test kits designed to test the screeners. The Justice Department then found three dozen illegal aliens using expired airport security badges. Authorities had no idea who the real identity was of workers with direct access to civil aircraft. This is not the way to run America's busiest airport.

Later today, Representatives ROSKAM, BIGGERT, and I will introduce legislation creating Federal security zones where only badged and approved United States citizens can work next to an aircraft. Everyone at the airport Federal security zone will have a background check and have a valid, real Social Security number.

You would think the Transportation Security Agency would know who is working at American airports. Our bill would help implement that commonsense solution.

IN HONOR OF PFC MATTHEW T. SPAULDING

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a brave American who is serving our country with distinction. Private First Class Matthew T. Spaulding of Bluffton, South Carolina, was a recent recipient of the Army's Bronze Star with Valor for his heroic actions in Afghanistan. The former Bluffton High School quarterback has been deployed since January as an Army medic.

On June 9th, PFC Spaulding was on patrol with his unit when their vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device. Suffering several wounds himself, Spaulding was able to come to the aid of one of his comrades who was severely injured. Through his quick and selfless action in the face of danger, Spaulding was able to save his fellow soldier's life.

The Bronze Star with Valor is awarded to a soldier who has performed an act of heroism in combat. It is the fourth highest combat medal awarded to members of the armed services.

I am grateful for PFC Spaulding's service, and for all the brave men and women who are fighting to protect our freedoms around the world.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

□ 1015

SCHIP AND CITIZENSHIP DOCUMENTATION

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

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to urge my colleagues to support a strong reauthorization of the SCHIP program that prevents additional loss of health care access to U.S. citizen children.

Medicaid citizenship documentation created by the Deficit Reduction Act has caused citizen children to lose access to health care. Low-income white and black U.S. citizen children, not Latino citizens, are disproportionately affected. Documentation requirements are extremely burdensome to low-income families who often lack the resources to pay for that documentation.

In Alabama, Kansas and Virginia, Medicaid enrollment declined by a larger percentage among white and black children than among Latino children who were U.S. citizens.

The Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services and the past administrator of CMS concurred that there is no substantial evidence that undocumented immigrants are committing fraud in order to receive Medicaid.

Citizenship documentation, as implemented, is a flawed policy based on inaccurate assumptions that adversely affect our children's health.

I urge my colleagues to allow that we enforce a good SCHIP program. Take care of those 10 million children.

FREE TO MOVE ABOUT THE COUNTRY-ILLEGALLY

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, it is illegal to drive a vehicle without a legal driver's license. Illegals, who aren't even supposed to be here, broke the law to get here, and they break it every day by staying here.

Some States pander to illegals and encourage them to stay. Seven States: Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Oregon, New Mexico, Utah and Washington, issue legal driver's licenses to illegals. These illegals then can use the driver's license to travel to other States, set up credit, obtain free social services, and in some States that don't verify citizenship, use these licenses to vote. Thus, these States encourage illegals to stay here. This is an absurd policy that gives the same recognition status to illegals that should be reserved only to citizens and legal immigrants.

We need stricter requirements for driver's licenses, not more lax enforcement. The 9/11 terrorists used fake driver's licenses to ''move about the country freely.'' So States that promote violation of Federal immigration policy by issuing these driver's licenses to illegals should lose Federal transportation highway funds.

Millions for border security, not one cent to highways for illegals.

And that's just the way it is.

DEACON BOB LITTLE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I'm honored that Deacon Bob Little, from my home parish and hometown of St. Helena, is serving as today's guest chaplain.

Deacon Little has had a lifetime of exemplary service to our country. He's a 26-year veteran of the Air Force, achieved the rank of major, and served in Vietnam, Panama and eastern Saudi Arabia.

He's also served the community in Napa County. He was a deputy sheriff

for 12 years and an elementary school science and physical education teacher.

He later came to work at the St. Helena Catholic Church. After 5 years of training, he was ordained as deacon.

Among the many services he provides the residents of our community, he also travels throughout Northern California as a military bugler for the funerals of fallen soldiers.

Deacon Little is a distinguished American citizen and important community leader, and I thank him for his service to our country and for the prayer that he led today.

FUNDING OUR VETERANS

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

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, this is day 45, that is, 45 days so far that our veterans have not had the use of the increased funding for their benefits and health care. That's $18.5 million a day not able to be used.

This bill has been done for months and the President has already agreed to sign it. Now Veterans Day has come and gone, and the Democrat leadership continues to delay this bill.

I am calling on the Speaker to not adjourn for Thanksgiving until this bill has been sent to the President. And I call on all Americans to contact their Representatives and tell the Democratic leadership to send a clean Veterans appropriation bill to the President now.

How can we celebrate a holiday with our families, knowing that there are benefits our veterans don't have access to simply because of our inaction.

LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill passed by Congress reinvests in our Nation's future in a fiscally responsible way, and it is fully paid for with no deficit spending.

The President vetoed this bill because he apparently believes that a better course of action would be to deliver massive cuts in critical domestic priorities, such as funding community health centers and medical research grants through the National Institutes of Health.

The Labor-HHS-Education bill vetoed by the President strengthens education by training 51,000 more teachers, and helps 173,000 more dislocated workers with job training and employment.

And again, unlike the budget-busting funding bills that were passed by previous Congresses and signed by this President, this bill is fully paid for and does not add one penny to the Federal deficit.

Madam Speaker, we must override the President's veto and pass this fiscally responsible bill.

DENIAL, RETREAT AND DEFEAT IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, the tide is turning in Iraq. As The Washington Post noted just last week, the number of attacks against U.S. soldiers has fallen to levels not seen since before February of 2006, the bombing of a Shiia shrine in Samara that touched off waves of sectarian killing.

The death toll of American troops in October fell to 39, the lowest level since March of 2006. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki announced this last Sunday that Sunni-Shiia violence in Baghdad was down more than 75 percent in the last year.

But sadly, today the House of Representatives will bring an Iraq supplemental bridge fund that once again brings the same tired language mandating withdrawal from Iraq.

It seems, Madam Speaker, the Democrats are adding denial to their agenda of retreat and defeat in Iraq. Now is not the time to micromanage a widening success in Iraq. Let's give the American soldiers the resources they need to get the job done, see freedom win, and come home safe.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. And SCHIP is prevention, as well as an important investment in our children and the future of our country.

If we don't make an adequate investment now to provide access to health care for our children, we will pay for it later. When is the White House going to get it?

And it must include all children. So let's not agree with the Republicans to put up barriers to doing that. Democrats opposed citizen documentation in Medicaid and we must oppose it now. It will hurt poor children and children who are racial and ethnic minorities, the children who need it most.

The anti-immigrant rhetoric that is raising its ugly head in this body is hurting our country. We must not let it hurt our children.

Not covering all poor legal immigrant children and requiring excess documentation is un-American. Let's end this today with SCHIP, and let's pass a bill that moves us closer to full coverage and to being the better country we ought to be.

CONGRATULATING MAJOR LES BRAUNNS, ARKANSAS STATE POLICE

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to one of my constituents who's dedicated his adult life toward protecting the men and women of Arkansas.

I rise to congratulate Les Braunns of Springdale on his promotion to the rank of major in the Arkansas State Police. A 28-year veteran trooper, Major Braunns was most recently the commanding officer of Troop L, where he earned the respect and friendship of the men he commanded.

According to the men of Troop L, Major Braunns always led his men by example, and led his men from the front, never asking a trooper to perform a task he was unwilling to perform himself.

His men pointed to the most recent example of his leadership from an incident in July when the Hell's Angels descended on my district for their annual get-together. Then Captain Braunns marched into a group of 300 and told them, ''You can police yourselves, or we can do it for you.'' The State police kept their word and so did the Hell's Angels.

I congratulate Major Braunns on his promotion, and I thank him and appreciate all that he's done for the State of Arkansas.

VETERANS GUARANTEED BONUS

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, this weekend, communities throughout our Nation honored the brave men and women who have defended our Nation in previous wars, as well as those who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. While parades, speeches and ceremonies are important, I believe it is more important for the U.S. Government to properly care for and honor our veterans.

Recently, the Department of Defense has instituted a new policy on bonuses, which does not provide servicemembers with their full enlistment bonus, reenlistment or other bonuses if they are wounded while in combat and cannot return to duty. This means that combat wounded veterans who are discharged from the military because of their serious injuries will not receive their full bonus. This policy is unacceptable and disgraceful. It is unbelievable that the men and women who have sacrificed so much for our Nation are being shortchanged and denied the bonuses they were promised by their government.

Congressman JASON ALTMIRE has legislation to correct this inequity, but we should not have to rely on legislation. I call upon the Commander in Chief, President Bush, to reverse this policy immediately. We have a letter going to the President asking him to terminate this policy and ensure all outstanding bonuses be paid promptly.

GENERAL BOB LIVINGSTON

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, it's that time of year when we begin to make plans to travel to be with our families for Thanksgiving, so I want to recognize those American military men and women fighting overseas who will be unable to go home for Thanksgiving.

Specifically, I'd like to recognize General Bob Livingston, who is currently serving with South Carolina's very own 218th National Guard Brigade currently serving in Afghanistan.

General Livingston sent an American flag to his wife, Barbara, who put it into my hands to thank me for supporting their mission. I've never been more honored and never received anything more symbolic of true patriotism.

Our U.S. soldiers are making the sacrifice away from their families during these holidays. They're always serving to protect our freedom and our safety.

My wish during this time is that our citizens offer a salute to these brave soldiers for the loyalty and honor they have had in America and for their courage to fight for freedom.

218th, Fit to Fight.

HONORING FOREIGN-BORN SOLDIERS

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise today also to honor the soldiers and veterans that sacrifice so much for this Nation. And this week in which we celebrated Veterans Day, it is an appropriate and necessary time to reflect on that sacrifice. And in the Congress that often feels the need to scapegoat or debase immigrants, this body often forgets how immigrants enrich our lives.

I rise today to take a special moment to thank those foreign-born noncitizens who are serving in this war and have served in wars past. In this current war, there are approximately 21,000 noncitizens in uniform. No other war has produced anywhere near as many posthumous citizens as this one.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues to work toward civility, solutions and humanity when we talk about immigration. Please do not play politics with the lives of current and future immigrants and their family members, like me, who are only a generation removed from the experience.

□ 1030

WELCOME HOME MINNESOTA GUARD

(Mrs. BACHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, today America and our allies in Iraq are breathing a collective sigh of relief as we continue to receive successful report after successful report of al Qaeda's demise in Iraq.

We continue to pray for a complete end to hostilities, but today we pause to thank America's brave military members and also their family members.

Just recently, 168 brave men and women returned from the famous Red Bulls to Minnesota. They were deployed for 13 months, and we thank them for their sacrifice.

The happy news is that not one of the 168 returned home with serious injury. Everyone was able to walk out and meet their loved ones.

It seems every generation has to learn the lessons of freedom. Freedom is precious, Madam Speaker, and we thank those today who secured our freedom and the freedom of our allies.

IMMIGRATION

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, since 1886 immigrants to the United States have passed the Statue of Liberty, which has inscribed, ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses.'' Why is it that now, when those huddled masses happen to be brown, the golden door of freedom is being slammed shut?

Immigrants contribute to the economy. They are free thinkers. They are hard-driven workers who strive for success, not only for themselves and their community but for their families. They come to this country because America is a beacon of hope for them. They are looking for a better life, just like every immigrant since the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

So why do some amongst us feel it necessary to place every obstacle possible in their path, to launch bigoted assaults on them, to wrongly blame those who work the hardest at the worst jobs for the ills of all of our society?

Immigrants are the history of the United States. They are our past, they are our present, and I must not rest until we recognize they are part of the future of this great country.

FUNDING THE TROOPS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Well, here we go again.

Instead of getting down to business and tending to the people's business, the majority wants to play a political game. So to do it, they are going to tie temporary funds for our men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to a timetable for withdrawal. No amendments can be offered. Once again, the leadership of the House is set to embark on a legislative gamble to force the hand of U.S. military leadership. This is their 41st Iraq vote.

But the suspense comes. Will the Houses of Congress, the President, and the American people take their bluff? I think it is very highly unlikely.

The Democrat leadership seems content to write legislation that they know is going to fail. Now, why would you write something you know is going to fail?

Let's get past this. Let's give up the games. Let's take care of the people's business. Let's pass clean legislation to ensure the safety of our troops.

JEC IRAQ WAR REPORT

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

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, by every measure the war in Iraq has cost Americans far too much, whether it's lives lost, dollars spent, or our reputation tarnished around the world.

House Democrats plan to send the President a smaller war funding bill than the one he requested but one with a bigger message: Start bringing our troops home now.

Without a change in course, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that Federal spending on the war could reach $2.4 trillion by 2017. A new report from the Joint Economic Committee finds that when you add in the ''hidden costs'' of the war, such as higher oil prices, interest payments, and helping to take care of our wounded veterans, the total economic costs will rise by over $1 trillion to $3.5 trillion.

It's time for a new direction in Iraq.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, like many other of my colleagues who spoke right before, who told stories about how the lack of immigration reform has affected many families, Madam Speaker, the time for Congress to pass immigration reform is long overdue.

Our system is broken. Our country is less safe. Families are torn apart. And people are living in fear. For the Hispanic Caucus, this is an issue that is personal to a lot of us. Our communities should not be a punching bag for the vocal few. It's time to stop this hateful rhetoric that serves only to divide us and bully the vulnerable.

Children should not be torn apart from their mothers. We have been asked to stand against what are American values of family, providing a chance to do better.

America is a Nation of immigrants, not just from Mexico and Latin America but from Canada, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Immigration is not an Hispanic

issue; it's an American issue. It's an American issue.

We want to work together to create a real plan to combat hateful and often racist rhetoric that affects all of us. I ask my colleagues to do the right thing and not the political easy thing and to support real immigration reform.

URGING SUPPORT FOR H.R. 4102, STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY ACT

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Today the New York Times reports that at least 14 of the 17 shootings from the September 16 Blackwater incident in Iraq were unjustified and violated deadly force rules.

Even though the FBI concluded that Blackwater, a for-profit contractor, used excessive force, there is no guarantee that anyone will be punished for these killings.

On Monday, the front page of the New York Times ran a story titled ''Security Guard Fires From Convoy, Killing Iraqi Driver.'' The shooter was an employee of DynCorp, and the victim an Iraqi taxi driver. The details of the incident are still unclear, but one thing is certain. The problem of trigger-happy contractors isn't confined to one company; it applies to all private security contractors.

The longer we wait to fix this problem, the worse the situation is going to get for the Iraqis and for our troops. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, H.R. 4102, to phase out unaccountable private security contractors before they do any more damage.

CAUTIONING SENIORS REGARDING PRIVATE MEDICARE INSURANCE OPTIONS

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, the Medicare open enrollment period begins tomorrow, November 15, and runs through the end of the year. Across the country, private HMOs have placed large newspaper ads and are running TV ads to convince seniors to sign up for their private Medicare insurance.

I am here to advise seniors to be very cautious. These private HMO insurance salesmen are on the streets and are oftentimes luring our seniors into private Medicare coverage that they do not need. If they leave traditional Medicare and sign up for a private HMO, oftentimes they will lose access to their doctor.

Be very cautious. Sons and daughters, grandkids across America, help your parents and grandparents sort through this myriad of options under private Medicare. In Florida, you can seek independent advice from the Department of Elder Affairs and the SHINE Volunteers. Seek independent advice and be very cautious with these private Medicare options.

WARNING AGAINST IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. BAIRD. My colleagues, as someone who opposed the invasion of Iraq and believes it was one of the most egregious mistakes in the history of this country, I rise today to implore you to not make a mistake today by demanding that we begin an immediate withdrawal.

The facts on the ground are that the situation is improving in Iraq. Courageous Americans have given their lives and time away from their families to make that happen. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died in a conflict that we created. We have a chance now to try to improve the situation.

Progress is being made. Do not let anyone today say it is not. Violence is down. Political leaders are reaching out across the aisle. Shias are meeting with Sunnis. Sunnis are meeting with Shias. They need more time to succeed, and an insecure situation will undermine the progress, not further it.

We need to have more time to debate this resolution today. We need to take the good parts of it, keep those in, but abandon this requirement for an immediate withdrawal.

There is a big difference between 1 year, which this measure says we have to be out in, or a 10-year horizon. We should find the nuance now that we can agree on.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, 2007 has been the deadliest year for American troops in Iraq. No doubt that a change of direction is needed, but President Bush refuses to change course. He envisions a world where our troops will still be on the ground in Iraq 10 years from now.

This Democratic Congress rejects such a plan. And this week we will once again consider legislation that will require President Bush to redeploy our troops out of Iraq while providing our troops in harm's way with the resources that they need.

President Bush has asked Congress for an additional $200 billion for Iraq. This House will instead vote on a $50 billion package that will require the immediate start of the redeployment of U.S. forces out of Iraq. The legislation sets a goal of having nearly every troop out of Iraq by the end of next year. That is a significant change in the course of the war, and it is a change that will finally hold Iraq accountable for its future course.

Madam Speaker, this Congress will continue to fight to change President Bush's 10-year, trillion-dollar war. We are committed to bringing our troops home soon, repairing the readiness of our military, and refocusing our efforts to fight terrorism around the world.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1429, IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 813 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 813

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1429) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER). The gentlewoman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Madam Speaker, I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 813.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 813 provides for consideration of the conference report for H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. This is the standard rule for a conference report. It waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. It also provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

Madam Speaker, for over 40 years Head Start has served as the premier educational and developmental program for America's children, more than 20 million American children and their families. Head Start works. Head Start works because it is a well-researched, comprehensive initiative that combines all of the children's educational needs, their health care needs, and it requires parental involvement. Years later, after four decades of Head Start, the research shows that children that participate in Head Start are

more likely to graduate from high school than their peers.

Head Start is a comprehensive approach to child health nutrition and learning, and it is one of our best tools in the struggle to close the achievement gap. The achievement gap for children in poverty in America must be tackled, and Head Start tackles the achievement gap through cognitive social and emotional child development, each of which is a key contributor to entering elementary school ready to succeed.

Today, 20 percent of America's 12 million children under the age of 6 unfortunately live in poverty. We know that a family's income level greatly affects their child's access to educational opportunities. The reality of poverty for so many American children in poverty is tied to their low success rates in schools.

But in America, family income simply should not impede a child's educational opportunities, and this is where Head Start comes in to level the playing field. Back home in Florida in my community in the Tampa Bay area, over 5,300 children are served by Head Start. But we've got thousands of children that are eligible and are on the waiting list. Why are they on the waiting list? Because previous Congresses have failed to properly support our Head Start kids, and this White House has flat-lined budgets over the years; so our kids merely have been treading water.

□ 1045

There have been no improvements or increases in funding since 2003. And with inflation, it has been very difficult to maintain the well-known, high-quality elements in Head Start. But the good news is that this Congress will change that today and make the smartest investment in our country's future workforce. And the research statistics bear repeating; children that participate in Head Start are more likely to graduate from high school.

We're going to put more children on a path to success today when we pass this bill and this rule. We're going to improve teacher and classroom quality. We're going to strengthen the focus on school readiness. We're going to expand access so children that are on the waiting list can enter Head Start classrooms. We're going to strengthen those all-important comprehensive services of health care and nutrition. We're going to increase the number of children in early Head Start because the research also shows that it is critical for child brain development that they have interaction by the age of 3, when their brains are developing. We're going to focus on allowing more homeless children to enroll and do a better job for children who are just learning English.

This year marks four decades of success for this holistic wraparound initiative that empowers all of us. These children are eager and ready to learn if we give them the tools.

The administration's slow-motion cuts to Head Start will now be reversed because this Congress, in a bipartisan way, but led by Democrats, is committed to raising strong and healthy children, and Head Start prepares our children to succeed in school and in life.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It's important for the future of our children that they develop the skills and receive the education necessary to make them a success later in life. Unfortunately, many children begin their education without a proper foundation, putting them at a disadvantage that has long-term effects on their education. We must do all we can so that low-income children do not begin their education at a disadvantage, and that is why Head Start was created.

In order to give the children the proper foundation they need to begin their education, the Head Start program provides comprehensive early child development services to about 900,000 children from low-income families. These services prepare children to enter kindergarten with a proper educational foundation for their continued educational success to hopefully break the chain of poverty. The underlying bipartisan conference report builds on the success of the program and alleviates some of its shortcomings.

The bill authorizes over $7 billion in fiscal year 2008. For fiscal year 2009, it authorizes a 4.1 percent increase. And for fiscal year 2010, there's an additional 4.5 percent increase.

It is important that the children in Head Start receive the best education possible. There are several provisions in the conference report that will help with that goal. First, the legislation seeks to ensure that a greater number of early Head Start teachers are better trained and educated in early childhood development, with a focus on infant toddler development, no later than September 30, 2012. Additionally, the conference report requires that at least 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education or related field by September 30, 2013.

Madam Speaker, competition encourages better quality. As recommended by a 2005 GAO study, this legislation seeks to increase competition among Head Start grantees to help weed out poor performers and foster stronger programs.

There is also a need for greater oversight of the program grantees. This legislation requires Head Start agencies to create a formal structure of program governance for assessing the quality of services received by the Head Start children and families, and for making decisions related to program design and implementation.

The bill also seeks greater transparency and disclosure regarding how Head Start funds are spent. This will help prevent abuse and further ensure that Federal Head Start funds reach the disadvantaged children that they are meant to reach.

The conference report kept the House's unanimously passed motion to instruct language limiting the compensation of a Head Start employee to Executive Level II, which equals $168,000. This is to prevent Head Start employees from receiving excessive salaries and bonuses, like in some past experiences.

With regard to a child's eligibility in a Head Start program, the conference report allows Head Start agencies to serve children whose parents earn 130 percent above the poverty level. The conference report caps the amount of participants that can be served at the increased level to 35 percent of all participants, and only if the agency can prove that they are serving all eligible participants at the poverty level.

Other important provisions included in the conference report are to continue the eligibility of faith-based organizations as Head Start agencies. Head Start has a proud history of inclusion of faith-based organizations. Approximately 80 grantees have religious affiliations.

With regard to our children's safety, the conference report requires background checks for those who transport children to Head Start centers.

I wish to thank both Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for their bipartisan work on this important legislation. This important legislation goes to show, Madam Speaker, that when we are willing to work together and compromise, we can bring forth good legislation with bipartisan support.

I urge my colleagues to support the conference report, which I believe is instrumental to the educational success of many children.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California, a member of the Education and Labor Committee and an outspoken advocate for America's kids, Ms. WOOLSEY.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today we're going to reauthorize Head Start and reaffirm, through this conference report, our commitment to this very, very valuable program.

When I came here 15 years ago, I was insisting that my married children make me a grandmother, and they told me it was just none of my business. But since then, I now have five grandchildren among my four families of young adults, and all of my grandchildren go to preschool. And they are lucky because they have working parents who are professionals who can

pick out very good schools for them and make sure, the oldest child is 7½, and he's the only one in school, he is a second grader, but ensure that when my grandchildren enter grade school, elementary school, that they know what's going on. I mean, I'm telling you, I can't believe it. These kids read, they write, they know their numbers, they know their alphabet, they can play Monopoly, and they aren't even in kindergarten yet. That's what every kid in America deserves, and that's what Head Start does.

Head Start evens the playing field so that the fortunate children in my family aren't the only ones that enter elementary school having read books, having understood that you sit down in a classroom, that you have social needs that you have to learn to deal with when you're a young person and you're going to be dealing with other young people in a classroom situation.

I feel so fortunate, but I also feel so thankful that in a very bipartisan way, under the chairmanship of Mr. MILLER and the good leadership of Mr. MCKEON, we were able to pass legislation that will finally bring to this floor a Head Start bill.

We need to increase the Head Start funding, of course. We aren't covering every eligible child in the United States, and we must do that over time. It's hard to do when you're spending $1.5 trillion in Iraq. But we must get our priorities in order, and one of our top priorities must be our children. Our children are 25 percent of our population, but guess what? They are 100 percent of our future.

We must support programs like Head Start that ensure that our future, when we become really old people and these young people are running our world and running our Congress, they know what they're doing.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished ranking member of the Rules Committee, Mr. DREIER.

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference report, and I want to join in commending first the managers on both sides of the aisle, our friends from Florida, Ms. CASTOR and Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and of course Mr. MILLER, Mr. MCKEON, and Mr. CASTLE, and all those who have been involved.

The Head Start program is a very important program. It has proved to be successful. And I'm pleased that we have a measure that is going to, I believe, become law and ensure that we are able, as we look towards preparing children for that very critical K–12 education, which we all know is facing very serious challenges, the Head Start program can help as they launch into that challenge.

Madam Speaker, I want to take my time, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART and I were just talking about an op-ed piece that was written by the former staff director of the Committee on Rules, Don Wolfensberger, and it got a response in today's Roll Call that I think is a very important one. And I think that, in light of the fact that we're debating rules here, this is a debate on the rule, and we've seen some real challenges when it has come to ensuring that the American people have their right to be heard here on the House floor. I think that I will share an article. And at this time, I would like to insert this article into the RECORD, Mr. WOLFensberger's op-ed piece.

[From Roll Call, Nov. 12, 2007]

MINORITY'S MOTION TO RECOMMIT SHOULD NOT BE CURTAILED

(By Don Wolfensberger)

It is the height of political arrogance for the majority party in the House of Representatives to dictate which minority party motions are legitimate and which are not. Yet that is exactly what the Democratic leadership is threatening through possible House rules changes governing the motion to recommit.

The motion to recommit a bill to committee with instructions to amend it was originally used primarily as a majority party device to make last-minute, minor corrections before final passage. All that changed in 1909 when Speaker Joe Cannon (R-Ill.) temporarily headed off a bipartisan effort to amend House rules and remove him as chairman and a member of the Rules Committee. Cannon recognized conservative Democratic Rep. John Fitzgerald (N.Y.) to offer a substitute amendment that, among other things, guaranteed the minority a final opportunity to get a vote on its position using the motion to recommit with instructions. (Cannon would still be booted from Rules in a bipartisan revolt the following year.)

The minority's right was slowly chipped away when Democrats last ran the House. Beginning in the early 1980s, Democratic Speakers and their Rules Committee majority minions used an obscure 1934 precedent to justify not only limiting the contents of the minority's instructions but also eventually denying them the right to offer any instructions. Republicans fiercely fought these limits at every turn and vowed that if they came to power the minority's right to offer its alternative in a motion to recommit with instructions would be fully restored. They fulfilled that promise upon taking control of the House in January 1995, and the Democratic minority enjoyed the right unimpeded over the 12 years of Republican control.

Nothing in the guaranteed right limits the minority to a motion that immediately adopts an amendment—the ''forthwith'' motion. The minority also may move to send a bill physically back to committee with instructions to hold more hearings, conduct a study or make specified changes in the legislation. This latter device, to recommit with instructions to report back an amendment ''promptly'' (instead of ''forthwith'') has been unnerving Democratic leaders every time Republicans have used it to raise politically sensitive issues. In two instances the majority withdrew bills from the floor rather than risk having them sent back to committee.

The most recent example was the leadership's decision to pull the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act amendments in the face of a likely GOP motion to recommit with instructions to ''promptly'' report back an amendment to exempt from FISA court coverage any surveillance of al-Qaida or other terrorist groups.

Democratic Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (Md.) argues that such motions are offered simply for ''political purposes'' rather than for the ''substantive purposes'' of ''trying to change policy.'' At the same time he concedes that Democrats used such tactics when they were in the minority. The only apparent difference is that Republicans have had a higher success rate with their recommit motions (though the only ones to succeed so far have been ''forthwith'' motions).

The majority is attempting to impose its notion that the only ''legitimate'' role of the minority party is to offer substantive policy alternatives in their recommit motions for instant incorporation in a bill. One way Democrats might try to enforce this concept is to only allow the minority to offer ''forthwith'' motions to recommit so that legislation can move immediately to final passage after the motion is voted. This ''amend it now or forever hold your peace'' approach overlooks one important role of an opposition party, and that is to oppose.

Opposing legislation does not carry with it the obligation to offer responsible policy alternatives that conform to the majority's timetable for passing a bill (especially when the minority is being blocked from offering any amendments on a record-breaking 35 percent of major bills). Opposition may include not only trying to defeat a bill, but also to slow it down, including sending it back to a committee for more work.

Yes, a straight motion to recommit without instructions would accomplish this same purpose. But who is to say that the minority should not be able to score its own political points by sending a bill back to committee with a message attached? After all, the majority routinely gets plenty of PR mileage out of reporting and passing bills on its political agenda. To assert that the minority is playing politics with its motions to recommit while the majority is somehow above such things in advancing its bills is laughable.

The difference, the majority would have us believe, is that it is achieving a serious public policy purpose for the betterment of humankind while the minority is merely engaging in ''cheap shot'' political tricks with no redeeming social value. That may be true at times, but the minority should be allowed to stand or fall on public and media perceptions of its actions—whether they be seen as foolish or heroic. The majority also will stand or fall on public perceptions of the quality of its legislative enactments and may well look just as foolish if well-intentioned bills produce bad results.

At a time when Congressional Democrats are under heavy fire and record low public approval ratings for a lackluster performance (including their inability to put even one of the 12 regular appropriations bills on the president's desk over a month after the start of the fiscal year), they would do well to spend more time honing their governance skills and less trying to control minority party behavior.

This paper, Roll Call, which we all get around here on the Hill, has been very critical of whichever party has been in control. I will say that when we were in the majority, this paper was often very critical of us. And today they have an editorial. Again, this is not Republicans speaking. It's not Republicans whining. It's not Republicans claiming that their rights are being trampled on. This is from the editorial page of today's Roll Call, and the editorial is entitled as follows, Madam Speaker, it's entitled ''Let 'Em Move.''

''Embarrassed though House Democratic leaders may be by Republican

success in proposing, and, often, passing politically loaded motions to recommit, it would be an outrage for the majority to limit the minority's right to do so.

''Despite promises to manage the House on a more open basis than Republicans did during their 12-year rule, Democrats have been every bit as authoritarian, prohibiting any floor amendments, for instance, at more than double the rate of the previous Congress.'' I'm going to repeat that, Madam Speaker, ''more than double the rate of the previous Congress,'' the number of closed rules that they've had. ''Motions to recommit legislation to committees with instructions on how to alter it are often the only opportunity the minority has to affect the legislative process.

''When they actually win a majority on the House floor, because a number of Democrats vote with Republicans, they constitute a huge embarrassment to Democratic leaders. This has happened 21 times this year, versus practically never during Republican rule, and each time Republicans have crowed that Speaker NANCY PELOSI and her team 'have lost control of the floor.'''

And let me remind you, Madam Speaker, I am simply reading from the editorial page of today's Roll Call.

They go on to say, ''Democratic leaders routinely fume at the practice, as when House Majority Leader STENY HOYER accused the GOP of using the motion 'for political purposes, not substantive purposes . . . not to change policy, but to try to construct difficult political votes for Members,' meaning potentially vulnerable Democrats.

□ 1100

''As Roll Call reported last month, Democrats are searching for ways to change House rules to limit the minority's right to propose motions to recommit. They have done so before, so far without success—once, because Republicans halted proceedings on the House floor to protest the attempt. We suggest that Democrats just drop the idea and learn to live with the GOP motions as a legitimate part of legislative work in a democracy.

''It's certainly true that many of the Republican motions have been politically designed, especially repeated motions to deny government benefits to illegal immigrants. Any Democrat who cast a vote against the measure, even if government aid was already barred by law, might well fear that it would be used by a potential opponent in a political commercial.

''At the same time, many of the GOP motions have been substantive and have gained majority support because they contained popular ideas or posed politically difficult choices.'' Roll Call goes on to write, ''Examples include a ban on Federal funding to colleges that prohibit military recruiting on campus and an increase in funding for missile defense.''

Madam Speaker, this Roll Call editorial reads, ''On two occasions, GOP motions were so threatening to the Democrats' purposes that they actually pulled legislation on terrorist wiretapping and voting rights for the District of Columbia.

''Rather than limit one of the minority's few rights to affect legislation, we suggest that Democrats expand those rights by allowing Republicans to offer amendments on the floor. Would some of them be 'purely political'? Of course. But more open and democratic debate also might produce better policy and reduce partisan rancor.''

Now, again, Madam Speaker, those are not my words. Those are the words of the editorial board of the Roll Call as printed in today's paper. I want to say again, this paper was often critical of us when we were in the majority, and they have now, I believe, been right on target in pointing to the fact that the notion of trying to deny the American people their opportunity to be heard through this motion to recommit would be a horrible thing. I believe the Democratic majority, Madam Speaker, should, in fact, follow this encouragement from Roll Call and allow more amendments to be made in order.

I also want to say that I will join with my friend when he seeks to defeat the previous question on this rule so for the 11th time, we will be seeking to bring assistance to our veterans to the floor. This is Veterans Week. We marked Veterans Day Monday. I will say that it is absolutely imperative that any Member of the House who wants to ensure that we have the resources necessary for our veterans should vote ''no'' on the previous question so that we can, in fact, get that assistance that they so desperately need.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I always enjoy hearing the ranking member from the Rules Committee, because 1 year ago, the American people demanded a new direction, to make America safer, to help restore the American Dream, to restore accountability and fiscal responsibility to the people's government. This 110th Congress has brought new faces, new energy and a steadfast commitment to a new direction.

In January, the first female Speaker of the House in American history gaveled open the Congress in honor of America's children, and we will keep that commitment today by acting on the Head Start bill in this rule.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CASTOR. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. I would simply say to my friend, I joined in heralding the selection of my fellow Californian, Ms. PELOSI, as the first woman, the first Italian American Speaker of the House of Representatives. It was a great day for this institution. I should say she was the first Californian as well. But I will say this, the record that was outlined in today's Roll Call is one which can't be denied by either the Members of the majority or the minority.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Ms. CASTOR. I am happy to debate the record of this Congress under Democratic leadership. The Congress is focused on a new direction, first, to make America safer. We have already taken action to implement the 9/11 Commission recommendations to protect America from terrorism. This Congress has passed the largest veterans health care funding increase in the history of the VA. We have adopted energy security legislation that will reduce the threat of global climate change. We continue to hold the White House accountable for this unending war in Iraq.

In addition, this Congress is restoring the American Dream because now the law of the land is the largest college age expansion since the GI Bill in 1944, where we raised the Pell Grant and we cut the interest rate on student loans. It has been this Congress, and this is important if you are keeping track of the record of this Congress, it was this Congress that raised the minimum wage for millions of Americans. We have also adopted an innovation agenda promoting 21st century jobs in a global economy. We have sent aid to the gulf coast for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and for the millions of Americans that continue to struggle day to day with the impact of those disasters. And we are fighting for health care, to expand health care to 10 million more American children.

Madam Speaker, we have also adopted a widely acclaimed and landmark lobby and ethics reform bill. And it has been this Congress that has returned to financial sanity and fiscal responsibility by adhering to pay-as-you-go discipline, no new deficit spending.

So I am very pleased to debate the record of this Congress on the floor of the House. We will work in a bipartisan way to build consensus. More than two-thirds of this legislation has passed in a bipartisan manner. We will strive to find common ground where we can, like here on the Head Start bill. But where we cannot, we will stand our ground, like on the Iraq bill that we will bring later today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, the record brought out today by the Roll Call editorial, that I am very pleased, by the way, that our ranking member brought forth and read into the RECORD, I think is important for a number of reasons.

Again, I was also here when the distinguished Speaker was elected in January. I recall the promises at that time and during the campaign, the electoral campaign that preceded that ceremony in January. The promises were, and I am sure they will be recalled, to have a more open process, a more transparent House. So the reason why I think it is most appropriate now to bring out the record that Roll Call in

an editorial has outlined is that instead of seeing, during this year, this first year of this Congress, a more open process, a more transparent process, a more democratic process, what we have seen is a more than doubling of the closed rules, of the gag rules, if you will, the gag rules that don't permit any amendments on legislation.

Since we are discussing the rule, by the way, on legislation that is an example of bipartisanship, the Head Start program is one that has been supported from its inception in a bipartisan manner, but we are discussing the rule, the means to debate this legislation, the procedure, if you will, to debate the legislation, I think it's appropriate to bring out the more than doubling by a majority that promised more transparency and more democracy in the running of the House, a more than doubling of gag rules that prohibit debate, that prohibit any amendments for debate. So I think that is appropriate to bring forth. And I commend Roll Call that, yes, was very critical when we were in the majority of many of the things that happened at that time. But a doubling, more than doubling of the impropriety, of the gag rules by a majority that promised more transparency is not only important to bring out but I think it is most unfortunate.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to a distinguished colleague who has worked so much on this legislation in an admirable way, as he has on many issues of great importance to the American people, Mr. CASTLE of Delaware.

Mr. CASTLE. I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding, and I apologize for returning to such a mundane subject as the rule before us, but that is what I am here to do.

I do rise in support of this rule, and I would like to thank Chairman MILLER along with Mr. MCKEON and Mr. KILDEE, as well as their staffs, for the work they have done over the last several Congresses to strengthen and improve the Head Start program.

Since 1965, the Head Start program has given economically disadvantaged children access to the same educational, health, nutritional, social and other services that were enjoyed by their more affluent peers. The goal of the program was, as it remains today, to provide children a solid foundation that will prepare them for success in school and later in life. As the centerpiece of the Federal Government's efforts to support quality early childhood education for our Nation's most disadvantaged youth, Head Start has served nearly 20 million low-income children and their families. Currently, Head Start serves over 900,000 children every day and has over 1,600 grantees across the United States. In my home State of Delaware, Head Start programs serve over 2,000 children with over 800 additional 3- and 4-year-olds receiving assistance through State Government funding.

Although we can agree on the need for Head Start and its successes, we must also recognize that the Head Start program is capable of producing even greater results for our children. Students who attend Head Start programs do start school more prepared than those with similar backgrounds who do not attend Head Start. Head Start students continue, however, to enter kindergarten well below national norms in school readiness. By moving to close the school readiness gap, the bipartisan Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act will improve results for almost a million Head Start students across the Nation.

I believe strongly in the Head Start program, particularly because of how the program helps children later in their academic lives. Despite the positive reputation of Head Start overall, however, there have been reports which have unfortunately uncovered the fact that some individuals have taken advantage of the taxpayer dollars that fund the program to line their own pockets. Along with the expertise of the Government Accountability Office and through reforms made in this bill, changes will be made to avoid these issues in the future. I feel this is the right step to take for the benefit of the program, and I thank everyone for finding what I hope will be a resolution to the pockets of abuse.

As I said at the outset, Head Start is an important and very popular program. The importance of early childhood education and services cannot be overstated. I believe strongly that the reforms sought with this bill will go a long way to institute needed reforms to an already successful program.

I support passage of this rule and the conference report to H.R. 1429.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to continue the debate on this important rule, the bipartisan Head Start conference report, by recognizing for 1 minute a member of the Education and Labor Committee, my good friend and colleague from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK).

Mr. LOEBSACK. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding.

I want to commend Chairman MILLER, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. KILDEE and Mr. CASTLE on their impressive work on this truly bipartisan legislation. This conference report is proof positive that in spite of the rancor evident this morning, when we put our minds to it and work together, we can, in fact, get things done in this Congress.

Head Start offers comprehensive early childhood development services to our Nation's neediest children. These comprehensive services are key to the program's success. Head Start engages parents and the community in students' lives and provides important nutritional, health and social services.

Studies show that children who enroll in Head Start excel academically, they have fewer health problems, and adapt better both socially and emotionally. I am proud to say that over 9,600 children are enrolled in the program in Iowa.

I grew up in poverty, and I know firsthand how important programs like Head Start are to low-income families. I urge my colleagues to support this conference report and this rule, and I hope it will be quickly signed into law.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege at this time to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Education Committee, Mr. MCKEON of California.

Mr. MCKEON. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I am pleased to rise in support of the rule on the conference report for the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act. This rule will allow the House to give final endorsement to a bill that will strengthen and improve the Head Start early childhood education program.

I would like to begin by recognizing members of the Education and Labor Committee for their efforts to produce this bipartisan conference report. Representatives CASTLE and KILDEE, along with Chairman MILLER and our staffs, have done great work to strengthen and improve this critical program.

In more than 50,000 Head Start classrooms around the Nation, nearly 1 million disadvantaged children are being given the tools and resources to help put them on a path to success which is a win-win for the country.

We have spent a great deal of time this year working to strengthen the No Child Left Behind Act. That law is, at its most basic level, about closing the achievement gap in our Nation's schools. However, the gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers do not begin in elementary school. That's why we have Head Start. This program is designed to help close the readiness gap in children before they ever enroll in school. The health, developmental and educational services offered through this program truly do give a head start to those children than they otherwise enter school already lagging behind.

□ 1115

Some studies have shown that children enrolled in Head Start do make progress, but there's significant work yet to be done in closing that readiness gap. I also believe it's critical to strengthen the financial controls in Head Start so that we can prevent the types of waste, fraud and abuse that have been uncovered over the past 5 years. Republicans acted aggressively to root out cases of financial abuse and mismanagement. We sought the expertise of the Government Accountability Office to identify weaknesses in the financial control network of the program. Through this bill, we will institute structural changes to prevent future breaches in the program's trust.

Our committee has been working to strengthen and reform this program going on 5 years, and I believe that dedication has paid off. Certainly this

bill is not perfect, but on issues where there were disagreements, I am pleased that we have forged compromises. Head Start is a good program, capable of achieving even greater results. With this bill, I believe we can make that happen.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of this rule, and I look forward to House passage of this conference report so it can go to the President for his signature.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I am the last speaker for our side, so I will reserve the balance of my time until the gentleman from Florida has made his closing remarks.

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

Madam Speaker, I will be asking for a ''no'' vote on the previous question so that we can amend this rule and move toward passing a conference report on the bipartisan Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations act. The House passed this veterans affairs and military funding bill on June 15 by a vote of 409–2, with the Senate following suit and naming conferees on September 6. Unfortunately, the majority leadership in the House has refused to move the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill. They have even refused to name conferees.

Why has the majority decided to hold off on moving this bill that has such bipartisan support? Well, according to several publications, including Roll Call, the majority intends to hold off sending appropriations bills to President Bush so that they can use an upcoming anticipated veto, actually, the veto of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill, to serve as ''an extension of their successful public relations campaign on the SCHIP program.'' Fortunately, that purely political move failed last week when the Senate removed the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill from the Labor-HHS bill.

Recently the Republican leader, Mr. BOEHNER, took a step toward naming House Republican conferees. Now the Speaker must follow suit and take the steps necessary to ensure that work can begin on writing the final veterans funding bill that can be enacted into law.

Madam Speaker, every day that the majority chooses not to act on this bill, our Nation's veterans lose $18.5 million. Our veterans deserve better than that; they deserve better than partisan gamesmanship holding back their funding. I urge my colleagues to help move this important legislation and oppose the previous question.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment and extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, by passing the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 and this rule, we will build on the great success of Head Start for America's hardworking families. I would like to salute the chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, GEORGE MILLER; subcommittee Chair, DALE KILDEE; the ranking member, Mr. MCKEON; and Congressman CASTLE from the committee, and all the committee members from Education and Labor for their wonderful work on this Head Start bill.

I would also like to thank the parents across America who are struggling to provide all that they can for their children. We are on their side. This Democratic Congress is charting a new direction with wise investments in education and health care for our kids, which are certain to pay dividends in the years to come.

Madam Speaker, this is an important day for America because Congress is going to keep the promise that it made four decades ago to children who are born with the same potential but, because of their life circumstances, are in need of a little extra attention, health care, nutrition and the guiding hand of a knowledgeable and talented teacher, which together provides them with a true ''head start.'' I urge a ''yes'' vote on the previous question and on the rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 813 OFFERED BY MR. DIAZ-BALART OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. The House disagrees to the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2642, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference requested by the Senate thereon. The Speaker shall appoint conferees immediately, but may declare a recess under clause 12(a) of rule I for the purpose of consulting the Minority Leader prior to such appointment. The motion to instruct conferees otherwise in order pending the appointment of conferees instead shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within two additional legislative days after adoption of this resolution.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's ''American Congressional Dictionary'': ''If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.''

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the

previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of H. Res. 813, if ordered; motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 812; motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 3320; motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 811.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 224, nays 190, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 1086]

YEAS—224

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—190

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—18

Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Doyle
Garrett (NJ)
Hastert
Hayes
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Larsen (WA)
Marchant
McMorris Rodgers
Moore (WI)
Oberstar
Paul
Sessions
Sestak
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 3 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1145

Mr. PETRI changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY AND PLEDGING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF FLOODING IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 812, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. HOYER was allowed to speak out of order.)

REGARDING TIME FOR VOTING

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I made this announcement some 10 days ago or a week ago, and we frankly didn't follow it very well, but I want to take another try.

On both sides of the aisle, you have correctly expressed concern about how long our votes are taking. There are times when votes take a longer time, we have Members down at the White House, we are just going to finish a committee markup, they are voting, or something like that. We understand that.

Madam Speaker, I would like everybody to hear this, because you are going to be angry with me. You are going to be angry with me today.

There were some 140 votes cast by the time the time ran out on this vote. That meant there were some 280 people who had not voted after 15 minutes. This vote took 25 minutes, give or take. Both sides of the aisle and the committee chairmen who are in a markup and it takes so long to get back to the markup, and we have witnesses standing there, both sides had this problem.

So I am asking you for your cooperation. Look at the clock, and when the clock hits 5 minutes left, come over here. Don't look at how many Members have not voted and think to yourself because there are so many Members that haven't voted, we're going to call the roll.

I want to say to my side, I am not going to, frankly, want to lose votes. You don't want to lose votes. They didn't want to lose votes when they were in charge. I didn't blame them. Either side. But don't take the position that they will wait for as long as they need to wait, because that is inconsiderate to every Member who comes here in a timely fashion and then has to wait because somebody else doesn't.

Now, I will tell you this: I am an offender. I am not pointing a finger. If I am pointing a finger at you, I'm pointing four fingers at me. I have in the last week, so I could get up here and pontificate, tried to make sure that I got here on time. But I haven't been getting here on time. I have done the same thing as you. That's why I know you do it. Look at that.

So I am asking all of us to try to work together so that when the bell is rung and the roll is called, you are here on time. We will keep these votes in the vicinity of 17 minutes, and some of you are going to miss votes.

Let me clarify so you understand. The Speaker's position articulated at the beginning of the session, if you are in the well with a card in your hand, you will be allowed to vote. But if somebody yells in the back of the room

''one more,'' if somebody is walking through the door, I do not guarantee you that you will be able to vote. We are going to call the vote.

Thank you very much.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I don't think anybody is going to argue with you, Mr. Majority Leader, but that means that you have got to do something about the elevators. I mean it. I'm not kidding. If you are going to make it work, if you are going to make the 15 minutes work, we have to have people in the elevators or the doorkeepers or somebody keeping everybody out of the elevators.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, ladies and gentlemen, if the elevators are slow, you leave with 10 minutes remaining on the vote. You be here.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will re-report the title of the next question on which proceedings now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 812, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 421, nays 0, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 1087]

YEAS—421

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)
Broun (GA)
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
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
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 Sandlin
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, 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
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
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
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
Tsongas
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)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—11

Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Doyle
Hastert
Johnson (IL)
Oberstar
Paul
Sessions
Sestak
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Two minutes remain on this vote.

□ 1157

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORT FOR THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3320, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3320.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 407, nays 13, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 1088]

YEAS—407

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)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
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
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
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, 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
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
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
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
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
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—13

Broun (GA)
Campbell (CA)
Conaway
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Duncan
Flake
Garrett (NJ)
Hall (TX)
Hensarling
Rohrabacher
Shadegg
Wamp

NOT VOTING—12

Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Doyle
Hastert
Johnson (IL)
Oberstar
Paul
Sessions
Sestak
Slaughter
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1206

Messrs. HALL of Texas and GARRETT of New Jersey changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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.

Stated for:

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote 1088. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 1088.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE AUGUSTUS FREEMAN (GUS) HAWKINS OF CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, it is often as the dean of the California delegation a sad duty to report the passing of a colleague, but I have to say today that I want to announce and celebrate with you the life of a distinguished former colleague who died last Saturday at 100 years of age. Augustus Freeman Hawkins had a 28-year career in this body, and I just briefly want to celebrate with you the accomplishments of this gentleman.

Gus, as we all knew him, was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on August 31, 1907, about the same time my dad was born in California. He moved to Los Angeles. He was elected to the State assembly in 1935. He was elected to Congress in 1962, and served here 28 years.

During that 28-year service, he chaired the House Administration Committee, he chaired the Committee on Education and Labor, a whole host of joint committees, Printing, the Library Committee, and decided not to run for reelection in 1990. But among his many accomplishments, and Gus authored more than 300 State and Federal laws in his career, but what he will be most known for, I think, is authoring title VII of the Civil Rights Act which created the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission.

He was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. He sponsored and was noted and will be remembered most perhaps for the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act that he sponsored with Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota at that time.

I just want to pay tribute to one of the great careers of one of our great colleagues.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I appreciate very much my colleague yielding, and I rise also to pay tribute to one of the great Americans who provided a level of leadership in terms of public policy in this House like few have and most would want to be.

Gus was a wonderful friend over time, and his best roommate, a guy by the name of Frank Baca served us in and around the Vatican for some years, a wonderful guy as well. They lived a short distance from our house. My bride and I used to walk in the park and run into Gus often. The conversations were about the House first, briefly, but then from there the fact that the best thing about this place, if we will let it, it is a place where people of great difference can become very dear and warm friends.

Gus Hawkins was one of the great Americans to ever serve in the Congress. While he has passed, it is a tribute to America that we can have men and women in the House of Representatives of the style and class of Gus Hawkins.

I appreciate my colleague yielding.

Mr. STARK. I am glad to yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman, and I thank him for taking this time.

As one who had the honor of serving under Gus Hawkins when he was Chair of the Education and Labor Committee, I would just like to say to my colleague that this was a man of great vision for young people, for students, and for working families. I knew Gus long before I came to the Congress. I knew him as a young man when he and my father served together in the State legislature and they were engaged in the great civil rights battles at that time, the great battles over education and school quality. Gus died when he was 100, but he was thinking about things 120 years from now because that's the way he always was.

Gus was always looking over the horizon for new opportunities and new ideas and new ways of doing things. He was a great pioneer, but he was also a great visionary and he honored us with his service in this body.

I thank the gentleman for taking this time.

Mr. STARK. I would like to yield, if I may, to the gentlewoman from California who now represents the district that our friend Gus Hawkins represented.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much.

I would like to join with the head of our delegation, Representative STARK, and others, in paying tribute to an extraordinary man.

Gus Hawkins was one of the most profound public policymakers that ever served in this House. You heard PETE STARK allude to some of that legislation. That legislation has been good for America, it's been good for African Americans, it's been good for this House.

I am so proud that when Gus Hawkins decided that he was not going to stand for reelection in 1990, he called me and he said, ''I'm calling you first because I believe that you would do well representing this district by serving as a Member of Congress.'' And so I have tried to live up to his legacy.

Gus Hawkins, however, was very, very strong. He understood how government works. He was understated. He got along with everybody. He made a lot of friends in this House. And people responded to him in a terrific manner.

And so I am standing here in great sympathy and in pain, because I know that we wanted to get him up here one more time when we focused on the Hawkins-Humphrey Act with BARNEY FRANK in the Financial Services Committee. We were not able to do that. And so all that we can do now is honor him with this tribute and say, ''Rest well, Gus.''

I would request a moment of silence, please, before we resume our schedule.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will resume.

There was no objection.

CONDEMNING THE NOVEMBER 6, 2007, TERRORIST BOMBING IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 811, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 811.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 1089]

YEAS—418

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
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)
Broun (GA)
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
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
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 Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
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
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
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
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
Tsongas
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)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—14

Baker
Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Dicks
Doyle
Hastert
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Oberstar
Olver
Paul
Sessions
Weller

□ 1221

Mr. FEENEY changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately earlier today, November 14, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes and wish the Record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1086 on ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 813, providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, I would have voted ''nay.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1087 on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 812, Expressing sympathy and pledging to support the victims of the devastating flooding in southern Mexico, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1088 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3320, Support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews Act, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1089 on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 811, Condemning the November 6, 2007, terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga, I would have voted ''aye.''

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1429, IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 813, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1429)

to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SERRANO). Pursuant to House Resolution 813, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 9, 2007, at page H13462.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

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

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be here today to reauthorize Head Start. And I know that everyone agrees that it has been far too long since we have authorized the Head Start Act.

Head Start has served millions of our most vulnerable children and families well for 42 years. More recently, Early Head Start has done the same for infants and toddlers.

These are our country's premiere early childhood programs, Mr. Speaker. Head Start works, and this bill will make it work even better.

Nothing is more critical to a child's success than a great teacher, and this bill will ensure that by 2013, half of Head Start teachers nationwide will have bachelor's degrees. This will improve professional development so that teachers can keep up with the best practices in early childhood education.

The bill increases funding for Early Head Start so that children will receive comprehensive services during the most critical stages of brain development.

Mr. Speaker, our predecessors 42 years ago initiated Head Start even before we realized, as we do today, that early and regular stimulation was critical to the very physical development of the brain.

Head Start requires the Secretary to update early learning standards using the best science, and puts an end to the ill-advised National Reporting System.

It authorizes significant increases in resources so that we can expand access. And I want to work with our friends on the Appropriations Committee to do just that.

It enhances the quality of Head Start boards, while maintaining a shared governance structure that empowers parents.

And it is especially important to me that the bill prioritizes significant resources for Indian and migrant and seasonal Head Start programs, both to expand existing programs and create new programs, so that these children, whose communities face such terrific challenges, can grow up to help their communities overcome those challenges.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Senator KENNEDY, Senator DODD, Ranking Members MCKEON and CASTLE, and Senator ENZI and Senator ALEXANDER, my staff and theirs, and all the conferees and their staffs for their hard work. I especially want to thank Lloyd Horwich, who has worked so hard with me to produce this bill.

We do our best work in this Congress when we work in a bipartisan way, and we do our best work, especially in education, when we work in a bipartisan way. It's been my pleasure through the years to have the advantage of working with Mr. MCKEON from California. We've grown to really commit ourselves to education and we trust one another and like one another, which is very important.

I was privileged, Mr. Speaker, to introduce this bill in March with Chairman MILLER, Governor CASTLE, Mr. MCKEON and many others, and look forward to its becoming law very soon.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Since 1965, the Head Start program has been instrumental in our efforts to close the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers. This program provides health, developmental and educational services to low-income and at-risk children before they enroll in school in order to help close the readiness gap. Head Start helps establish a foundation for these children's future success.

This conference report is the product of a bipartisan collaboration and compromise. I'd like to thank Chairman MILLER, along with Mr. CASTLE and Mr. KILDEE. And I appreciate Mr. KILDEE's words, and I appreciate the opportunity I've had to get to know him and work with him closely over the years. I thank them for their work to strengthen and improve Head Start.

I'd also like to acknowledge the staff on both sides for their instrumental role in developing this legislation. Their work was critical to producing such a strong, widely supported measure. On my staff, I'd like to recognize Kirsten Duncan, along with Susan Ross and James Bergeron, for their tireless efforts on this legislation.

Studies have shown that children enrolled in Head Start do make some progress. We also know that even greater results are possible.

With this in mind, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act will strengthen Head Start's academic standards by emphasizing cognitive development and the results of scientifically valid research in topics critical to children's school readiness. The conference report will improve teacher quality by ensuring a greater number of Head Start teachers have degrees and are adequately trained in early childhood development, particularly in teaching the fundamentals.

Despite the many successes of the Head Start program, it's reputation has, unfortunately, been marred in recent years by instances of financial abuse and mismanagement. In communities across the country, we've heard reports of taxpayer dollars being squandered. A March 2005 report from the Government Accountability Office warned the financial control system in the Head Start program is flawed and failing to prevent multimillion dollar financial abuses that cheat poor children, taxpayers and law-abiding Head Start operators.

This conference report builds on efforts of Republicans in the 109th Congress to address weaknesses in the Head Start financial control system in order to better protect taxpayers and ensure funds are being used to help prepare disadvantaged children for school.

I'm particularly pleased that the conference report includes strong protections to ensure Head Start dollars are not used to pay excessive salaries to program executives. The House voted unanimously last week to instruct conferees to include clear, unambiguous protections in this area. Thanks to that vote, we were able to visit the negotiations and agree to even stronger language.

□ 1230

Mr. Speaker, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act is a solid reauthorization bill built on bipartisan collaboration. Head Start is a good program capable of achieving even greater results, and the bill before us will help achieve that goal.

I support passage of this conference report so we can send the bill to the President.

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH).

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, we must acknowledge that America's continued success will not be ensured unless we equip the leaders of tomorrow with the tools they need today. This means cultivating not just the most privileged and brightest students but the students who grow up with disadvantages. We must nurture the potential of all our children from the very beginning of their lives. We don't have one mind to waste or one citizen to waste. We need everyone to have the greatest ability and preparation to live productive, meaningful lives in our society.

For a million students, Head Start is the answer. For those who work hard but remain stuck just above the poverty level, the reauthorization of this program will give their children a chance to soar. I am proud to say that just as we did by increasing the minimum wage, doubling college assistance, and providing health care to uninsured children, this Congress continues to put working families first.

With nine in 10 Americans reporting no increase in income the last 6 years, cynicism has replaced hope for too many. We are in a position to restore faith in the future. And as we pass the

reins of our Nation to future generations, we must invest in that future by guaranteeing every child a chance to succeed.

I know that in my hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, thousands and thousands of young children have gotten adequate preparation for schooling that they might not otherwise have gotten because of the wonderful training they received in Head Start. It is not just a head start; it is a very strong foundation to success in education and success in whatever careers our young children may select.

So I'm proud to stand here in the House of Representatives, the people's House, and urge my colleagues to support a program which will help ensure that the people we represent are able to enjoy the prosperity and the happiness that our Founding Fathers hoped they would have.

With that, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Head Start and begin restoring faith in the future for millions of American families.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy now to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), the ranking member on the subcommittee and at the same time thank him for the key role he played in getting this legislation to this point.

Mr. CASTLE. I thank the distinguished gentleman from California for yielding and for his work on this legislation.

I do rise to ask my colleague to support this bipartisan conference report before us today. Like almost every other Member of this body, I believe strongly in the benefits of this program. I trust that the conference report on H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act, will improve Head Start by emphasizing that every child, regardless of his or her economic status, should have the best possible chance to succeed.

As Mr. MCKEON stated, this report is a byproduct of bipartisan collaboration and compromise. I would also like to thank Chairman MILLER, along with Mr. KILDEE and Mr. MCKEON, as well as the committee staff for their work on Head Start. I see Ms. WOOLSEY in the room. I have worked with her on this issue before, too, and thank her.

This legislation builds upon efforts made in the past several Congresses to address weaknesses in the Head Start program and improves upon language contained in the bill to help make the program even stronger. Specifically, this report preserves and enhances the vital role of parents in ensuring the success of Head Start by establishing both a governing body and a policy council, each with specific detailed responsibilities. This conference report also maintains the current income eligibility requirement to provide services to those who need them the most. Additionally, this legislation ensures that curriculum and other materials used in Head Start classrooms are based on the principles of scientific research and scientifically valid research. Equally important, this conference agreement ensures that a greater number of Head Start teachers are adequately trained and educated in early childhood development, and that applies to Early Head Start as well. Finally, consistent with the motion to instruct I introduced last week, this conference agreement limits the compensation of a Head Start employee to Executive Level II, that of an Assistant Secretary, currently $168,000.

Mr. Speaker, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act builds upon the success of the Head Start program and will assist in having the program achieve even greater results. I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this conference report.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding and I also want to commend him for introducing this legislation, H.R. 1429, the Head Start for School Readiness Act.

I applaud the leaders in both Chambers for crafting such a strong bill that builds on the accomplishments of Head Start and promotes the success of young children. It is clear from this product that you and your staffs have toiled long and hard to strengthen the quality of the Head Start program, and I say to you, well done.

Foremost, let me thank you for maintaining the role of parents in governing Head Start. For more than 40 years, one of the most unique and important aspects of the Head Start program has been its emphasis on parental involvement. I worked actively with Mr. SOUDER and Mr. PAYNE, along with 88 other Members of the House, to advocate for maintaining this hallmark of equal responsibility for parents in governing Head Start.

I am also pleased that the bill strikes a balance between the House and Senate versions on the issue of program eligibility. In high cost-of-living areas such as Chicago, low-income families can lose access to this critical child development program not due to lack of need but because we fail to adequately consider the cost of living when calculating the poverty level. The conference report grants local programs flexibility in opening the eligibility while also requiring them to demonstrate the need.

I am especially grateful that the final report includes so many issues near and dear to me, such as recruiting minority male teachers, emphasizing children's social and emotional well-being, recognition of the expanding role of grandparents and kinship caregivers in children's lives, incorporating the best practices from the field of home visitation into the Early Head Start program, and increasing funds for salaries and education for Head Start teachers.

Finally, in addition, I am very pleased that this bipartisan bill preserves the anti-discrimination history of Head Start advocated so ardently by the Head Start and religious communities. Federal funds are not meant to support discrimination of any type, and I applaud the Members on both sides for maintaining this fundamental commitment to justice and fairness.

This bill expands access, improves teacher quality, expands accountability, and strengthens school readiness. I am proud to be a member of the Education Committee and proud to serve in a Congress that will pass this bill into law.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes at this time to the gentleman from Indiana, a member of the committee (Mr. SOUDER).

Mr. SOUDER. I thank our distinguished ranking member.

I am very supportive of this bill, but I want to share some vague uncomfortability with what I think is potentially happening here in Head Start, and I think it's very important to clarify for this administration and for future administrations what this bill is intended to do and not intended to do.

From the time the Republicans took over in Congress, I remember then Subcommittee Chairman Frank Riggs had a number of hearings talking about the lack of an academic focus to Head Start. There was a big debate about what the original role was, but it was supposed to certainly prepare kids who didn't have the same opportunities for their ability to be prepared when they started school.

But there's a reason that Head Start, while it was in the old Department of HEW, didn't move with the Department of Education and stayed with HHS. If it was intended to be merely another education program run by educational bureaucrats, run the same way that every other education program was run, it would be over in the Department of Education. It wouldn't have been a grassroots Head Start program with parent councils that voted and participated and ran it. It would have been part of a pre-K program or a kindergarten program run by the public schools. Increasingly, we see this pressure where the public schools are trying to take over the Head Start program.

The original origins of the Head Start movement came out of the sixties. Saul Alinsky was an organizer in Chicago. The populist movement and the community action organizations led to a wave of saying, we need programs where local low-income groups are empowered to make their own decisions. What this meant many times was it didn't exactly meet the professional goals or standards of where the public schools thought it should be, necessarily where the professionals in Washington thought it should be, but they were engaged at the community level, participating in a way that we have tried to reach in kindergarten and public schools forever. We can't get

low-income parents engaged. It's one of the biggest challenges we have. Yet in the Head Start program, they were engaged all over the country, whether it was rural low income, urban low income. And then when you talk to those parents, you say, What's it like when you go to school? Well, they don't really want us at the public school. There they want us to do fundraisers or they want us to come to back-to-school night. But participating in the governance, participating in the organizations was different.

Now, we had wide support in this body, 91 Members, including Mr. DAVIS and Congresswomen LORETTA SANCHEZ and MAXINE WATERS, myself and RIC KELLER and many conservatives on the right, who share the concept of empowerment. None of us want malfeasance in office or funding problems, people who aren't accounting. All of us would like to see more professional development. All of us would like to see quantified goals. But in this drift towards trying to use the word ''professional'' all the time, we need to make sure that that doesn't lead to an exclusionary concept that basically says, okay, now really the white middle class is going to take over and run this program like we would like it run.

The fact is when you get groups of parents and give them votes, they're going to make some judgment mistakes. We need to have accountability. I am for accountability. We need to have measurement. We need to empower those people. But this can't be a typical takeover project, because I believe that the major reason Head Start has, in fact, worked in communities across the country is it's engaged with the people at the grassroots level. And sometimes when we use some of the language here, what we really mean is we're going to take it away from these people because they're not quite as skilled and that we don't quite trust their judgments as much.

Now, I appreciate that there was a strong compromise to the side of parents in the conference committee, that, in fact, the language keeping the voting powers to the parents is still there. And it still says that in any major decision, they get a vote. It still says that when there is a conflict with the other people who are governing this, it has to be resolved. There was an additional clause added that seemed to potentially demean the parent councils, where it says ''meaningful consultation and collaboration.'' Now, that was originally going to replace the vote just like we saw in HIDTAs, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas, where we tried to have the Federal Government, initially in the proposal of the Bush administration, take voting power away from sheriffs and local police chiefs and use the same words ''meaningful consultation and collaboration.'' That is usually a code word for we're going to pat you on the head and invite you to an occasional meeting but not put you in the decision power.

What's great about this bill is we left the voting power there and no future administration or this one should mistake that the parents still have the voting power. Any meaningful decision, they have a right to have a vote, and there has to be a resolution with the policy councils. This additional language that was Senate language is supplemental and did not alter the policy council. Of course, parent councils should be a meaningful consultation and collaboration, not just as a ''term'' but real meaningful consultation. They should also have the vote.

I want to thank the leadership on the Democratic side and the Republican side in the House and Senate in leaving the real vote to parents. It was a huge victory, a grassroots, bipartisan, liberal-conservative victory that should stand and hopefully will not be undone by administrative interpretation.

□ 1245

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start Act.

I represent part of Suffolk County, New York, where over 20 Head Start and three Early Head Start centers have been serving the community since 1966. I am also proud to say that my wife's first teaching job was as a Head Start teacher, and that she remains today an early childhood teacher.

Parents, teachers, and many of my colleagues can all agree that Head Start is one of our Nation's most prominent and successful early education programs. This bill continues to build on Head Start's success by ensuring that kids are prepared for school, by improving teacher and classroom quality, strengthening the focus on school readiness, increasing accountability, and boosting coordination.

Research has found that children who attend Head Start enter school better prepared than their low-income peers who do not attend the program, and that children who do attend Head Start make significant learning gains.

If we are serious about achieving the goals set forth by NCLB, then passing Head Start reauthorization is a down payment on achieving these goals.

I was proud to offer an amendment during the Education and Labor Committee's consideration of this bill to allow Head Start programs to use up to 10 percent of their quality improvement funds for transportation costs. This amendment was in response to concerns brought to me by my constituents, as many Head Start programs are being forced to choose between providing transportation to children or sacrificing the quality of their program. This is a decision that no Head Start program should have to make.

With this amendment, and with so many other worthwhile improvements to Head Start, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this balanced reauthorization for the benefit of our children and future generations of Americans.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time we have left, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 19 minutes. The gentleman from Michigan has 18½ minutes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield now 3 minutes to the gentlelady from California, a member of the committee and a very active worker on this bill, Ms. WOOLSEY.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I want to thank Chairman KILDEE and Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON, who was the Chair when we were working on this, and Ranking Member CASTLE for a bipartisan success. We can be proud of ourselves today.

Anyone who has been around small children knows that they're sponges for information, they just sop it up if you make it available to them. And it's widely accepted that early childhood education is absolutely critical to their development and directly tied to their success when they get into school, elementary school, and their ongoing future. So getting children in a structured classroom environment earlier in their young lives provides a critical window of opportunity.

Head Start provides our Nation's poorest children with a quality start that puts them on a level playing field with others when they start elementary school. No matter where a child comes from or what his or her background is, Head Start provides an equal opportunity to succeed by starting with a quality early childhood education. That's why I'm glad I'm here today as we authorize Head Start, reaffirming our commitment to this valuable program.

This bill expands access to Head Start, it improves teacher and classroom quality, and it strengthens the services children and their families receive when they enroll in the program.

The administration, however, can and should do better when it comes to funding. Too many eligible children are still denied an opportunity to participate in a Head Start program because there isn't enough funds. Well, if this administration wasn't spending $500 billion in Iraq, we would have the necessary resources to increase funding to allow for program improvement to give every child the Head Start experience and to increase teacher quality and salaries. It just depends on where we put our priorities.

Children are 25 percent of our population, Mr. Speaker, but they are 100 percent of our future. We must provide them with the best possible beginning to their lives. So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to increase our Nation's commitment to education for all of our children and to ensure that Head Start remains the successful experience that it is.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio, the Republican leader, former chairman of our committee, Mr. BOEHNER.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, let me thank Mr. MCKEON for yielding time and take a moment to congratulate Mr. MILLER and Mr. KILDEE, Mr. MCKEON and Mr. CASTLE, the two Republican rankers on the committee, for a job well done.

We have been at this reauthorization for a number of years, and I think that the work that is represented in this reauthorization of Head Start is very important for our Nation's children.

Those of us who have worked in the area of education for a long time know that for low-income children, having some type of early childhood development is critically important to their success. Head Start is among a number of programs, both public and private, that are out there that supply this type of early childhood development for these children. The reforms that are included in this bill I think are critically important so that Head Start can really be all that many of us want it to be.

There are some tremendous Head Start programs around the country, I have visited a number of them, but there are also some programs that don't fulfill the promise that we're making to parents and to their children of what this program could be.

We all know that if we're serious about educating all of America's kids, we will never get there unless we find a way to help low-income children get the development they need that many of us take for granted, things that happen in our homes, for those who have means, things that happen in our communities that these children are not exposed to. And so to make sure that they do have an equal chance to get a good education, that early childhood development for these 3- and 4-year-olds is very, very important.

I do want to congratulate my colleagues for the bipartisan way this bill has come together. This is a great example of what Congress can do in a bipartisan way when it chooses to.

I have been on the floor a lot this year, being critical of the fact that there was some partisan bill on the floor of the House that was going nowhere. But here is an example of Members on both sides of the aisle working together for the interests of America's low-income kids, and I just wanted to come to the floor and say, job well done.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I appreciate the very kind words of the Republican leader and my former Chair on this committee. His work through the years on this bill has been very, very helpful.

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

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

I am pleased to be here in support of a conference report that will make Head Start even stronger. This program serves nearly 1 million underprivileged children and eases the divide between the haves and the have-nots when it comes to preparing them for kindergarten. The bipartisan support we've seen today should lend all of us confidence that the program will remain on a solid foundation for generations to come.

By reauthorizing Head Start, we're going to strengthen academic standards by emphasizing cognitive development using scientifically valid research, improve teacher quality by ensuring more Head Start teachers have degrees and are adequately trained in early childhood development, increase financial disclosure requirements by Head Start operators as custodians of Federal Head Start grants, and require local governance boards to actively oversee grantees. These are commonsense reforms that I wholeheartedly support.

I would like to join the Republican leader and my other colleagues who have spoken here today in commenting on the bipartisanship with which this bill was brought to this point. It's one that the President will sign. It's one that will bring good reforms to a good program.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this conference report.

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Mr. MCKEON, Mr. CASTLE, and all those on the other side of the aisle who have worked so hard on this bill to produce a very good bill. I also want to thank Ruth Friedman, with Chairman MILLER, for her tireless work on this bill over the last 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, America can watch this Congress at work today on this bill, Head Start, and feel good about its Congress, and that's very important. This process in working on Head Start has shown Congress at its best, and I think we owe that to the American people. And we can feel a certain pride in having demonstrated to the American people what Congress can do. This is one of our better days, one of our better bills, and it's been a process that we've enjoyed. We've had differences. We resolved those differences. We produced a very good bill.

And people do make a difference. People in this Congress make a difference. And I want to especially, again, commend my friend, my colleague, Mr. MCKEON from California, who has worked tirelessly on this bill. This bill is better because of his input.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Improving Head Start Act of 2007 Conference Report.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson laid out his domestic agenda, one that made Americans reevaluate what it means to be a Great Society. We learned much from that time in our Nation's rich history: that we must all fight together for civil rights, for equality, for peace and security, against poverty, and for future generations.

One year later, the Head Start program began as a product of Lyndon Johnson's vision of a Great Society. Now, over 40 years later, Head Start is truly one of our Nation's most successful programs.

Head Start takes a holistic approach to ensuring that our country's most at-risk children are educated and healthy. Kids who are vibrant and in school are put on a path to success. The program provides grants to local public and private agencies to offer comprehensive child development services to disadvantaged children and families.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Chairman KILDEE and all of the conferees for their important work on this conference agreement.

I am glad to see that this agreement authorizes 7.35 billion dollars for the program. Unfortunately, a number of residents in my hometown of Sacramento are eligible for enrollment in Head Start, but are currently on a waiting list because the program does not have enough funds. This funding authorization will help correct this urgent problem. It will help put Head Start back on track to ensuring that all eligible children will be able to participate in the program.

Also important is the expansion of the Early Head Start program. This program serves low-income youth from birth to age 3. It puts special focus on helping preschoolers develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. It recognizes that starting our children's education early is crucial to their long-term achievement.

The Conference Report also includes an increase in income eligibility. This is especially important in California due to my State's high cost-of-living. I want to thank the conferees for recognizing the growing needs in communities across the Nation by increasing income eligibility.

Study after study confirms that early education is the key to success later in life. And I am glad that Leadership has made educating our children a priority. With passage of this bill today, the 110th Congress indeed becomes the Children's Congress.

Mr. Speaker, no child should be without early education. The Head Start program provides access to education for all of our children, regardless of their parents' economic status.

As Lyndon Johnson said, "The purpose of protecting the life of our Nation and preserving the liberty of our citizens is to pursue the happiness of our people. Our success in that pursuit is the test of our success as a Nation."

I believe that reauthorizing the Head Start program reaffirms our commitment to the Great Society that Lyndon Johnson envisioned. I am proud to support the rule and the Head Start Improvement Act.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, more than 40 years ago, we recognized that poverty was robbing millions of children of the opportunity to do well in school and succeed in life.

As a nation, we made a decision to help poor children reach school age ready to succeed by creating the Head Start early childhood program.

In the last four decades, it has helped nearly 25 million children by providing them with high-quality, comprehensive education, health, and nutrition services.

Head Start remains a cornerstone in this country's efforts to help all children learn, to

combat poverty, and to provide all Americans with the opportunity to meet their fullest potential.

We know that Head Start works. Research shows that not only do Head Start students make important educational gains while they attend the program, they also continue to gain ground after they leave Head Start.

Research shows that by the end of kindergarten, Head Start graduates are ''essentially at national norms in early reading and writing'' and have further narrowed the achievement gap in vocabulary, general knowledge and early math.

In other words, Head Start is doing what we expect and demand that it should do—help prepare children to succeed in school and in life.

We also know that there are ways we can improve Head Start.

That is why I am so pleased to be here today with a bipartisan conference report to reauthorize and reinvigorate Head Start.

This bipartisan legislation improves teacher and classroom quality, expands access to Head Start for more children, improves comprehensive services that help children and their families, and ensures that taxpayer dollars only fund Head Start centers that are well-run and high quality.

First, this legislation builds on Head Start's success by integrating the best available science on child development to inform classroom instruction.

Each year we learn more and more about how children's brains develop. This legislation ensures that we improve teacher quality and update classroom practices based on what the research tells us.

It requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to re-evaluate and update early learning standards and use of assessments with the best available science, including a forthcoming study from the National Academy of Sciences.

And it terminates further use of an inappropriate and ineffective testing regime for 4-year-olds. This wasteful testing regime cost taxpayers over $25 million dollars, it took up valuable classroom time and hasn't been useful for improving program quality.

Of course, Head Start is much more than an educational program. Head Start provides health, nutrition and parent education services in addition to a strong educational curriculum.

The conference report recognizes this by also strengthening Head Start's role in meeting these important needs of the children it serves.

This legislation takes important steps to ensure that Head Start centers are well-run and effectively managed. This will ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and that every Head Start center is high quality.

The report allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to more quickly take funding away from bad programs. It requires that new and detailed fiscal management protocols be included in program reviews.

Finally, the legislation also expands access to Head Start in many important ways.

Expansion of Early Head Start is prioritized so more infants and toddlers can attend Head Start during the years their brains are growing the fastest.

And expansion of Migrant and Indian programs is prioritized so more of these children can have access to this important program.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I'd like to take a minute to thank Congressman MCKEON, Chairman KILDEE, Congressman CASTLE, Chairman KENNEDY, Senator ENZI, Senator DODD, and Senator ALEXANDER for their hard work in getting us to this point.

I'd also like to thank the staff for their work and expertise.

In particular, I'd like to thank Liz King and Jean Harmann with Legislative Counsel; Lloyd Horwich with Mr. KILDEE; James Bergeron, Susan Ross, Kirsten Duncan, and Jessica Gross with Mr. MCKEON and Mr. CASTLE; Roberto Rodriguez and David Johns with Senator KENNEDY; Catherine Hildum with Senator DODD; Lindsay Hunsicker and Beth Buehlmann with Senator ENZI; David Cleary and Sara Rittling with Senator ALEXANDER; and from my own staff—Lamont Ivey, Molly Carter, Kate Scully, Stephanie Moore, and Ruth Friedman.

This bill will build on Head Start's past successes to create an even stronger program to provide Head Start children with a better future.

I am pleased that we are about to send this legislation to the President for his signature.

I thank my colleagues for their efforts.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Head Start conference report and I thank Representatives MCKEON, CASTLE, MILLER and KILDEE for their work on producing an agreement with the Senate.

For several years, I have worked to improve Head Start's academic and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start provisions.

For thousands of children, Head Start serves as their first formal learning experience. Three- and four-year-olds are open to learning about the world around them, and they should be presented with a wide range of early academic concepts. I am very pleased that this conference agreement includes provisions to ensure that these children are exposed to math and science. I certainly do not intend for Head Start to teach ''rocket science,'' but rather for its teachers to equip Head Start preschoolers with the extremely basic concepts of math and science. Perhaps it will spark the imagination of some kids, and lay the foundation for them to become rocket scientists many years later.

With regard to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, I joined with Representatives GRIJALVA, HINOJOSA and SANCHEZ in securing a 5 percent funding floor for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start in the House version of the bill. For far too long, funding for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start has lacked parity with other Head Start programs. I am disappointed that the conference report abandoned the House- and Senate-passed 5 percent floor, but I recognize the difficulty conferees had in finding a workable formula. I hope that Members will join me in supporting funding for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start in the future since it is a sorely needed program for workers of our fields and their children.

I urge Members to support the conference report.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report.

Let me start by commending the chairman of the subcommittee, the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, Mr. KILDEE, and the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from California, Mr. MILLER for their work on this bill. I offer my thanks to the House and Senate conferees for bringing forth this important piece of legislation today.

In 1965, with a great deal of hard work, Head Start was created. It soon became a ''legislative Lamborghini'' of social programs, going from 0 to 561,000 thousand participants in only a few months. In the 42 years since its inception, Head Start has become the educational foundation for more than 20 million American children.

Education serves as both a ladder of opportunity and an investment in our future. Our Nation's security, economy, and position in the world all depend on the success of our education system. We must take advantage of this opportunity to fund our future.

Head Start and Early Head Start are linchpins in the effort to prepare our country's most disadvantaged children to succeed in school and life. Many studies indicate that children enrolled in Head Start make significant progress in closing the readiness gap to their more advantaged peers as they enter kindergarten.

The congressionally mandated impact study recently published its results, which noted that after less than 1 year in the program, children in Head Start had narrowed the readiness gap by 45 percent in reading skills and 28 percent in writing skills. This momentum continues well beyond the ages of 3, 4, and 5, as another large academic study has noted that Head Start graduates continue to mount academic gains well after leaving the program.

The bill we see before us today helps to raise the academic standards of American children and ensures that every child in our country has an equal opportunity to a high quality education. It aims to improve teacher quality by requiring a greater number of Head Start teachers to have a bachelor's degree and be adequately trained in early childhood development. This is clearly good news for the children that will be participating in Head Start in the future.

On multiple occasions, the President has advocated that all 3- and 4-year-old participants in Head Start should take standardized tests to assess their improvement. For President Bush, No Child Left Behind means no child left untested. I am happy that this conference report terminates the further use of the National Reporting System, an inappropriate, ineffective, and expensive testing regime.

This conference report notes that Head Start is not without the opportunity for evaluation, however, and there is strengthened program accountability at the Federal, regional, and local levels included in the legislation. The report also requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to initiate classroom evaluations, thereby ensuring optimal teacher-child interactions.

We have known for some time that when children are not provided high-quality day care and early childhood services, once in school, their academic achievement and limited language proficiencies become cumulatively worse over time, over grade levels, and across all subject areas. By passing this conference report, we build on the past 42 years of success for this program and help ensure that both Head Start children as well as our Nation as a whole have a brighter tomorrow.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I supported this measure as a member of the conference committee that drafted the final version of the

bill. I'm proud to have served on the committee of House and Senate leaders that negotiated the final version of this legislation. This important bill will help prepare Louisiana's neediest children for kindergarten by improving their access to medical, nutritional, and educational services.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Head Start is a critical part of this country's effort to combat the effects of poverty and ensure that all of our children have the opportunity and skills they need to thrive.

Since its creation in 1965, it has proven to be our most valuable school readiness program in the history of this country—especially, now that we know more about the importance of early-childhood education.

Study after study demonstrates that by age 6, a child's capacity to learn is largely formed, and time after time, we have seen reports that prove students who attend Head Start perform better than those who don't.

By doing this, Head Start is helping to close the achievement gap between students of differing socio-economic status across our country, and helping the children in our communities by providing opportunities that they might not otherwise have.

Additionally, people often forget the wonderful things that this program does for the parents.

The key to Head Start's approach is its level of actively involving parents and the community in all aspects of the program—and this reauthorization would further this goal.

Parents are a child's first teachers, and Head Start helps build and foster a person's parenting skills in various ways.

Parents are also urged to improve their literacy skills, obtain adult basic education, and make their homes a place where reading is part of everyday life.

Head Start also tackles a wide range of poverty issues through its family and community partnerships, including: substance abuse, violence, HIV, homelessness, single-parent households, inadequate child care, unemployment, and numerous other stressors that challenge families' resources.

This program is clearly instrumental to our country.

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 will reinvigorate Head Start and help more children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.

I urge my colleagues to support this report.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act, to strengthen and expand Head Start programs across the country.

Last Spring, we held a National Summit on America's Children here at the Capitol. We heard from leading experts on child development and neuroscience, who emphasized the vital importance of early childhood education. Early interventions can dramatically increase a child's chances for future success.

Head Start is based on this idea and it works. For more than 40 years, it has been helping to close the achievement gap and teach our children that they can succeed, regardless of background or family income. More than 20 million children and families have benefited from its services. With this bill today, we will open the door to more children to enter both Head Start and Early Head Start and will ensure that they are better prepared for kindergarten and elementary school.

Today's bill also recognizes the importance of early childhood educators, targeting new funding to improve teacher salaries and professional development. It ensures that teachers are highly qualified and able to meet the needs of children with disabilities and improves accountability for Head Start programs.

I also urge my colleagues to support the funding necessary to continue Head Start's success. Last week, we sent the President a bill increasing Head Start funding by 2.2 percent to simply help it keep pace with inflation. The President vetoed this funding. I encourage my colleagues to vote to override the President's veto to prevent Head Start program closures and ensure that children get the services they were promised.

I thank Chairman MILLER, Chairman KILDEE, and the Conference Committee for putting together this bipartisan piece of legislation, and urge its passage today.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report on H.R. 1429, the Head Start for School Readiness Act.

As a member of the Education and Workforce Committee for 6 years, I was pleased to have the opportunity to work on this important issue. While visiting Head Start centers in the Fourth District, I was able to see firsthand the difference Head Start makes to children and families. In addition, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis published a study in 2004 showing that investment in early education has a rate of return of 12 percent. Even with all the evidence showing the social, educational and economic value of this program, the Republican-controlled Congress was unable to pass an acceptable bill.

Thanks to the hard work of Chairman MILLER and Speaker PELOSI, the bill before us today is a bipartisan, bicameral agreement that does what earlier reauthorization bills did not—it focuses on preparing children for school. This agreement includes an increased emphasis on teacher quality and compensation, maintains parent involvement in the governing structure of Head Start, and increases coordination with other early childhood programs. It also maintains Head Start's commitment to comprehensive services and places greater emphasis on identification of child and family mental health needs.

H.R. 1429 terminates the inappropriate high stakes testing system for Head Start students implemented by the Bush Administration and replaces it with best practices for early learning. It also strengthens monitoring of Head Start programs, allows quicker action against failing or fraudulent programs and rejects a proposal to allow discrimination in hiring with Head Start funds.

Congress still faces the critical issue of providing enough resources to Head Start to serve all the children who are eligible to participate. The Head Start for School Readiness Act authorizes increased funding, as well as some flexibility in funding, to allow more children to access this important education. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue to work towards improving our investment in children, families and communities.

I am pleased to vote in support of H.R. 1429 because this bill will make a real difference in the lives of children and families, and for our economy. I urge all my colleagues to support this investment in our future.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report on H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act. This bipartisan legislation provides services to one of our most vulnerable populations—children from low-income families. By passing this measure today, over 900,000 disadvantaged children ages 3 to 5—including over 3,000 in Rhode Island—will have access to health services, the necessary tools to enter kindergarten, and a foundation for their success later in life.

Studies show that low-income children often lack the richness of books in the home, proper nutrition, or access to a continuum of health services. For over 40 years, Head Start has provided comprehensive early childhood development services to low-income children, with strong emphasis on the involvement of families and the local community. H.R. 1429 would increase funding for quality improvements to Head Start and requires that by 2013 at least half of Head Start teachers nationwide have at least a baccalaureate degree in early childhood education.

Today, half of the children enrolled in Head Start are from working poor families. For this reason, I am pleased that this conference agreement increases the income eligibility to 130 percent of the poverty level so that families struggling with work and childcare will have another option. I also believe that stopping the program's National Reporting System is essential until proper testing methods for these young children are carefully developed. H.R. 1429 also establishes a set of procedures to improve accountability in the Head Start program, which will lead to improvements for all those served by Head Start.

Earlier in the year, H.R. 1429 passed both the House and the Senate with overwhelming support. I am proud that the 110th Congress is on the verge of passing this conference report after nearly a decade of failing to reauthorize Head Start. For all the children who benefit from this program, I look forward to sending this bill to the President for his signature.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report for H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act. Since 1965, Head Start has provided 22 million American children with the education and health and social services to lead productive lives. It is the most successful school readiness program in the Nation and has always enjoyed bipartisan support.

Today, we are continuing this tradition by passing strong bipartisan legislation to reauthorize this vital program. In fact, this legislation marks the first time in almost a decade that Congress has reauthorized Head Start.

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act will invest in America's future by providing children and their teachers with the resources they need to take advantage of the opportunities that the Head Start program has offered America's youth for over 40 years.

In addition to providing additional resources for increasing teachers' salaries and State Advisory Councils, this reauthorization will expand the reach of both Head Start and Early Head Start by providing greater funding and flexibility. The increases in funding will enable tens of thousands more children to have access to the program. H.R. 1429 will also improve Head Start by providing the Secretary of Health and Human Services and local teams

with tools to hold teachers and programs accountable and requires the implementation of best practices for family service workers. Head Start has served America's children well since 1965, and this legislation will expand the reach and ability of this program to positively impact lives across the country.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER for his dedication to Head Start and to education in general. Head Start is an investment in America's future. Thanks to Head Start, we can give our children the best start possible so they can lead productive lives and grow up to be outstanding citizens. I am proud to support these efforts to continue the legacy of Head Start, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 1429.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support the Conference Report on H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. This bipartisan legislation takes significant steps to strengthen the Head Start program so that children will be better prepared and ready to succeed when they begin kindergarten. H.R. 1429 increases funds targeted at improving teacher quality and provides additional support for the program's extensive monitoring process and the comprehensive services offered to the students' families. In addition, it expands access to Head Start for more children, increases coordination efforts with State and local programs, and eliminates any further development of the controversial and ineffective National Reporting System.

For over 40 years, the Head Start program has worked to break the cycle of poverty by providing access to early childhood education for low-income children and families. In the House budget for FY 2008, the State of Texas is estimated to receive approximately $490 million in Head Start funding which will go towards providing services for over 68,000 students. Since it first began in 1965, the program has served more than 20 million children, and it continues to play a major role in our Nation's efforts to close the achievement gap, reduce poverty, and ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to succeed.

Studies have shown that students with a high quality pre-Kindergarten education enjoy greater success in academics as well as their overall lives. The Head Start program goes a long way in addressing educational inequity by aiding low income children in their social and cognitive development. I am a firm supporter of this program and the lifelong benefits it provides. It is only by addressing this critical need that we will be able to ensure a better future for all our Nation's children.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, Head Start has been the premiere early childhood education program in the United States since 1965. Since that time, it has benefited 20 million children and families and has become one of the cornerstones of this country's efforts to close the achievement gap, combat poverty, and provide all Americans with the opportunity to thrive. By passing the conference report to H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, we will reinvigorate Head Start and help more children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.

The fact is that quality education and early engagement, from both parents and teachers, are essential for our kids' success. Recent findings from the congressionally mandated impact study found that after less than 1 year, Head Start narrowed the achievement gap by 45 percent in pre-reading skills and 28 percent in prewriting skills. Another large study found that Head Start graduates continue to gain ground after they leave the program. Furthermore, Head Start graduates are less likely to need special education services, to be left back a grade or to get into trouble with the law. They are more likely to go on to college and to have professional careers.

This bipartisan reauthorization improves teacher and classroom quality, strengthens Head Start's focus on school readiness, expands access to Head Start for more children, ensures that centers are well-run, boosts coordination between Head Start and State and local programs, and improves comprehensive services that help children by helping their families.

I commend and thank Congressmen KILDEE, CASTLE, and Chairman MILLER for their leadership on this critical legislation. Head Start has proven its self as a strong and effective program. The growth and success of millions of American children and families is living proof. We have a responsibility to embrace their success, support it, and strengthen it for years to come. I know that my colleagues will join me in sending this critical reauthorization to ensure the Head Start program meets its full potential.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as the only former State superintendent of schools serving in Congress, I have devoted my life to the well-being and development of children, and I strongly support Head Start. I rise in support of H.R. 1429, the Head Start for School Readiness Act.

In the global economy of the 21st century, lifelong learning is the pathway to the American Dream, and for many of our Nation's children, learning begins with Head Start. Over 20,000 children in North Carolina get prepared for school in Head Start or Early Head Start.

This act takes and builds on the success of Head Start, expanding and enhancing this fundamental initiative that has served over 20 million children and families nationwide since 1965. H.R. 1429 extends the benefits of Head Start to more of our Nation's low-income children, and raises the bar so that we can attract highly qualified Head Start providers through performance accountability, greater compensation, and higher standards.

Research continues to show that the first few years of a child's life are critical to a child's mental development: their brains grow exponentially and learning patterns are set. We must invest in these youngsters so that they may take full advantage of one of the premier education systems in the world by ensuring their school-readiness by age 5. Head Start successfully provides the stepping stones to lifelong learning.

This act provides the parents and children of our country an additional 4 years of this vital service, guaranteeing a 20 percent increase in funding by 2012. Education is the best investment we can make for our children, grandchildren, country, and world.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1429 updates, improves, and expands the successful services of Head Start. I commend Chairman MILLER for his leadership on this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to pass it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KILDEE. 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, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the conference report will be followed by 5-minute votes on motions to suspend the rules with regard to H.R. 3845 and H.R. 719.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 36, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 1090]

YEAS—381

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
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
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Drake
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
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
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
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
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nunes
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
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
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—36

Akin
Barrett (SC)
Broun (GA)
Burton (IN)
Campbell (CA)
Coble
Culberson
Doolittle
Duncan
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Hensarling
Inglis (SC)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Lamborn
Mack
Marchant
McHenry
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Neugebauer
Pence
Poe
Price (GA)
Rohrabacher
Royce
Sali
Shadegg
Stearns
Tancredo
Walberg
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland

NOT VOTING—15

Boustany
Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Mitchell
Oberstar
Paul
Platts
Roybal-Allard
Sessions
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 5 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1317

Messrs. POE and HENSARLING changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the conference report 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. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1090, I was inadvertently absent from the floor at the time the Head Start for School Readiness Act [H.R. 1429] was voted. Had I been present, I would have vote in favor of said Act.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during rollcall vote No. 1090 on H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start Act. I supported this measure as a member of the conference committee that drafted the final version of the bill and if I had been able to vote, I would have voted ''aye.''

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3845, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3845, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 2, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 1091]

YEAS—415

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
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
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 Sandlin
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
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 (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)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Royce
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
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
Tsongas
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)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—2

Broun (GA)
Flake

NOT VOTING—15

Brown-Waite, Ginny
Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Lewis (CA)
McCollum (MN)
Oberstar
Paul
Roybal-Allard
Sessions
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 3 minutes remaining in this vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there is 1 minute remaining in this vote.

□ 1324

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KIDS ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 719, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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. 719, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 1092]

YEAS—417

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)
Broun (GA)
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
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
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 Sandlin
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
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
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
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
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
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)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—15

Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Oberstar
Paul
Sessions
Simpson
Spratt
Sullivan
Tancredo
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 3 minutes remaining in this vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 1 minute is left in this vote.

□ 1331

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title was amended so as to read: ''A Bill to authorize additional appropriations for supervision of Internet access by sex offenders convicted under Federal law, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CORRECT THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1429

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 258) and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

H. CON. RES. 258

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill (H.R. 1429), An Act to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall correct the bill by striking subsection (m)(1) of section 640 of the Head Start Act, as added by section 6(g) of the bill, and inserting the following:

''(1) to implement policies and procedures to ensure that homeless children are identified and prioritized for enrollment;''.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 817 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 817

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes. All points of

order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order against H. Res. 817 under section 2 of H. Res. 491 because the resolution contains a waiver of all points of order against the conference report and its consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). The gentleman from Arizona makes a point of order that the resolution violates section 2 of House Resolution 491.

Such a point of order made under that resolution shall be disposed of by the question of consideration under the same terms as specified in clause 9(b) of rule XXI.

The gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed, the gentleman from New York, each will control 10 minutes of debate on the question of consideration.

After that debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration, to wit: ''Will the House now consider the resolution?''

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Speaker.

And while the Speaker of the House is actually in the Chamber, I want to read a quote from March of this year. In March of this year, the Speaker of the House said, ''Before Members vote on a bill, there should be an appropriate time for people to read it. That should be a matter of public record. If there is an earmark that can stand the scrutiny, then that transparency will give the opportunity for it to be there.''

Let me just ask, if I can, the representative from the Rules Committee, don't we have a rule that says that we are not to consider a bill or a rule until 24 hours after the bill is actually out there? I would yield to the gentleman to answer.

My understanding is that this bill was posted on the Web last night at just after 7 o'clock, yet here we are at 1:35 already considering the rule. I think that is important, because when you look at the bill, we didn't just get it on the Internet where it would be searchable, where we could find things in it. We got a PDF file that is not searchable.

When you look at the bill itself, you find complete sections that have been X'd out, or little insertions with little notations here that are barely legible. You have another big insertion here of an entire page. Again, there are little insertions there within the insertion. You have within it ''3 percent'' stricken. It says ''4 percent'' now. To what?

This is really difficult to wade through. And when we don't even get 24 hours? I mean, 24 hours, frankly, is far from sufficient to consider a bill that is 531 pages long. Then when you consider the bill itself is not searchable, it was given in a PDF file, and then you also have 141 pages of earmarks that are part of the report. That is not a searchable index, either. It is just given. You can wade through it.

The earmarks that are air-dropped into the conference report are supposed to be asterisked. You can see some of those. We identified 21. But is that all there is? We're not sure. But when you look through that list of earmarks that were air-dropped in, you have to be suspicious of why in the world we waited until now to air-drop these earmarks in when nobody can challenge them.

Keep in mind, this is a point of order against consideration of the rule. Because the majority has chosen to waive the rule against points of order on the bill, we can't challenge any of the earmarks in the bill, so we have 21 earmarks air-dropped into the bill at the last minute that we have no ability to challenge.

You might think that, well, if they were air-dropped into the bill, then they certainly must be vital spending, vital projects, that we just couldn't do during the regular consideration of the bill.

I will read a couple of them and you can make your own decisions on whether or not this was vital spending, something that couldn't wait, something that was so important that you had to, at the last minute, in the last 24 hours, include it in where nobody could see it.

One is for $200,000 for the Intergenerational Research Center in Atlanta, Georgia, for a community center. The Intergenerational Research Center, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, for a community center. This is part of the Economic Development Initiative.

Another one: Waynesburg College Center for Economic Development in Pennsylvania for a multipurpose facility. That is $300,000 there.

Tell me, please, somebody tell me, what was so vital here that we had to violate the rules that we have had in the House to insert this at the last minute, when nobody has the ability to challenge it?

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would like to point out to my friend and colleague from Arizona that this point of order is about whether or not to consider this rule, and ultimately to consider a measure that invests in our Nation's vital transportation infrastructure and housing program at a time when we desperately need it so much in this country. In fact, I would say it is simply an effort to try to kill this conference report, and on a faulty premise at that.

Every single earmark in this conference report has been properly disclosed in conformance with the House rules. The blanket waiver against consideration of the conference report did not include a waiver of either clause 9 or rule XXI of House Resolution 491.

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

Mr. FLAKE. Well, we've waived other requirements as well here. What this point of order is about is transparency. Again, we got this bill last night, less than 24 hours ago. It has always been the understanding you would have at least 24 hours, and we are violating that even.

When you look at the bill itself, here I found another page, section 409, we're not sure what was there, because it is now gone. It is gone from the bill. It is very difficult to go through a bill that is 534 pages that is not even searchable and wade through the earmarks.

The gentleman mentioned this is vital spending we have to get done. Let me give you an example of some of what is in the bill itself. $150,000 for the Atlanta Botanical Gardens in Atlanta, Georgia. $275,000 for the Berkshire Music Hall in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLAKE. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Let me clear up this issue here about the time requirements. The rules of the House say there shall be a 72-hour, or 3-day layover on these bills. That was waived. That was waived by the majority party. Then as a courtesy in their ''new directions,'' they say it should be at least 24 hours. So here they are even waiving a promise of a waiving of a rule of 3 days.

So I wanted to clarify that. It is supposed to be 3 days, that is the premise from which we start, and then we come down to a promise of 24 hours. They are even waiving that promise.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for that clarification.

Let me get back to this list of these vital projects that we somehow have to rush through here. There is $400,000 for the Bel Alton High School Alumni Association in Bel Alton, Maryland. Again, $400,000 for the Bel Alton High School Alumni Association. Why in the world is this in the bill at all? Is it any wonder that somebody wants to move this bill through quickly and without following the rules?

□ 1345

$500,000 for the Los Angeles Fire Museum in Bellflower, California; two earmarks totaling $300,000 to revitalize downtown Clearwater, Florida; $150,000 for the Edmunds Arts Center in Edmunds, Washington; $100,000 for Cooters Pond Park in Prattville, Alabama; $100,000 for the reuse of the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant in Romney, West Virginia; $100,000 for the Crystal Lake Art Center in Frankfort, Michigan; $750,000 to the Detroit Science Center in Detroit, Michigan; and $300,000 to the Houston, Zoo in Houston, Texas.

Again, this is just a tiny sliver of the 141 pages of earmarks in the bill, more than 1,000 of them. And again, 21 air-dropped earmarks that we have never

seen before, never had the ability to challenge on the House floor for such vital things as the Grand Teton National Park Pathway System in Wyoming. This may be a good project, but it should receive the scrutiny it deserves, not air-dropped into a report that we are given less than 24 hours to consider, that we have no ability, none, to amend out.

Or $500,000 for Park Street Streetscape Improvement in Alameda, California. Why in the world was this that vital where we had to violate our own rules to bring this to the floor and hide these earmarks where they don't see the light of day?

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to Mr. CAMPBELL from California.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Let's talk about what is really going on here. If somebody is an alcoholic, they understand they shouldn't drink. What they will do oftentimes is they will ask their friends to help them, you know, come in the house. Make sure I don't have any alcohol here. Keep me honest. Make sure I don't do this.

This Congress is drunk on earmarks. The majority party has said, well, we want to get better. We want to stop drinking. We want to stop doing these bad earmarks, so we set up a point of order on the bill so we can stop this.

But it is the equivalent of the alcoholic saying, I want you to help me, Mr. Speaker, and I want you to come check my house to make sure that I don't have any alcohol, but then locking the door so you can't go in and you can't look. That is what the majority party is doing here.

They say we have this point of order on earmarks, but we are waiving it. We are going to bury them in the bill so you can't see. The majority here in this Congress is not serious about controlling earmarks, and they should be, because of the ones that the gentleman from Arizona read, and whether it is teaching people how to play golf in the defense budget or monuments, to me, whatever it is. We have budget problems, we all agree. We disagree on how to take care of them. But one thing we must do is stop these earmarks, and the majority is not doing that.

Mr. FLAKE. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). The gentleman yields the balance of his time to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. FLAKE. How much time remains on this side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. I did the math for you, sir; 1 minute remains.

Mr. FLAKE. I am glad to yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. BOEHNER. I appreciate my colleague for yielding. This is exactly what the American people are disgusted with. We can't balance the budget. We can't send the President appropriation bills that are within the budget. This bill is some $3.5 billion over the President's request. But having said that, we have all of these projects that didn't go through the House, didn't go through the Senate, that got air-dropped into a conference. And we wonder why the American people look at us like our heads have been cut off.

There is nobody in my district who would ever vote for any of these projects that got air-dropped into this bill. And we have this process, this point of consideration on these earmarks, on consideration of this bill, in exactly the time when we are supposed to have a better look at what these earmarks are.

All we have are these brief descriptions, if you can find them in the bill, because this bill should not be up on this floor until tonight. It is one thing to waive the 3-day rule, but the 24-hour rule, most Members believe, is almost sacrosanct. And yet, not even 24 hours after the bill was filed, it is on the floor of the House. Members don't know what is in it. That is why this point of order that we fought for this summer was put into effect.

I would urge my colleagues to vote for the gentleman's point of order to stop consideration of this bill so we have a chance to look and see what else is in here that we haven't seen, because this place is out of control.

Mr. FLAKE. In my remaining 30 seconds, let me just say, in January when we passed transparency rules on earmarks, I was the first one to compliment the majority on what they had done. We put some decent rules into play. But rules are only as good as your willingness to enforce them. And we have seen a pattern over the past several months culminating in this kind of thing, breaking the rules so we can bring a bill to the floor with 21 air-dropped earmarks into it where we are simply not following our own rules.

This institution deserves better than this. I plead with my colleagues to vote to stop this bill from moving forward until we can actually see what's in it.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), a member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague on the Rules Committee for yielding to me.

I think my friend from Arizona raises issues, and sometimes it is not clear with reference to earmarks. I don't recall hearing too many people argue about the earmarks that the President of the United States has within the prerogative of the President. Two-thirds of Federal spending is nondiscretionary. And in a budget the size of ours, which is $2.9 trillion, that means discretionary funds in this particular budget are about $935 billion.

What they fail to do in their point of order or that we hear in the Rules Committee is to say to the general public that the name of the Member requesting the earmark exists, the name and address of the intended recipient, and if there is no specifically intended recipient, the intended location of the activity, the purpose of such earmark, a certification that the Member or spouse has no financial interest in such congressional earmark, and it requires the House Appropriations Committee to make open for public inspection approved earmarks.

Now each of these earmarks has an asterisk and each of these earmarks is easily identifiable. Clearly, there are things that people disagree with as to whether or not in the particular constituency that that constituency is going to benefit.

Democrats cut in half the number of earmarks. I believe my friend from Arizona knows that when this measure was sent to the Senate, the Senate increased the number of earmarks that are here. But I don't care whether you call it earmark, toe mark, arm mark, elbow mark, whatever it is, it is something that benefits the American people. And in a budget that has $2 trillion in it, we can find some reason for us to control that as opposed to the executive branch.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, we must consider this conference report which provides funding for our Nation's priorities. For example, Community Development Block Grants to provide communities with funds to assist low and moderate-income persons; housing for the elderly, disabled, and homeless veterans; foreclosure mitigation and reconstruction of the Minnesota bridge and the repair of aging bridges throughout our Nation that is desperately needed.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the new House Democratic majority has implemented the most honest and open earmark rule in the history of the United States House of Representatives. But don't take my word for it. A few weeks ago, Ryan Alexander, president of Taxpayers for Commonsense, was quoted in CQ Weekly as saying, ''The House has given us more information than we have ever had before on earmarks, and they deserve credit for that.''

I am troubled with the analogy given by my colleague from California comparing it to a drinking problem. I would say the comparison, considering the way the Republicans abused the process, would be to a person who started a fire, then called the fire department, and when the fire department came and put out the fire, they then turned around and criticized the fire department for the way that the fire was put out.

That is the situation that they have. They abused the earmarks when they were in control of the House, and now they are critical of our majority when we attempt to fix it. It is important to remember which side actually abused the earmark process and who actually stepped up to the plate to reform the system and provide transparency.

We didn't wait until 2 months before the election. We responded to the people's call for more openness on the first day of Congress. It seems quite clear to me that the minority is more concerned with obstructionism, while we are focused on actually meeting the needs of our constituents and the people in this country.

This question of consideration is the result of an unwarranted point of order against our rule. A ''no'' vote will prevent consideration of a critical package that has strong House and Senate bipartisan support.

So despite whatever roadblock the other side tries to use to block this bill, we will stand up for housing and we will stand up for the critical infrastructure upon which our economy depends. We must consider this rule and we must pass this conference report today.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' to consider this rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Will the House now consider the resolution?

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FLAKE. 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, this 15-minute vote on the question of consideration will be followed by a 5-minute vote on approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 197, nays 186, not voting 49, as follows:

[Roll No. 1093]

YEAS—197

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clay
Cohen
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—186

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—49

Barton (TX)
Bishop (GA)
Blunt
Boucher
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Buyer
Carson
Clarke
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Delahunt
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doyle
Hastert
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Langevin
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lowey
Lynch
Meeks (NY)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Oberstar
Paul
Payne
Rangel
Rush
Scott (GA)
Sessions
Shays
Smith (NJ)
Taylor
Turner
Udall (CO)
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weller
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Young (AK)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1414

So the question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1093, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, on November 14, 2007, I was participating in an Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing and inadvertently missed 1 recorded vote.

I take my voting responsibility very seriously. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on recorded vote number 1093.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, I was unavoidably detained and thus I missed rollcall votes No. 1090 through 1093. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

On rollcall vote NO. 1090, on Adoption of the Conference Report on H.R. 1429, the Head Start for School Readiness Act, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 1091, on H.R. 3845, the PROTECT Our Children Act of 2007, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 1092, on H.R. 719, the KIDS Act of 2007, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 1093, on H. Res. 817, Providing for consideration of the conference report on H.R. 3074, Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 2008, I would have voted "nay."

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 181, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 1094]

YEAS—221

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Buchanan
Butterfield
Buyer
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Gerlach
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Heller
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Whitfield
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—181

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Carney
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Goode
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hensarling
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mitchell
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuler
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Stupak
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wicker
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Gohmert
Tancredo

NOT VOTING—28

Brown, Corrine
Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Dicks
Doyle
Feeney
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastert
Hayes
Jindal
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Knollenberg
Levin
Linder
McCrery
Oberstar
Paul
Rush
Schiff
Serrano
Sessions
Udall (CO)
Weller
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1420

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1093 and 1094 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on both votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. ARCURI) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, for purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of this rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to extend their remarks on House Resolution 817.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 817 provides for consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3074, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the ranking member for bringing a conference report to the floor that makes critical investment in our Nation's transportation infrastructure at levels guaranteed in SAFETEA-LU.

The conference report also rejects the administration's proposed funding cuts to the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program, highway programs, and critical housing and community development programs.

The conference report provides $151 million more than current funding for the FAA, $765 million more than the President's request for FAA Airport Improvement Program, which provides grants for airport planning, construction and development.

Recipients of AIP funds such as Griffiss Park Airfield in my upstate New York district have benefited greatly from this program. Over the last few years, AIP funds have helped Griffiss continue to fully develop as a regional aviation facility, become the new home for the Oneida County Airport, create long-term regional economic growth for a region seeking to attract new investment.

The conference report also maintains our commitment to keeping our airways safe by providing $7 billion for air traffic organization, including $16 million to hire more than 1,400 new air traffic controllers to replenish the work force as the rate of retiring air traffic controllers continues to grow, and provides critical funding to hire and train more safety inspectors and for other aviation safety activities.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report provides $3.5 billion more than current

levels for the Transportation Department. These additional funds will provide for much needed investments in our Nation's highways, road construction and repair, and transportation safety.

This conference report boosts funding for the Federal Transit Administration by providing $227 million more than the President's request for mass transit programs. Local transit authorities, such as the Central New York Regional Transit Authority and Centro in my district, will now be able to expand their hybrid bus fleet and continue to provide low-cost, convenient, clean and energy-efficient transportation services to commuters in both upstate New York and in New York City.

This conference report also increases funding for the Housing and Urban Development Department by $3.1 billion above the President's request.

The President's budget request sought to eliminate funding for the HOPE VI program, but I am so pleased that this legislation will maintain our commitment to providing affordable housing for the many disadvantaged individuals across our country, individuals that still struggle daily to meet their family's needs, even while working full-time jobs.

In 2003, the City of Utica, New York was the recipient of an $11.5 million HOPE VI grant for revitalization of a local residential community. This grant has allowed for significant improvements in safety and greater access to service and facilities for its residents. It would be a shame if similar communities around the country were unable to reap the benefits of the HOPE VI program.

The conference report restores funding for the Community Development Block Grant program, which this administration has cut since 2001 by nearly 35 percent. This conference report provides $922 million more than the President's request for CDBG grants, which allow local governments in cities such as Utica, Rome and Auburn, New York to provide critical service to revitalize neighborhoods, promote economic development and improve quality of life for those starved of financial resources.

Localities across my upstate New York district rely on CDBG funds to support vital redevelopment efforts that improve housing, assist local businesses, and offer services that promote safety and reduce crime. CDBG funds have been used by the City of Utica to prepare sites like those in the Corn Hill area for new housing construction by demolishing existing structures, replacing antiquated sewer lines, planting trees, constructing new sidewalks and curbs and paving streets, improving the quality of life for all the citizens of that city.

CDBG funds have been used in the City of Auburn to provide small business assistance loans to help new businesses make it through their first critical year of start-up, retain their employees, and grow their business. CDBG funds are also used by Auburn to support after-school programs, child care subsidies, and even counseling for children in crisis.

In the City of Rome, these funds are also used to assist new small businesses and also to assist low- to moderate-income persons make needed health and safety improvements to their homes, such as helping seniors with the installation of ramps and railings that allow them to remain living in their homes, and helping people deal with emergencies like failure and roof collapse. These are important parts of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, there are, I'm certain, very important programs that are funded by the legislation being brought forth today. And without any doubt, the Transportation and HUD appropriations bill is one of the most important appropriations bills that we face and we consider and we pass every year.

What is unfortunate is that it has been brought forth, it has been brought to this floor by the majority in a manner that is consistent with a pattern that is most unfortunate, objectionable.

As a matter of fact, that pattern, another aspect of that pattern is the subject of an editorial today by a newspaper that analyzes and informs on a daily basis with regard to this Congress. The newspaper is called Roll Call, and it has an editorial today about another aspect of the pattern that is most unfortunate and that we're seeing with the way in which this, albeit, very important piece of legislation is being brought forth today. Because it wasn't until, and we'll talk a little bit about the other aspect of the pattern that is the object of the Roll Call editorial in a minute. But with regard to this legislation, it was publicly available at 7 p.m., approximately, last night for the first time.

□ 1430

By the way, not in a very accessible way, in a format that's not very accessible: it was put online. There was no way to look at all of the legislation in that manner, in the format in which it was made available around 7 p.m. last night.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the rules of the House, there is a requirement that before an appropriations bill is considered by this House, 3 days, 72 hours, must pass. That rule was waived by the majority in the Rules Committee last night.

Now, in addition to that rule, there is a custom and a custom that is repeatedly made reference to. As a matter of fact, it's not only custom, but in the promises made by the new majority in a document during the campaign the last election, the new majority in a document entitled ''A New Direction for America,'' they talked about that at the very least, if not 3 days for an appropriations bill to be able to be considered by the membership before it is brought forth that there should be at least 24 hours. I read from the document ''A New Direction for America'': ''Members should have at least 24 hours to examine bill and conference reports texts prior to floor consideration.''

So not only do we not have the 3 days because that's waived by the rule, it's a rule but it was waived by the majority of the Rules Committee, which is what we saw last night, but, in addition, not even the 24 hours now for Members to be able to look at the legislation that is before them. Most unfortunate. It violates the promise of the majority in addition to what I would say is an elemental required fairness for this process to work.

Now, I talked about the pattern. It's not just the lack of 24-hour notice; it's a pattern. Let's look at Roll Call today. They talk about the fact that there have been multiple threats by the majority to restrict something that hasn't been restricted since 1822, and that is one of the few legislative means, procedural means by which the minority can seek to amend legislation, and it's called, Mr. Speaker, the motion to recommit. And that hasn't been restricted since 1822. The majority has repeatedly now during this year, the first year of this Congress, this year that is already coming to an end, it's talked about that it wants to restrict that right that the minority has, one of the few vehicles that the minority has had since 1822 to try to amend legislation.

Roll Call, a newspaper, Mr. Speaker, that covers what we do here, observes us very carefully, has an editorial in today's edition: ''Despite promises to manage the House on a more open basis than Republicans did during their 12-year rule,'' Roll Call says today in an editorial, ''Democrats have prohibited any floor amendments at more than double the rate of the previous Congress.''

And then Roll Call goes on to ask the Democrats not to do what they have threatened to do, and that is restrict the procedural vehicle that has been available and unrestricted since 1822, the motion to recommit. So note, Mr. Speaker, the pattern.

Now, I wish, I really wish, because of the importance of the programs funded by this legislation that we could discuss those programs. But when we are seeing this pattern of unfairness, of constant tightening, restricting the legislative process despite, and in contrast to, the promises made by the majority included in this ''A New Direction for America'' where they said, well, if we're not going to give 3 days, which is what the rules require, because sometimes we might have to waive that in the interest of time, then at least 24 hours. So, no, this legislation, the first time it was posted was 7 p.m. That's when it could be seen.

By the way, I am informed by people who are a lot more expert than I am at the format by which the legislation was posted at 7 p.m. that at 7 p.m. with that format, the details of the legislation could not be accessed. So really, Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is a lot less than even that time if we wouldn't have come to the floor until 7 p.m., which is what the New Direction for America promised, the majority repeatedly promised, and which would have been elementally fair in addition to in compliance with the promise of the majority.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would ask my friend, and he is my friend, Mr. ARCURI from New York, how many speakers he has wishing to speak.

Mr. ARCURI. I have no other speakers.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to adjourn.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 150, nays 244, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 1095]

YEAS—150

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Delahunt
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Knollenberg
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
McCaul (TX)
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Pearce
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (TX)
Sullivan
Tancredo
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Wamp
Westmoreland
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—244

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Butterfield
Capps
Carnahan
Carney
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Fortenberry
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCotter
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (MI)
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—38

Baker
Capuano
Cardoza
Carson
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Doyle
Hastert
Higgins
Jindal
Levin
McCarthy (CA)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McMorris Rodgers
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Moran (VA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Paul
Pence
Poe
Radanovich
Roskam
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Smith (WA)
Souder
Tierney
Udall (CO)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Yarmuth

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there is less than 1½ minutes remaining.

□ 1456

Messrs. BRALEY of Iowa, ROTHMAN and HINCHEY, and Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. JONES of Ohio and Mrs. MYRICK changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. TURNER and BARTLETT of Maryland changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to adjourn was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1095, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking for a ''no'' vote on the previous question so that we can amend this rule and move toward passing a conference report on the bipartisan Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act.

The House passed the veterans and military funding bill on June 15 by a vote of 409–2, with the Senate following suit and naming conferees on September 6. Unfortunately, the majority leadership in the House has refused to move the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act. They have even refused to name conferees.

Now, the question that is begged, Mr. Speaker, is why has the majority decided to hold off on moving this bill that obviously has such bipartisan support. Well, according to several publications, including this one, Roll Call, the majority intends to hold off sending appropriations bills to President Bush so that they can use the veto of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill to serve as ''an extension of their successful public relations campaign on the SCHIP program.''

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield for one moment?

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Yes, I will yield to my distinguished friend.

Mr. DREIER. Was that quote that my friend provided something that was written by Republican staff members? Where exactly did that come from?

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Roll Call.

Mr. DREIER. Oh, okay. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Reclaiming my time, fortunately that purely political move, Mr. Speaker, failed last week when the Senate removed the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs bill from the Labor-HHS bill.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, the Republican leader, Mr. BOEHNER, took a step toward naming House Republican conferees. Now the distinguished Speaker must follow suit and take the steps necessary to ensure that work can begin on writing the final veterans funding bill that can be enacted into law.

Mr. Speaker, every day that the majority chooses not to act on this bill, veterans lose $18.5 million. Our veterans deserve better than partisan gamesmanship holding back their funding.

I urge my colleagues to help move this important legislation and oppose the previous question.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I will yield to my friend.

□ 1500

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding.

I would just like to ask him to clarify one more time before we vote on this issue, I think this is going to be the 11th time we have had an opportunity to vote on this.

I have just been reminded by our crack Rules Committee staff that this is, in fact, the 12th time that this House has had the opportunity to vote on this issue. I guess the second or third time in Veterans Week. We have just marked the date on which we honor our Nation's veterans, and this House has repeatedly, repeatedly denied us the opportunity to move ahead and get the very much-needed assistance to our Nation's veterans. I think that this vote is going to be critically important in our quest to move that effort forward.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I thank my friend. I think that it is critically important that we get this legislation passed as soon as possible and sent to the President. It is the 12th time that we have attempted in this House to get this bill sent to the President. Mr. Speaker, obviously this is critically important legislation, a critically important moment. And so I urge my colleagues to help move the important veterans legislation along by opposing the previous question.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment and extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, if the American people have just heard the last colloquy between my two colleagues, perhaps they wouldn't have understood that when my two colleagues were in the majority in this House, for 12 years, the last time they passed a Veterans appropriation bill on time wasn't in 2005, 2004, no, not in 2003 either, not in 2002, not in 2001. You have to go back to 1996 to find when they passed an appropriations bill for veterans on time.

I can understand why the gentleman wouldn't want the facts to get out to the people who might have just watched him on television have a colloquy that was not factual in explaining the fact that when he was chairman of the Rules Committee, it was 11 years ago when they last passed a Veterans appropriation bill on time.

Mr. Speaker, let me also point out they forgot conveniently, perhaps convenient political memory here, they forgot conveniently to explain to the people listening that under the Democratic leadership we have passed $8.1 billion of increase in veterans funding this year, most of that going to veterans health care, the largest in the history of America.

One final point, Mr. Speaker. The two gentlemen also forgot to make one other point, and that is that as they chastise this Congress as being a little over 1 month late in passing the Veterans bill, even though we have already passed an $8.1 billion increase, they forgot to tell the American people that last year they didn't pass the VA bill in October, not in November, not in December. In fact, they adjourned the Congress for their Christmas holiday without passing the Veterans appropriation bill.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. My parliamentary inquiry is as follows: When I asked the gentleman if he had any further speakers before yielding back the reminder of our time, I was informed that he did not. Is it correct for the gentleman to say that he has no further speakers, and then after, based on that statement, I yield back our time, he yields to someone else in contradiction to what he has told me?

Is that appropriate, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is free to yield his time as he sees fit.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Is that appropriate, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized.

Mr. ARCURI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would also point out that the gentleman from Florida indicated that he had no further speakers, and he recognized the gentleman from California.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I didn't recognize. I yielded. No. No.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York controls the time, and the gentleman is recognized.

Mr. ARCURI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Additionally, I would like to point out that whenever anybody makes factually incorrect statements on the floor, I am going to yield to my colleagues to make sure that the record is made clear, and that is why I yielded to Mr. EDWARDS on that point.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill, like very few other things that we as a body deal with, deals and helps and touches many, many millions of Americans, whether it is CDBG money that goes to help the elderly make a senior center more accessible, or whether it is fixing our roads that thousands of commuters travel on every day, it is a bill that is critically important. All we have heard from the other side of the aisle are procedural reasons why we shouldn't go forward. That is what the American people are tired of. They are tired of the process, the procedure. They want action. They want things accomplished.

During the break, I had an opportunity to talk to my friend and colleague from Wisconsin, Representative KAGEN, and he made a good point. He said, you know, while we spend billions of dollars in Iraq, and no one talks about it, we hear all kinds of complaints when we try to spend millions of dollars domestically on programs that help Americans, needy Americans, people that need it most.

Mr. Speaker, that's why we need to pass this rule. I urge a ''yes'' vote on the previous question and on the rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 817 OFFERED BY MR. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 2. The House disagrees to the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2642, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference requested by the Senate thereon. The Speaker shall appoint conferees immediately, but may declare a recess under clause 12(a) of rule I for the purpose of consulting the Minority Leader prior to such appointment. The motion to instruct conferees otherwise in order pending the appointment of conferees instead shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within two additional legislative days after adoption of this resolution.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's ''American Congressional Dictionary'': ''If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.''

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. ARCURI. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 221, noes 195, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 1096]

AYES—221

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—195

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—16

Cannon
Carson
Cleaver
Cubin
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Levin
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Towns
Udall (CO)
Weller
Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote. Members are further reminded to stay in the Chamber. There are votes immediately following this one.

□ 1526

Mr. PEARCE changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1096, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to reconsider the vote on the previous question.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Did the gentleman cast a vote on the prevailing side?

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, yes, I did.

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. ARCURI

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I move to table the motion to reconsider.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 221, noes 196, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 1097]

AYES—221

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—196

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Kaptur
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—15

Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Levin
Oberstar
Paul
Reyes
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sessions
Udall (CO)
Weller
Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are less than 2 minutes remaining to vote.

□ 1534

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1097, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 224, noes 194, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 1098]

AYES—224

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart, L.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton

Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—194

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—14

Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Granger
Hastert
Jindal
Levin
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Udall (CO)
Weller
Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded they have less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1540

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1098, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to reconsider the vote on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Did the gentleman cast his vote on the prevailing side?

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Yes, I did.

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. ARCURI

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I move to table the motion to reconsider.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 213, noes 194, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 1099]

AYES—213

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Becerra
Berkley
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—194

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Donnelly
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—25

Bean
Berman
Blackburn
Carnahan
Carson
Cubin
Cuellar
Dicks
Doyle
Gutierrez
Issa
Jindal
Levin
Linder
Moore (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Sires
Taylor
Udall (CO)
Weller
Wilson (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote).

□ 1547

So the motion to table was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1099, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 817, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 817, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 13, 2007, at page H13598.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 3074.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report on H.R. 3074. Before I explain the contents of the conference report, however, I would like to thank my ranking member, the gentleman from Michigan, JOE KNOLLENBERG, for his great help in crafting a well-balanced Transportation and Housing bill. JOE and I have put together a strong bipartisan bill that will help address the Nation's important transportation and housing needs.

I think JOE and I have been a good team and I look forward to working closely with him again next year. I would also like to thank the staff on both sides of the aisle for all of their hard work. On the minority side, Dena Baron and Dave Gibbons and Jeff Goff. And on the majority side, Kate Hallahan, our clerk; Cheryle Tucker; David Napoliello; Laura Hogshead; Alex Gillen; Mark Fedor and Bob Letteney. They performed well under stress and trying circumstances, and without their dedication we would not be here today debating this bill.

Mr. Speaker, Members can and should be proud of this bill because it provides critical investments in our Nation's transportation and housing infrastructure, and does so within a fiscally sound manner and within our conference allocation.

Unlike some other issues we debate in Congress, transportation and housing have a long history of bipartisanship, and I hope we can continue in that spirit of bipartisanship today.

At their core, both transportation and housing have a direct impact on the people we represent. All of us are affected by congestion on our roads, travel delays in our airports, and the lack of dependable public transportation. We also all benefit from community development investments and the availability of affordable housing in our communities. This bill in so many ways affects each and every one of us.

Let me briefly explain some of the highlights of the conference report.

For the first time in 13 years, our bill includes $75 million for the Veterans Affairs Supported Housing program, commonly known as VASH, to provide roughly 10,000 housing vouchers and supportive services to homeless veterans.

While we do not know the exact number of homeless veterans, the Veterans Administration has estimated that there were as many as 196,000 during a point-in-time count just last year. Surely we can all agree that 10,000 homeless veterans are 10,000 too many homeless veterans. Even one homeless veteran is a homeless veteran too many.

We have also included $30 million for about 4,000 new housing vouchers for the disabled, the first new housing vouchers for the disabled in 5 years. The need for housing for the disabled has been well documented, with average housing rents rising much faster than a disabled person's monthly supplemental security income, SSI.

Secondly, the bill provides $250 million to help with the current foreclosure crisis. We have included $200 million over the President's request for the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, a recognized national intermediary between lenders and homeowners, to help individuals and families forestall foreclosure and keep their homes. A separate $50 million is provided for HUD's housing counseling program to help new potential home buyers avoid future foreclosures.

According to the Mortgage Bankers Association, the second quarter of this year saw the highest percentage of mortgages go into foreclosure since 1972. Many of those foreclosures and delinquencies are due to the proliferation of subprime and other adjustable-rate loans. With 2 million subprime mortgages expected to reset over the next 18 months, the number of homeowners facing delinquency is staggering in many parts of the country.

The funds included in this bill for foreclosure counseling is the first major Federal investment into this growing crisis. The President has stated on a number of occasions that he wants to help solve this problem. If he is serious, he would sign this bill into law and help many tens of thousands of families receive the help they need to manage their finances and the refinancing of their mortgage so they can keep their homes.

In addition, the bill also makes significant investment in our transportation infrastructure. The Minnesota bridge tragedy put a national spotlight in the State, on the state of America's transportation infrastructure, especially with the number of lives lost in that tragedy. More than 20,000 out of some 100,000-plus bridges on the national highway system are characterized as "structurally deficient" or "functionally obsolete." Traffic on these bridges is over 190 million trips per day.

The conference report includes an additional billion dollars over the President's request for the bridge program as a downpayment to help States fix their long list of substandard bridges; $195 million is specifically included for the I–35 bridge in Minnesota, which alone carried 140,000 passenger vehicles per day. And that sum will make Minnesota whole for the full replacement of that Interstate 35 bridge in Minneapolis.

Those are the new initiatives, but there are numerous other positive transportation and housing investments in this bill. The bill honors the highway guarantees which were set in the authorization bill in 2005, the SAFETEA–LU authorizing bill which was brought forward by the now minority just 2 years ago. That guarantee provides a record level of investment in transit as well. This funding will improve the Nation's transportation and infrastructure and is expected to create close to 80,000 new jobs between highways and transit.

The bill also provides $1.375 billion for Amtrak, plus an additional $75 million for a new intercity passenger rail program to create a faster, safer, and more reliable intercity passenger rail system. That $75 million was requested by the President.

We have included $3.5 billion for the Airport Improvement Program, the same as last year, for critical airport safety capacity and security upgrades.

We have also provided almost $3.8 billion for Community Development Block Grants, the extremely popular CDBG program, which is $100 million above fiscal year 2007 but still $400 million below the fiscal year 2001 level. It is estimated that every dollar of community block grant funding leverages $3 in private investment for critical community and economic development priorities in over a thousand localities around the country.

The bill restores housing for the elderly and disabled to last year's level. And finally, we have provided enough funding to ensure that no one that has

a section 8 tenant or project-based housing voucher will lose that voucher in this fiscal 2008 year.

Mr. Speaker, transportation and housing is not a Republican, not a Democratic issue. A broad consensus exists affirming the great needs for transportation and infrastructure investment and affordable housing nationwide. As such, this budget should be above partisan politics and should be passed and signed into law. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to adopt the conference report.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Chairman OLVER, has already detailed many of the aspects of the fiscal year 2008 conference report. I am pleased to say that I will support the conference report. The conference report has much to commend. I want to thank JOHN OLVER; JOHN and JOE I guess is what it amounts to. But we have worked together very hard on this, along with the staffs on both sides, and I commend him for working with us to bring this product forward.

We meet the majority of the transportation funding guarantee as mandated by SAFETEA–LU, plus included some wise legislative provisions such as raising the airline pilot mandatory retirement age to 65 and prohibiting towing on Federal roads in Texas.

We didn't go overboard on funding Amtrak and kept the reforms we put in place 2 years ago in hopes of bringing the railroad into the modern age. One unfortunate point I would like to make is one of the Transit New Starts Project, a project for the Chicago area's commuter rail, Metra, the UP West Line, was inadvertently not included in the bill. It was funded in the House bill, and in the negotiations all sides supported conference funding, and I am very hopeful we can work a little magic to get that included.

In housing, we provided more than $100 million for about 11,000 new incremental vouchers for three of our most vulnerable populations: veterans, including those returning from Iraq who might face homelessness without rental assistance; nonelderly disabled individuals, the so-called Frelinghuysen vouchers; and vouchers to keep families together when facing homelessness rather than forcing the children into foster homes.

Further, the bill insists that these vouchers retain their use and purpose upon turnover when the current individuals and families no longer need them.

The vouchers for veterans are important and will certainly be welcomed throughout Michigan as well as the rest of the country. I want to note the intent here is not just for HUD to administer these vouchers, but for HUD and VA to work together so that the full array of eligible services are coordinated and administered jointly.

□ 1600

Along that same line, I strongly support a new demonstration in the homeless program to avoid forcing children through the trauma of homeless shelters by rapidly rehousing these families in secure rental units and providing the care and training in that setting, rather than through the shelter plus care process. We need to be sure, however, that in doing so we do not end up subsidizing drug or other illegal activity.

I want to also express my appreciation for the provision in the bill that waives the Medicaid cap on income and allows citizens in Michigan to voluntarily pay more and still receive rental assistance. This has made a tremendous difference in my district, and the new statewide provision will apply to all Michigan residents. Obviously, it is available for consideration in other states, too.

As many of my colleagues know, Michigan has been facing a severe credit crunch due to defaults and foreclosures resulting from the subprime lending boom a few years ago. The resets are around the corner and the problem may well get worse for Michigan before it gets better. But no one wants to see foreclosure, not the homeowner, not the banks, and certainly not the Federal Government which has insured many of these loans.

As a result and through extensive collaboration with my colleague, Chairman OLVER, and our Senate counterparts, we included a provision that I am sure will go a long way towards stemming if not reversing the trend in the home mortgage market. We have included $200 million in new funds for intensive and extensive loan foreclosure mitigation guidance plus counseling and targeted funds to those areas which are facing the largest threat of foreclosure.

We have ensured that the funds will be in the hands of the expert counselors and State housing finance agencies before the loan resets dates hit homeowners who will find it difficult to meet the higher payments. We have not placed the funds in HUD, or created a financial handout for mortgage companies or homeowners. Instead, we are using the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, which is in itself expert and has a network of expert loan counselors throughout the country. As a federally chartered corporation, they will be able to avoid the many delaying regulatory hurdles that would result if funded through HUD, but still must meet all the requirements to ensure the integrity of the funds provided to expert counseling agencies. I firmly believe that Michigan will benefit greatly from the one-time funding being provided in this bill to help at-risk homeowners get through this difficult period.

Having said that, there are clearly areas in the bill that could and should be reduced in funding or for which funding should be allocated.

All of us have heard about the shortfall that HUD now faces in meeting contracts with longstanding low-income assistance providers under the project-based section 8 program. While better than the Senate bill, let's face it, we did not solve the problem. We only delayed the date at which the crisis will occur. Yet at the same time, the voucher program has $300 million in excess funds based on the new methodology instituted by the majority as part of the 2007 continuing resolution. Apparently the majority does not trust their new methodology that much, yet those funds could have further reduced the shortfall that HUD faces with project owners under the project-based program, or reduced the cost of the bill itself.

Furthermore, the Department continues to receive funds for a long list of small boutique and duplicative programs, all of which could be eliminated as the administration requested without harming any of the program.

Finally, I want to emphasize that there are no new air-dropped earmarks from the House minority.

I want to thank my colleague and chairman, Chairman OLVER, for his work on this bill. I have to say he was most fair. This was a very inclusive conference and, because of his cooperation and the highlights of the bill, I will be voting ''yes'' on passage of the conference report.

I reserve the balance of my time

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield at this time 3 minutes to the vice chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. PASTOR from Arizona.

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

Mr. PASTOR. I thank my chairman, JOHN OLVER, for recognizing me.

First of all, I want to congratulate Chairman OLVER and Ranking Member KNOLLENBERG for the fine work they have done on this bill. It is quite an accomplishment. If you look at last year, we were not able to conference the bill and here we are talking about a bill that has been conferenced with the Senate. Both the chairman and the ranking member have talked about some of the programs that have been given additional funding, but I would like to talk about a few that this bill starts a new initiative.

One is a program that the railroad administrator spoke to us about at one of our hearings, and that is the ability of the Federal Railroad Administration being able to provide grants to have intercity connection by rail. And in Arizona, it is a program that we are looking forward to see implemented. As you may know, Arizona is growing very quickly, and the two metro areas, the Phoenix metro area and the Tucson metro area, in a very short time are going to be growing into each other, and there is a great need to connect them because the freeway that connects them today is no longer efficient.

So by applying for these grants, hopefully we will be able to connect 90 percent of the Arizona population with a rail.

With the possibility of that connection, then there is a possibility that Arizona may be connected with Amtrak. So it is an initiative that this conference bill brings forward that those of us in Arizona are very happy to see implemented, especially in this city-to-city rail connection.

For those of us who were local elected officials, I am very happy to report that CDBG is in this bill and will receive additional money, so local officials can use these monies to develop the social infrastructure that is needed in many of our locations that do not have the economic development activity that other parts of the city has.

The other initiative I want to talk about is one that you will begin to see cooperation with the Federal Transit Authority and HUD. As the transit lines are being developed, there are initiatives in this bill that will encourage the development of affordable housing and development of small businesses along the transit line. This is something that, again, those of us who have transit lines that are being developed, that with these initiatives we can develop affordable housing, because many of the people who will be on the transit lines are people that will be going to work and in many cases need to have the affordable housing that the transit line will bring it.

I congratulate both the chairman and the ranking member for this fine bill, and I ask for its passage.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR, a senior member of our subcommittee and someone who has been very much involved in planning for communities over the years.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the chairman very much for the time, Chairman OLVER and Ranking Member KNOLLENBERG, for just a fantastic effort on this conference report. Let me say I rise in full support.

There are so many programs in it, such as our community development block grant program which helps over 1,180 communities across this country. We have been able to provide $3.79 billion in this bill, which is still, though responsible, $400 million less than we spent as a country in 2001, with many of our cities finding revenues on the decline or stuck because of the condition of the economy. So I know many of our mayors will welcome this.

I rise especially to point to the programs dealing with housing counseling, $250 million in this bill through the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, dollars to be disbursed within the next 60 days to help parts of the country that are just suffering so greatly because of the home mortgage foreclosure crisis.

There is no more important form of savings that any American family can have than their home. What has been happening across our country is we not only have a negative savings rate, but now we have a $1 trillion housing crisis in which hundreds of thousands of people have lost their homes or are about to lose their homes. This $250 million that is included in this bill that will go through the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation for counseling will help to try to allow some of these families to retain their homes as these mortgages are reset.

Frankly, I have been so disappointed in HUD's just sitting on the dime. As FEMA sat on the dime as people drowned in Louisiana, we've got people drowning all across this country because they're losing their homes and there's been no action. So we hope that this housing effort will make a big difference in helping them to be able to maintain their largest form of savings.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention the program for housing for special populations in this bill. There is a total of 7,500 vouchers for homeless veterans that are living in missions across this country, that are in our jails, that are on the streets. Surely we can do better than this as the American people. There are also 4,000 vouchers in the bill for the nonelderly disabled and another 4,000 vouchers for families with children, where children are separated from their families because the families have no housing. Ask yourself the question, how well will that child perform in school when their home situation is so uncertain that they don't even know where they're going to stay at night?

I think that this bill provides some important stimulus to the housing sector, and the funding that we have provided is certainly not enough in view of what we are facing as an economy as funds are drained away from our communities as a result of this subprime lending crisis, but at least we have done something in this bill to recognize that there ought to be dispatch in the subprime lending market, and if HUD can't do a very good job of it, then let's let the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation try to deal with these families that are dropping off the edge. I know that our mayors and those involved in housing for special populations will see this bill as a step forward.

I compliment the chairman of the committee and the ranking member for moving this legislation.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) who has been very helpful with thoughts and suggestions about how transportation and housing should fit together in the planning of communities.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy, as I deeply appreciate the work that the subcommittee has done. This is not just about spending money; it's about spending money right.

It is important that resources are being focused to being able to ''fix it first,'' to be able to deal with the fraying of our Nation's infrastructure. As the gentleman pointed out, there are 100 million trips on tens of thousands of substandard bridges across the country.

There is an important step in this legislation to have more robust funding for Amtrak. We have avoided the problems of past sessions where we have come through here to have an ideological battle fought about how somehow the United States should be the only country in the world without government-supported rail passenger service. Given skyrocketing oil prices and congestion in our highways, people understand that that is a prescription for disaster. I appreciate the hard work of the committee coming forward with a proposal to help put a floor underneath the rail passenger infrastructure, not making a difference just for Arizona but throughout the country.

I appreciate looking at the big picture. The committee's willingness to look at how land use, housing, and transportation fit together to coax maximum advantage out of those investments is very, very important.

□ 1615

I hope that we can continue to work with the subcommittee, with the whole Appropriations Committee, with the authorizing committees to be able to get more out of these investments.

Last but not least, it should be pointed out that this will be the last budget that we'll be able to have with the transportation funding at this level. The refusal of the administration to work with us to increase transportation investment in the last Congress resulted in a reauthorization level that is higher than the trust fund can support. We're going to be running out of money here in a couple of months. That means that the task of the subcommittee will be extraordinarily difficult, given the slow payout rate of transportation funding. It means you're going to have to cut probably four times the amount of the deficit this next year, and it's going to be even greater in subsequent years. So I'm hopeful that, working with the subcommittee dealing with appropriations and with Ways and Means, with the authorizers, we can come forward to make sure that we don't lose the opportunity to make the right investments in transportation and housing, because these are going to help us with greenhouse gases. These are going to help us with economic development, with energy efficiency. It's a tall order ahead of us, but I appreciate the foundation that the subcommittee has laid, and look forward to working with them.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I would like, at this point, to enter into the

RECORD a couple of letters which we have from public organizations. One is Americans for Transportation Mobility. And this is an organization which is an umbrella of the American Public Transportation Association; the American Road and Transportation Builders Association; the Associated Equipment Distributors; the Associated Equipment Manufacturers; Associated General Contractors; American Society of Civil Engineers; International Union of Operating Engineers; Laborers International Union of North America; the National Asphalt Pavement Association; National Construction Alliance; National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association; and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, who are cosigners on this letter of support for H.R. 3074.

And I have, secondly, a letter from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, commonly known as AASHTO. I think every one of us who has ever worked at the State levels of public funding, as well as the national levels, understands what AASHTO is. And this is a letter of support signed by the executive director of AASHTO, also in support of the conference report on H.R. 3074. And I offer that for inclusion in the RECORD.

AMERICANS FOR TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2007.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The Americans for Transportation Mobility (ATM) Coalition strongly urges you to support the conference report for H.R. 3074, the ''Transportation Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008.''

H.R. 3074 honors the commitments to capital investment in highway and public transportation infrastructure made by Congress in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) and will not increase the federal budget deficit. Although H.R. 3074 under-funds public transportation by $81 million, the ATM Coalition still feels strongly that this conference report should pass as a stand alone measure in order to maintain and improve the nation's highway and public transportation systems in fiscal year 2008.

America's transportation system is being stretched beyond its capacity. Both public and private usage of highways, transit, and aviation systems are increasing at rates far outpacing infrastructure investment. A decaying surface transportation system costs the U.S. economy $78 billion annually in lost time and fuel while congestion adds significant pollution to the air, and substandard roads claim thousands of lives every year.

As representatives of over 400 major users and providers of the nation's surface transportation infrastructure network including the business and labor communities, our unique coalition is dedicated to ensuring the global competitiveness, economic prosperity and the American way of life by promoting investment in transportation infrastructure. SAFETEA–LU provided record levels of investment in highways and transit programs by ensuring that revenues flowing into the Highway Trust Fund are only used for their intended purpose: fixing and maintaining the nation's transportation infrastructure. By passing the H.R. 3074 conference report, Congress will maintain its commitment to a safe, efficient and competitive transportation system.

Sincerely,
Americans for Transportation Mobility.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2007.

Hon. DAVID OBEY,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As the House begins consideration of the Conference report on the Housing and Transportation Appropriations, H.R. 3074, I wish to advise you the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and its 50 State members strongly support and urge that the legislation be passed as submitted.

The Nation's transportation system is the foundation of our economy. If investments are delayed it will impact the economy and add to increased costs because States will not have the full funding that would be available given the guaranteed spending provisions of SAFETEA–LU. Given the timing of the construction season it is also of immediate importance that the bill be passed promptly.

Sincerely,
JOHN HORSLEY,
Executive Director.

At this point, I would like to yield 7 minutes to the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few observations about the White House comments on this bill, because we are told that the White House intends to veto this bill.

Let me point out some facts about this bill. This bill spends about $105 billion, all told. Much has been made in the debate this morning or this afternoon about earmarks in this bill. Earmarks are about 1 percent of all of the funds that are provided in this bill, around $1.2 billion.

For reference, last year, the appropriation, or rather the transportation authorization bill included about $20 billion in earmarks. I didn't see the President talking about vetoing that bill. I find it quaint that he now purports to be upset because this bill contains 1/20 the earmark level of bills that he has previously signed.

I would also note that the President objects to the elimination of the deep cuts which this bill contains for the Community Development Block Grant and for housing programs. There is no individual in this country who is a greater beneficiary of taxpayer-subsidized housing than the President of the United States. He lives in that big white house on Pennsylvania Avenue. He doesn't have to worry about having a driver's license to drive on the roads in this country because he has nice chauffeurs and nice limousines which are transported everywhere around the country. He has lots of people in the kitchen to prepare any meal that he wants prepared. If he wants to have a relaxing weekend, he can go out to Camp David, and he can take a helicopter so he doesn't have to worry about beating the traffic. And yet, this President objects to the fact that we are trying to do a mite more than his budget does for low-income housing in this country.

Section 8 housing, he's very unhappy about the fact that we've increased funding for that. It just seems to me that this is one case of the pot calling the kettle black if the President objects to that kind of funding.

When we first started putting together appropriation bills, Mr. Speaker, I asked each of the subcommittee Chairs to disregard the year-to-year arguments that we've usually had in this place, and I asked all of the chairmen and chairwomen to ask themselves: What is this country going to look like in 5 and 10 years? And in the case of this bill, how many more cars are there going to be on the road? How much more pressure are we going to have for our rail traffic, both passenger and transport, or freight?

I asked people to look at what the expanded population would mean in terms of added demand for housing for the elderly, as well as low-income housing. And then I asked the Chairs to try to prepare a bill which would get us to where we needed to be over a 5- or 10-year period in order to meet those challenges. And that is essentially what this bill tries to do with very limited available funds.

Now, this bill contains about $5 billion increase in funding above the President's level. That's about 2 weeks of what we spend in Iraq. I make no apology for it. I wish it were more. No country can have an efficient economy if it doesn't have an efficient transportation system and if it doesn't have modern infrastructure. This is one of the bills that tries to meet those demands.

So the President, if he wants, can invent a disagreement with the Congress and veto the bill if he wants. But I think the American people will recognize, the American taxpayer will recognize, while they may not agree with every choice made in the bill, that this is a far more reasonable response to the future needs of the country than is the President's very pinched view of the investment needs that we have here at home.

So I would urge support to this bill on both sides of the aisle. It's been put together on a bipartisan basis. To my knowledge, every single Republican on the subcommittee signed the conference report. I think that there is not really very much in terms of policy which would recommend a ''no'' vote on this bill. And I urge Members to recognize that we've got an obligation to deal with the needs of the least visible people in our society, the least powerful, and the least well connected. This is one of the bills that tries to do that.

I urge an ''aye'' vote for the bill.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield as much time as he may wish to consume to the gentleman who is the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. LEWIS from California.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I appreciate very much my colleague yielding. And before making the remarks I have in mind, I want to extend my congratulations to the chairman and the ranking member for a very thoughtful effort to put together a very reasonable bill, while it is a bit over the funding levels of the President, and as a result of that I'll probably vote against it.

I had not planned to speak on this bill, for I had an understanding from the other side that maybe neither the chairman or the ranking member would spend too much time speaking.

I must say that some years ago it was my privilege to chair this subcommittee, and I took that responsibility very, very seriously. I know that the chairman of the committee has been very frustrated with me this year as I've suggested, more than one time, that the solution on the other side to every problem, it seems, is to throw more money at it.

And the chairman just was wringing his hands a bit about the section 8 funding in this bill and suggesting we certainly should be doing a better job.

Well, let me say, Mr. Speaker, we absolutely should be doing a better job.

And back then, when I had a chance to chair this subcommittee, I spent some time with then-Secretary Henry, under a different administration than this one, and he and I went to section 8 housing circumstances and both wrung our hands with some frustration about the way many of those housing authorities are operating and the way they're using the money that we send out there to help the poorest of the poor have a chance for reasonable housing.

We found that there were some serious questions to be raised, and that led to a thing called the Housing Fraud Initiative. And we gave extra money to the Inspector General of the Housing Authority, and the Inspector General went around the country, and, indeed, found serious problems in any number of housing authorities about the way the money was being spent that supposedly was designed for the poorest of the poor.

It is not a fact that those housing authorities automatically respond in a way that would reflect the best use of our money. And if that's an illustration, indeed, the chairman has made my point. We don't solve problems by just throwing money, especially if we're not willing to follow the money and see if it's getting to the people we pretend to want to help in the first place.

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

I hesitate to get involved between my chairman and my big ranking member here, but since they've gotten into it and the ranking member has made the comment that every suggestion that we make is to throw money at the problem, I just wanted to point out that the President has actually indicated that he will veto this legislation. It provides $3 billion more in budget authority than he requested in the original budget.

And I'd like to remind people on both sides of the aisle that in each of the last 6 years, each of the last 6 years, the President, rightly, signed transportation and housing budgets into law that were above his initial request. The irony here is that in fiscal year 2003, the President signed into law the transportation and housing budgets that were over $9 billion above his request. Ours is 3, on budget authority. And in fiscal 2004 it was $4.2 billion above his request, and in fiscal 2006 it was $7 billion above the President's request.

□ 1630

And he did that at times, he signed those bills, without a whimper, without any objection, when the deficits, the budget deficits, were much larger than they are today. This bill is a responsible piece of legislation, and I hope that it will be adopted.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), who is the authorizing Chair for the housing portion of this legislation.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Prior to my speaking, Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Are we debating the Defense appropriations bill here?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. We are debating the conference report on H.R. 3074.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Is the subject matter of that HUD or Defense?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk has reported the title of the bill. Would the gentleman like it to be restated?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will re-report the title of the bill.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was confused, Mr. Speaker, because I had to go up to the Rules Committee and I came back and I heard the gentleman from California saying stop throwing money at the problem, that's not the way to solve the problem. And when I think about what we're throwing money at, I assumed we were talking about the Defense bill and Iraq and reconstruction, because so much money has been thrown at that, none of us can keep track of it. Then it turns out he's talking about a relatively small increase in CDBG. I certainly agree we should not solve problems by throwing money at them. That, however, led me to think we must be talking about the bill that spends so much more money than anything else and that has had more documented waste and abuse and fraud, the Defense bill and the Iraq spending, than all the other appropriations bills put together.

As to this bill, now that I know what we're talking about, not to be taken for granted on the floor of this House, I want to be congratulate the gentleman from Massachusetts for doing an excellent job with the limited resources he was given, far too limited.

There is an increase in here for the Community Development Block Grant program. The President apparently wanted to continue his path of reducing Community Development Block Grants, having them be lower than they were years ago when he came into office. In fact, that is a very important program for our municipalities, and I am very pleased to see that it is not being reduced.

As to section 8, every year when the Republicans were in power, we would approach the point when we were running out of section 8s. And as a member of the committee that has the authorization role here, we would hear from Members, Democratic and Republican, about the importance of keeping this going. Now, I agree it should be improved. And what we have done here in this House, we began something last year but we finished it this year and sent it to the Senate. We passed a bill we called SEVRA, the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act. So, yes, we think there should be reform. This House has passed on a bipartisan basis, support from everybody in the authorizing committee, a bill to improve it. So we are trying to make things better. And I guarantee you that you will not find anywhere under HUD, and I know a lot about that department, anything like the wanton expenditure waste that we have seen in Iraq and elsewhere.

What the gentleman from Massachusetts has done in the housing area is sensibly to respond to important needs. I particularly want to say earlier this year, the Secretary of HUD, Secretary Jackson, asked me to meet with a group called ADAPT. These are people who represent people with disabilities. They were concerned about the availability of section 8 vouchers for people with disabilities, particularly those who may have been turned away from public housing projects. In response to that, in collaboration, the bill we have today increases that pool of vouchers. Now, they're not earmarked for that group, and we will have further conversations about how to deal with that, but there are additional vouchers here that the Secretary of HUD came to me and said, look, will you listen to this group and try to respond? And these are vouchers that respond to their needs.

I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts. I wish he was able to throw money at the problem. I wish we had a set of priorities in this country that were more respectful of genuine human needs. But given the limited resources he has, he and his subcommittee have done an excellent job.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman that just spoke talked about how the committee had done so well with such limited resources and makes it sound like this is positively a skinflint bill, that we're just making do with what we have.

The truth is we are well over the President's budget that he submitted. Let me just give people a flavor for what's in this bill. This is just a slice of the 150 pages of earmarks, more than 1,000 earmarks that were in this bill, 21 of them air-dropped last night that we had no idea were here until today, but here is just an example of some of them in the House-passed version:

There is $100,000 for the Crystal Lake Art Center in Frankfort, Michigan; $750,000 to the Detroit Science Center in Detroit, Michigan; $300,000 for the Houston zoo; $200,000 for the Huntsville Museum of Art in Huntsville, Alabama; $100,000 for the Los Angeles Fashion District in Los Angeles, California; $150,000 for the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Flushing, New York; $50,000 for the National Mule and Packers Museum in Bishop, California; $150,000 to the Renaissance Art Center, Inc., in Rupert, Idaho; $200,000 to the Fruitvale Cultural and Performing Arts Center in Oakland, California; $100,000 for the 1924 Vaudeville Theater in Plattsburgh, New York; $200,000 for the Hunting and Fishing Museum of Pennsylvania; $100,000 for the Lincoln Museum in Hodgenville, Kentucky.

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

Mr. FLAKE. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. OLVER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would just point out that every one that you have recited, and I have listened to probably 18 or 20 of them along the way, every one of them was in the legislation as it passed the House of Representatives.

Mr. FLAKE. That is correct.

Mr. OLVER. They were not air-dropped, as has been suggested.

Mr. FLAKE. No. These were all in the House version, the House version that we had just a couple of days to digest, and we were only able to offer in reality few amendments in keeping with the comity of the House.

This shouldn't substitute for real vetting or real scrutiny when you have earmarks like this. And particularly, I didn't mention and I could read the 21 air-dropped earmarks, the ones that were put in last night that because the majority has waived the rules, we have no ability to actually challenge. We don't know if these earmarks are meritorious or not because they were air-dropped in last night. I'm reading these that were in the House-passed version of the bill.

Let me read through a few more and maybe this will clarify it: $150,000 for the Atlanta Botanical Gardens in Atlanta, Georgia; $275,000 for the Berkshire Music Hall in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; $400,000 to the Bel Alton High School Alumni Association in Maryland; $500,000 for the Los Angeles County Fire Museum in Bellflower, California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will advise Members that the gentleman from Massachusetts has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 18 minutes remaining.

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

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

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to adjourn.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 154, nays 252, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 1100]

YEAS—154

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Coble
Cole (OK)
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
Dent
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
Kingston
Kuhl (NY)
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—252

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Burgess
Butterfield
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Fortenberry
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Poe
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—26

Baird
Bono
Capuano
Carson
Cubin
Delahunt
Dingell
Doyle
Gilchrest

Gutierrez	Murphy, Tim	Waters
Hunter	Oberstar	Watson
Jindal	Paul	Weller
Levin	Ruppersberger	Wilson (NM)
Mack	Rush	Wilson (OH)
McCollum (MN)	Sessions	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded there are 1½ minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1700

Messrs. PALLONE, MELANCON, POE, REYES, DAVIS of Virginia, TIERNEY and PAYNE and Ms. BERKLEY changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the motion to adjourn was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1100, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Stated against:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1100, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1100, had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 18 minutes remaining.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

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

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to enter into the RECORD two more letters, which I have in hand now, one from The United States Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the National Associations of Local Housing Finance Agencies, the Association for County Community and Economic Development, and the National Community Development Association in support of the conference report on H.R. 3074. And also, the second letter from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urging support of the conference report for H.R. 3074, signed by the executive director of the U.S. Chamber.

NOVEMBER 14, 2007.

Hon. JOHN W. OLVER,

Chair, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing And Urban Development and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OLVER: The undersigned organizations of local elected and appointed officials urge passage of the conference report on H.R. 3074 that provides funding of transportation and housing programs at $105.6 billion. Housing and community development is a major challenge. Local government officials know that decent, safe, affordable housing is at the core of family stability and strong neighborhoods. Your bill will assist us in achieving affordable housing and community development goals.

H.R. 3074 provides funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Public Housing, Section 8, Homeless, and other housing and community development programs. As you know, more than 260 mayors signed a letter calling for increased funding for the CDBG program. HOME continues to be an effective affordable housing program having assisted the development and rehabilitation of nearly 900,000 affordable homes for very low and moderate-income families. These are just two examples of effective programs. Virtually every housing and community development program in your bill can be cited as having an exemplary record.

We urge the House to pass the conference report to the bill, H.R. 3074.

Sincerely,

The United States Conference of Mayors; National Association of Counties; National Associations of Local Housing Finance Agencies; National Association for County Community and Economic Development; and National Community Development Association.

NOVEMBER 13, 2007.

To: The Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of ever size, sector, and region, strongly urges you to support the conference report for H.R. 3074, the ''Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008.'' This bill provides the necessary funding to ensure that the U.S. transportation system is the safest and most efficient in the world.

The business community depends on a safe and reliable transportation system to remain competitive and efficient. The nation's transportation system is the foundation of the nation's economy. If the investments necessary to maintain this foundation are not made, the U.S. economy win suffer. The inadequate surface transportation system costs the economy $63 billion annually in lost time and fuel.

H.R. 3074 addresses the enormous demands of the nation's transportation infrastructure system by providing funding for the highway and transit programs authorized by Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU), which President Bush signed into law two years ago as well as funding for the Federal Aviation Administration to improve the safety, performance and capacity of the nation's aviation system.

While the Chamber strongly supports passage of H.R. 3074, it is important to note that the Chamber is disappointed that H.R. 3074 under-funds public transportation by $81 million. These investments are vital to the safety of our system and the health of the nation's economy. It is imperative that commitments made under SAFETEA–LU be maintained as is required by law.

For these reasons, the Chamber urges you to support the conference report for H.R. 3074 and may consider using votes on, or in relation to, this issue in our annual How They Voted scorecard.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the conference report on H.R. 3074 provides critical funding for construction of new roads, repairs, and overall improvements to our Nation's infrastructure. The legislation also provides needed funding for housing vouchers and new vouchers for veterans and disabled and low-income families.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to passing a funding bill that has a positive economic impact on our Nation, none is more important than the fiscal year appropriation for the Departments of Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development.

America's transportation system is being stretched beyond its capacity. Both public and private usage of highways, transit, and aviation systems are increasing at rates far outpacing infrastructure investment. A decaying surface transportation system costs the U.S. economy $78 billion annually in lost time and fuel while congestion adds significant pollution to the air, and substandard roads claim thousands of lives every year.

By investing $40 billion in the Nation's highway system for construction of new roads, repairs and improvements and $1 billion to address deficient bridges across America, H.R. 3074 honors the commitments to capital investment in highway and public transportation infrastructure made by Congress in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) and will not increase the Federal budget deficit.

This bill also addresses many of our Nation's pressing housing needs, at a time when we are facing a housing crisis that has directly impacted millions of American homeowners and millions more as the effects have rippled through the U.S. and world economy. National estimates indicate that as many as 2.5 million mortgages will reset to higher interest rates in the near future.

The fiscal year 2008 appropriation for the Department of Housing and Urban Development also addresses the plight of homeless veterans. According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, one out of every three homeless men who is sleeping in a doorway, alley or box in our cities and rural communities has put on a uniform and served this country. By providing $75 million in housing vouchers to homeless veterans, we are beginning to address this problem by providing safe, affordable, permanent housing access to 7,500 of our homeless veterans.

Another housing program strongly supported by my constituents that this bill funds is the Section 8 Project Based Vouchers. If passed the conference report will allocate $6.4 billion, $405 million above 2007 and $568 million above the President's request, to provide affordable housing to 1.3 million low- and very low-income families and individuals, two-thirds of whom are elderly or disabled.

When we pass this bill today and send it to the President, the House of Representatives will be addressing the important challenges of keeping our Nation's transportation system safe and strong, ensuring that every American has adequate shelter, and doing so in a way that strengthens the economy.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report for the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations for 2008.

The funding provided in the conference report helps enhance our national transportation system at a critical time. Our transportation system is extended beyond its capacity. Public

and private use of highways, transit, and aviation systems are growing far beyond the current level of investment.

I am particularly pleased the agreement provides funds for a number of important projects not just in my own district but throughout Colorado. Our State faces a number of transportation challenges as a result of rapid expansion in the northwest Denver sububs and mountain and resort communities. Without the passage of this conference report, critical transportation and infrastructure needs for Colorado and the Nation will continue to be shortchanged.

I am committed to continue working with the rest of the Colorado delegation, local communities, the Transportation Committee and the administration to secure essential Federal funding to get people and goods from one place to another with a focus on transit and other transportation alternatives, and improving current modes of Colorado's transportation network.

The report also includes a number of important provisions with national implications.

The United States and Colorado are facing a housing crisis that has caused dire impacts to millions of homeowners. Very often a home purchase represents the largest single investment that individuals and families will make in their lifetimes. Homeownership is a cornerstone of the American Dream, and Congress needs to treat it as a top priority. I am pleased the report provides additional funding for counseling assistance for at-risk homeowners. Funding in the bill will assist thousands of borrowers with mortgage changes and restructuring to help them keep their homes.

I am also pleased the report makes changes to inequities in the retirement age of U.S. pilots. Like the Senate bill, the report raises the mandatory retirement age for pilots to 65, with certain exceptions. I supported similar provisions that passed the House in the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration. We must take urgent action to ensure that more competent pilots are not lost.

Mr. Speaker this legislation is far from perfect but by passing the conference report, Congress will maintain its commitment to a safe, efficient and competitive transportation system that will fuel job creation. I urge its passage today.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. LEWIS OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the conference report?

Mr. LEWIS of California. In its present form, I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. LEWIS of California moves to recommit the conference report on the bill, H.R. 3074, to the committee of conference.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. LEWIS 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 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the conference report.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 182, nays 231, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 1101]

YEAS—182

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
King (IA)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—231

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Klein (FL)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Lampson
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Bono
Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Gutierrez
Hunter
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Keller
Langevin
Levin
Mack
Miller (NC)
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Watson
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1718

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1101, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on the previous motion to recommit vote, in light of the new extraordinary and difficult and strenuous voting time, I was unavoidably delayed in an Iraq briefing. If I was present, I would have voted ''nay'' on the motion to recommit on the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, during the previous vote on the motion to recommit, number 1101 on H.R. 3074, I was unavoidably detained and I missed that vote. I would like the record to show that I would have voted ''nay.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 270, nays 147, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 1102]

YEAS—270

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Camp (MI)
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hayes
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
LaTourette
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—147

Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
English (PA)
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Granger
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Lamborn
Latham
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rehberg
Reynolds
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Simpson
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—15

Bishop (UT)
Bono
Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Gutierrez
Jindal
Levin
Mack
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Watson
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The Speaker pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised they now have less than 2 minutes remaining in which to cast their vote.

□ 1725

Mr. TURNER changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the conference report 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. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1102, I was unable to vote due to medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I was unavoidably detained and could not cast my vote for H.R. 3074, on agreeing to the Conference Report for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing, and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 2008.

Had I been able to cast my vote, I would have voted "yea" for H.R. 3074.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 258. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1429) ''An Act to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.''.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4156, ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up H. Res. 818 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 818

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4156) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions of the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 4156 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

□ 1730

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself 6 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 818.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 818 provides for consideration of H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act of 2008. The rule provides 2 hours of debate and provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq has gone on for nearly 5 years. Thousands of our brave men and women have lost their lives. Many more thousands have returned home with injuries so severe that they will require a lifetime of medical treatments.

We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on the war, virtually none of it paid for, almost all of it on our national credit card. That means that the bill will be paid for not by us, but by our kids and our grandkids.

The war has diminished our standing in the world. It has distracted us from the war in Afghanistan, the very place where those responsible for 9/11 are now regrouping. And it has put incredible strain on the readiness of our Armed Forces.

The President of the United States and many of my Republican friends have argued fiercely over the years for a blank check. They want no strings, no conditions, no benchmarks, no end dates, no accountability, no nothing.

Today, they will tell us that the President's strategy is working; that the recent decrease in deaths and casualties in certain areas of Iraq prove it, and, therefore, we should provide yet another blank check.

Mr. Speaker, let me caution my friends about declaring ''mission accomplished'' yet again. While all of us pray that the violence continues to subside, we should also appreciate history enough to know that lulls in intense violence are not always permanent. Let me also state that the current levels of violence in Iraq are still unacceptably high.

As Joe Christoff of the Government Accountability Office recently testified, this recent reduction in violence should be put into the proper context as it coincides with increased sectarian cleansing and a massive refugee displacement. Let me quote:

''You know, we look at the attack data going down, but it's not taking into consideration that there might be fewer attacks because you have ethnically cleansed neighborhoods, particularly in the Baghdad area. It's produced 2.2 million refugees that have left, and it's produced 2 million internally displaced persons within the country as well.''

Mr. Speaker, we must remember that the justification for the surge and the justification for the Bush military strategy in Iraq has always been to foster Iraqi political reconciliation. And there is precious little evidence of any such thing.

Over 10 months ago, President Bush said, ''A successful strategy for Iraq goes beyond military operations. Ordinary Iraqi citizens must see that military operations are accompanied by visible improvements in their neighborhoods and communities. So America will hold the Iraqi Government to the benchmarks it has announced.''

But, Mr. Speaker, as the GAO reported last month, ''Iraq has not yet advanced key legislation on equitably sharing oil revenues and holding provincial elections. In addition, sectarian influences within Iraqi ministries continue while militia influences divide the loyalties of Iraqi security forces.''

Mr. Speaker, the Maliki government continues to be corrupt, inept and without the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people. When will the Bush administration live up to its word and hold the Iraqi Government accountable for its actions, or inaction?

The fundamental crisis facing Iraq remains the same: the inability of Sunni, Shiites and Kurds to agree to set aside their sectarian divisions and live in peace. As long as we remain there indefinitely, Mr. Speaker, there is no incentive for anything to change.

Mr. Speaker, our soldiers have already given so much to create an opportunity for the Iraqi Government, an opportunity that that government has squandered. So, today, we are saying we want a different course. We reject the President's vision of an endless war that will cost more lives and bankrupt our Nation.

Today, we will vote on a bill that requires the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq to begin within 30 days of enactment, with a target for completion of December 15, 2008. It would prohibit the deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq who are not fully trained and equipped. And it changes the mission of our forces.

It also extends to all government agencies and personnel the limitations in the Army Field Manual on permissible interrogation techniques, which means that torture will be absolutely banned, and anyone who engages in such practices will be committing a crime under U.S. law, no ands, ifs or buts.

Mr. Speaker, it is no longer acceptable for Congress to simply write yet another blank check. It is not acceptable for the President to simply run out the clock and hand this problem off to his successor.

This is a war that George Bush started, and this is a war that he needs to end. For the sake of our troops, for the sake of our country, we need to support this legislation. Enough is enough.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise to express my appreciation to my friend from Worcester for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as I listened to my long-time Rules Committee colleague, the gentleman from Worcester, I am reminded of a great speech that was delivered last Friday. Last Friday, our very distinguished colleague, the Senator from Connecticut, JOE LIEBERMAN, in an address, said something that I think encapsulates exactly what we just heard from my very good friend.

Senator LIEBERMAN, in speaking of the Democratic Party, and he is now an independent Democrat, sometimes I see him listed as a Democrat, I know he organizes with the Democrats, he is listed as an independent as well, he said, ''The Democrats are emotionally invested in a narrative of defeat.''

Mr. Speaker, I have got to say as I listened to the words of my colleague from Worcester, I can't help but think that Senator LIEBERMAN was right on target when he used that language, ''emotionally invested in a narrative of defeat.'' I was so struck with that when I heard it that I committed it to memory, and I think, again, it really takes on exactly what we have just heard.

It comes as no surprise that I rise in very, very strong, vigorous opposition to this rule and the underlying legislation as well. We have had 40 votes on Iraq policy, and today's bill brings us to vote No. 41. Not one, Mr. Speaker, not one of the withdrawal bills went through the normal legislative process. Not one, not one of these 41 measures is the product of a committee markup. Not one got its own hearing. Not one has been brought up under an even slightly open process, allowing for amendment, and consequently not allowing for any kind of real debate.

Mr. Speaker, most telling of all, not one has been enacted into law.

Now, we all know that the Democrats control both the House and the Senate, and still they cannot produce a single legislative victory on Iraq. Not once, not twice, not 10 times. Forty times. Mr. Speaker, 40 times we have gone through the motions of their failed, bankrupt strategy. I can't recall a more naked display of demagoguery.

Now we come to vote No. 41. It has all the hallmarks of the Democratic majority's work: no deliberation, no gesture towards bipartisanship, and no hope of being enacted.

But there is something different about the vote this time, and that is context. We are considering this vote in a much different context than we have the 40 previous votes that we have addressed on this. In fact, our colleague in the Senate, JOHNNY ISAKSON, Senator ISAKSON, said this debate was understandable in May. He said in July, it was questionable. He said now it is absolutely ridiculous.

For many months, the situation in Iraq has been very bleak. While there were many promising signs of progress, the turnaround in al Anbar province most notably, the overall picture was one of great challenges and struggles. I have argued repeatedly that a precipitous withdrawal would only create more challenges, and, Mr. Speaker, I have highlighted the signs of progress amid the struggles all along.

But today, the tide is turning in Iraq. We are seeing far more than pockets of success, as my friend has said. We are seeing a dramatic shift in the landscape. It began in al Anbar, as I have said. The Sunni sheiks there turned on al Qaeda, joined with the largely Shiite Iraqi army and with coalition forces, and reclaimed the province. Ramadi, its capital, the city that we have all heard of described as the most dangerous city in the world just a year ago, hasn't had an attack in 3 months. The city and the province are rebuilding. They are constructing small business centers so that the entrepreneurial spirit of Iraqis can flourish once again.

A delegation, including the Anbar governor, the Ramadi mayor, several prominent religious leaders and Ahmed Abu Risha, the brother of Sheik Sattar Abu Risha, the father of the Sunni Awakening, was just here in Washington a couple of weeks ago. They came here, Mr. Speaker, to spend several days receiving training in institution building, good governance, transparency and the rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, these are Anbar's political, business and religious leaders, not coming here to seek security assistance, not seeking military assistance. They have achieved security in al Anbar. Now what they want, Mr. Speaker, is help from us in their quest to build a democracy. But, most important of all, they are serving as a model for the rest of Iraq.

Prior to their trip, they participated with Shiite leaders in a summit in Karbala. Sheiks from Karbala and Najaf, Iraq's two holiest cities for Shiite Muslims, reached out to their Sunni brothers in Anbar and asked for their help in combating al Qaeda. This comes at a time when Sunni and Shiite leaders in Baghdad are reaching out to each other to begin the process of reconciliation as well.

Baghdad's notorious Adhamiya neighborhood that we have heard so much about, formerly the site of some of Iraq's worst sectarian violence, is now a place where Sunni and Shiite sheiks are meeting regularly to discuss how to bring their people together, just the things that my friend from Worcester said are so imperative. They are taking place at this very moment.

Now, all of this has been possible, Mr. Speaker, because of the dramatic drop in violence brought about by General Petraeus' counterinsurgency strategy. This strategy, which included the surge, has resulted in months of plummeting IED attacks, plummeting American troop deaths, plummeting Iraqi civilian deaths, and plummeting sectarian attacks.

Many of my colleagues have pointed out that this has been the deadliest year for American troops yet in Iraq, and, Mr. Speaker, I will acknowledge that this has been the deadliest year for American troops in Iraq. And it is true over the past year we have tragically seen that great number. But that does not reflect what is happening now in this post-surge world.

□ 1745

The past few months have seen the most dramatic decline in the deaths of American troops because we have had a new strategy. Mr. Speaker, we have had a new strategy, and that strategy is working. And perhaps most important for all of us, that strategy has enabled our military commanders to begin a drawdown in U.S. troop levels.

Not because of artificial timetables. Not because of the micromanagement of Members of Congress from the comfort of our offices thousands of miles away from the front lines. But by empowering our commanders on the ground, they have created a stable security situation that is allowing for both the beginnings of Iraqi reconciliation and the safe withdrawal of our troops.

Mr. Speaker, the big question for today is this: Will the dramatic improvement in Iraq prove to be a true turning point or nothing more than a lull in the war? I don't know the answer to that. Neither outcome is a foregone conclusion. Whether it is a major turning point in the war or just a lull, no one knows for sure. What we do know now will profoundly affect the future of Iraq. Will we fund our troops and empower our commanders to continue to do what is best for our long-term interests? Or will we pull the rug out from under them now at the precise moment they have achieved what we have asked of them?

As one of my friends just said to me, it seems like our friends on the other side of the aisle want defeat before we can win.

For my colleagues who would resort to the latter option out of political expediency, Mr. Speaker, let me remind them of another war our men and women are fighting. Today our troops are also battling a very real enemy in Afghanistan.

We got a terrible reminder just a few days ago of the viciousness of that fight when six of our counterparts, members of the Afghan Parliament, were brutally targeted in the worst attack in Afghanistan's history, and I would like to express my appreciation for the bipartisan support that my colleague, DAVID PRICE, and I offered as leaders of the House Democracy Assistance Commission.

We have been working with those parliamentarians in Afghanistan, and we are hoping to work with those in Iraq as soon as possible. And we once again express our condolences to the people of Afghanistan who have suffered the single worst attack in their nation's history when a week ago yesterday six parliamentarians and 44 other people were brutally murdered.

Let me also remind my colleagues that this war that we are seeing in Afghanistan is not our first war in Afghanistan. Many of us were intricately involved in their war against the Soviets in the 1980s, many Members who are still here today. And what did we do after the Soviets were defeated? We withdraw and left the Afghans to fend for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget that democracy is hard work. For over a decade, unfortunately, in Afghanistan we indulged in the luxury of ignoring what was going on there. And then on a sunny Tuesday six Septembers ago, 3,000 Americans paid a horrible price for that mistake.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot refuse to learn from history or we are doomed to repeat it. Our support for our troops in Iraq has earned us a far more stable, secure situation. And yet what does the Democratic leadership propose to do? Their bill would reward our military commanders' success by cutting them off.

It would provide constitutional protections for terrorists, while leaving our veterans, including Iraq veterans, without funding. It would force the same disastrous, shortsighted withdrawal that led to the terrorist sanctuary in Afghanistan. It would do all of this at a time when we are achieving not just pockets of success in Iraq but broad-based improvements, and at a time when Republicans have been trying every possible means to get an appropriations bill for our veterans to the President, which he will certainly sign if we can ever get it to him.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic majority's priorities, foolhardy policies, and constitutional rights for terrorists have never been so out of whack. I suppose we can take comfort in the fact that this is all a meaningless charade that will never be enacted, because we all know this will never be enacted. But that is a hollow comfort when we consider our troops in harm's way and our veterans in need.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very cruel comfort for the families of those who have made incredible sacrifices in this war.

I often think of my good friend, Ed Blecksmith, a former marine and the father of JP Blecksmith, also a marine, who died in November 2004 just 3 years ago in the very famous battle of Fallujah. I have talked about the Blecksmith family here on the House floor many, many times. I didn't know JP, but from everything that I have read, and I have a recent article that has just come out about him, he was a very talented young man with a very bright future. He had so many opportunities before him, and he chose to be a marine because he wanted to serve as his father had done. His family proudly, but soberly, supported him. As a

former marine, Ed Blecksmith knew in a very real way the cost of war. JP Blecksmith would not return to his family, having made the ultimate sacrifice.

And his father said something to me that I will never forget. He looked me in the eye and asked me to make sure that we complete his son's mission in Iraq. He has said to me on countless occasions, You must complete the mission or my son JP will have died in vain.

Mr. Speaker, it is deeply heartening to see the beginnings of victory. And no, I am not saying ''mission accomplished'' or anything like that because we know full well that we have difficult days ahead. But it is deeply heartening to see the beginnings of victory in Iraq, for JP's sake and for the sake of all who have paid a very dear price.

We have a profound responsibility to allow our commanders to continue on this path.

Mr. Speaker, after 41, 41 wasted efforts, I can only hope that the Democratic leadership will finally abandon empty demagoguery for substantive legislation, meaningful debate, and a quest at bipartisanship so we can work with the President to come to an agreement. Until that time, I urge my colleagues to reject this closed rule and the terribly wrongheaded policy that it seeks to shield.

[From Details, Holiday 2007]

THE FALLEN: 2ND LIEUTENANT JP BLECKSMITH, 24

(By Jeff Gordinier)

On the night before 2nd Lieutenant JP Blecksmith shipped out to Iraq, after his family took him out for dinner in Newport Beach, California, his older brother, Alex, picked up a pair of clippers and shaved JP's head. When that was done and JP looked ready for combat, Alex gave his brother a hug. Then Alex climbed into JP's green Ford Expedition and drove it north, back to the family's house in San Marino, weeping part of the way. He had a feeling. So did his parents. A premonition. They didn't talk about it much, but two months later, in November 2004, when JP joined a wave of U.S. Marines roaring into the city of Fallujah as part of Operation Phantom Fury, the feeling intensified.

On the night of November 10, Blecksmith and his closest friend in Iraq, Lieutenant Sven Jensen, slept on a rooftop in Fallujah. It was, miraculously, a quiet night, and chilly. They got a decent night's sleep. They awoke just before sunrise and were amused to find a small pet bird with green wings and a yellow belly perched a couple of feet away from their faces. Jensen took a picture of the bird. There were other ones like it all over Iraq, because when U.S. troops were searching abandoned houses, they often found cages that had been left behind. The soldiers let the birds go free so they wouldn't starve to death.

Hours before, JP had sent a letter to his girlfriend, addressing it formally, as always, to ''Ms. Emily M. Tait.'' In it he wrote, ''By the time you receive this, you will know we have gone into the city. We've been preparing for it the last few days, and my guys are ready for the fight, and I'm ready to lead them. It'll be hectic, and there will be some things out of my control, but the promise of you waiting at home for me is inspiring and a relief.'' Now he was in the thick of it. Blecksmith and Jensen came down from the roof, ate their MREs for breakfast, and got their orders. Before the invasion the battalion commander, Colonel Patrick Malay, had given his men an analogy: '' 'Imagine a dirty, filthy windowpane that has not been cleaned in hundreds of years,' '' he recalls saying. ''That's how we looked at the city of Fallujah. Our job was to scrub the heck out of that city, and then take a squeegee and wipe it off so that it was clean and pure.'' Most of Fallujah was empty, and anyone left in the city was presumed to be an insurgent.

Blecksmith and the other members of the India Company of the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines Regiment, moved south through the city, with their blood types scrawled in indelible marker on the sleeves of their uniforms. The streets smelled terrible—a stubborn aroma of rotting food and bodies. Late in the day on November 11, things started to go wrong. A marine in Blecksmith's platoon, Klayton South, was shot in the mouth by an insurgent when he kicked open the door of a house. Blood gushed from his mangled teeth and tongue. The medics cut into South's throat to give him an emergency tracheotomy. (He survived. He's since had more than 40 operations to repair the damage.) ''It shook the platoon up,'' Jensen says now, ''and JP was the most in-control person I saw. He had a sector to clear, so he rallied his guys and said, 'Okay, we've got to continue clearing.' '' Blecksmith's and Jensen's platoons moved off in different directions, and the two friends shot each other a glance. ''I'll never forget looking at his eyes the last time I saw him,'' Jensen says. ''He turned and he gave me almost an apprehensive look, like, Oh, s-it, we've got some s-it going on. I wanted to say 'Hey, I'll see you later.' But I didn't say anything to him.''

Minutes later, Blecksmith led his platoon into a house and climbed a flight of stairs to the roof to survey the surrounding landscape. Shots came from a building across the street. Blecksmith stood up to direct the squads under his command, shouting at them to take aim at the enemy nest. He was tall, and was now visible above the protective wall. ''He was up front a lot, and he made a big target, and we'd talked to him about that,'' Colonel Malay says. ''He exposed himself consistently to enemy fire in the execution of his duties. He displayed a fearlessness to the point that we had to talk to him about the fact that nobody is bulletproof.''

As Blecksmith stood on the roof, a sniper's 7.62-mm bullet found one of the places on his body where he was vulnerable. It was a spot on his left shoulder, less than an inch above the rim of his protective breastplate. The bullet sliced downward diagonally, coming to rest in his right hip, and along the way it tore through his heart. ''I'm hit,'' Blecksmith said. He fell. He raised his head for a moment, and that was it. A Navy medic got to Blecksmith immediately, but he was already dead, and his men carried his heavy body back down the stairs. He was 24.

That night in San Marino, Alex Blecksmith came home from work and noticed that the house was dark. He opened the front door and saw his mother, Pam, sitting at the kitchen table with a couple of marines in dress blues and white gloves, and he heard the phrase ''We regret to inform you . . .''

The funeral was so magnificent, so full of pageantry, that at times it was difficult for Alex to remember that the guy being buried was his brother. The Marines do it right when it comes to honoring the fallen. They do it so right that you can get swept up in the ceremony and feel as though you're watching a parade. The funeral took place at the Church of Our Saviour in San Gabriel—the church where the most celebrated of San Marino's favorite sons, General George S. Patton, had been baptized as a baby. As the flag-draped casket was carried out of the sanctuary and into the California sun, a long, silent line of almost 2,000 people followed. There were marines and midshipmen and local firefighters in uniform. There was a 21-gun salute. Four World War II fighter planes swooped toward the cemetery in the ''missing man'' formation—just as they passed over the funeral, the fourth plane symbolically split from the quartet and veered into the sky. A bagpiper played a Scottish dirge. One of JP's old friends would later observe that the day, in all of its glory and pomp, made him think of Princess Diana's wedding.

As public support for the war in Iraq wavers, it's easy to forget that people like JP Blecksmith even exist. The American military is so predominantly blue-collar that we tend to assume that the sons and daughters of the rich never voluntarily die in warfare anymore. Blecksmith was born in September 1980, just weeks before his state's own Ronald Reagan was elected president, and he spent most of his youth in the small Los Angeles County town of San Marino during what felt, for many of its wealthy and conservative inhabitants, like something of a ''Leave It to Beaver'' golden age. To look at a photograph of him, blue-eyed and suntanned and grinning, is to understand the enduring magnetism of the word ''California.'' He stood six foot three and weighed 225 pounds. His chest was a keg; his biceps were gourds. His biography reads as though it were scripted by a Hollywood publicist: legendary quarterback on the Flintridge Prep football team, track star, graduate of the United States Naval Academy.

His father, Ed Blecksmith, who is 64, runs an executive-recruiting firm in Los Angeles. He and Pam met in the early seventies, while both were working in the White House. Along a wall leading into their kitchen hang framed Christmas cards from Dick and Pat Nixon. ''Here's a kid,'' Ed says, ''who didn't need to do this.'' It's as though JP were transplanted into our world from the Eisenhower years. Somehow, in an ironic age of Jon Stewart and ''South Park,'' the guy grew up in a kind of pre-Summer of Love bubble in which young men of strength and valor still yearned to distinguish themselves on the battlefield. He was groomed, in a sense, for something that no longer exists, at least not for guys who grow up in the wealthiest zip codes in the country. He believed in ideals of duty and sacrifice that have become, for many men, anachronistic and even unfathomable.

''I was in awe,'' says Peter Twist, Blecksmith's closest friend since preschool. Twist played wide receiver to Blecksmith's quarterback on the Flintridge Prep football team; a local newspaper called the duo ''Fire & Ice.'' Blecksmith was known for being fast, composed, smart, and unflappable, and his giant arms could propel the ball a good 80 yards down the field. If he had an athletic flaw, it was that he was aware of his own flawlessness. ''He had such personal confidence,'' says Tom Fry, a mentor to Blecksmith in high school and one of the assistant coaches on his team. ''He felt that if all the stars aligned, there was nothing he couldn't do—it was JP's world.'' When they graduated in 1999, Twist and a couple other teammates went off to the University of Arizona, where it's safe to say the prospect of partying was on their minds, while Blecksmith opted for the rigors and restrictions of Annapolis. ''I was stoked for the man'' says Twist, 26, who lives in Newport Beach and works in the mortgage business. ''Most of us are still trying to figure it out, but JP always had a goal.''

November 11, the date on which JP Blecksmith died, was noteworthy for other reasons. It's Twist's birthday. It also happens to be the birthday of General Patton, who grew up in San Marino and holds a prominent place in the town's history. This coincidence has only bolstered the mythology of JP Blecksmith—a feeling that it was his destiny to die in combat. The Blecksmiths have a statue of Patton on a shelf in their home, and it becomes clear in conversation that Ed, a decorated Vietnam veteran himself, sees a kind of mystical link between the fate of his son and the military, triumphs of the legendary general (who was a passionate believer, it just so happens, in reincarnation).

Indeed, JP Blecksmith fit the ''hero'' mold in such classic, square jawed American style that a kind of cult of JP has begun to develop in San Marino. They give out awards in his name at the local schools. On the Fourth of July, San Marino hosts a JP Blecksmith 5K run. A Marine Corps training center in Pasadena has been christened Blecksmith Hall. On a hot Sunday morning this past August, Alex parked his brother's Expedition in the cemetery and walked across the grass to the pale granite stone that says JAMES PATRICK BLECKSMITH. An elderly man wandered over to the headstone, hand in hand with a grade-school kid who had a blond Mohawk, and told Alex, ''I never met JP, but I go by here and show my grandson his grave''

THREE YEARS AFTER BLECKSMITH'S death, his bedroom still looks the way it did when he left for Annapolis in 1999. There's a Green Bay Packers poster over the bed, a dense forest of athletic trophies, toy race cars lined up on the dresser. ''This is all his stuff from Iraq that they sent over,'' Alex says, looking down at a cardboard box on the floor. ''We haven't gone through it, really.''

Ed Blecksmith walks into the bedroom, and within a few seconds his voice is cracking and his blue eyes are growing wet. ''It's still tough,'' he says. ''You see all these pictures and things . . .'' He insists on sitting down in front of the TV downstairs and watching DVD footage of that magnificent funeral, fighting back a sob at the moment when one of the eulogists, a Navy SEAL, describes JP as having been ''the best of the best.'' Ed has some Fox News footage, too. In it, you can see JP speaking to his men hours before the battle in Fallujah, and that's where you get a brief glimpse of the regular guy behind the mythology. Because there stands JP, in fatigues and a floppy Boonie hat, holding a map, telling his marines to ''expect everything you can possibly imagine.'' When he looks at the camera for a moment, he's smiling.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 20 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California mischaracterized my position and what I am invested in. I am invested in what is best for this country, Mr. DREIER. And I am invested in what is best for our troops. And I am opposed to this Bush policy of an endless war, and I think it would be a mistake for this Congress to give this President another blank check.

This is not a meaningful charade, Mr. DREIER. Those of us who are arguing for this legislation want to bring this war to an end.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, today's debate is not about political calculation. It is not about public appearance or ready-made slogans. It is not about approval ratings or polls.

Today's debate is about the very future of this country that each one of us loves so dearly. It is a fork in the road. It is a rare opportunity for each of us to chart the course of the Nation we serve by casting a single vote.

Today we can vote for the status quo in Iraq or we can vote for change. For me, this choice is simple. I will vote for change.

The war in Iraq has divided our country for nearly 5 years, longer than our participation in World War II. Its monetary cost has already reached dizzying heights. Measured in casualties lost, lives forever altered, the toll of this war is truly staggering.

That is why we must transcend politics and party loyalty when we vote today. An issue of this magnitude requires each one of us as Members of Congress to vote based on our conscience and obligation to represent our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, on this issue my conscience and my constituents speak loud and clear. They say, We must end this war. Bring our troops home and work to restore our international reputation.

I stand here today in support of this rule and the underlying legislation because it accomplishes each of these three goals:

Within 30 days of enactment, it requires an immediate and orderly redeployment of our military from Iraq. No more delays, Mr. Speaker.

With today's bill, Congress stands with the American people in demanding a swift and responsible conclusion to military engagement in Iraq.

I also support this legislation because of what it does in the long term. It recognizes that we have a moral and strategic obligation to help rebuild Iraq, to avoid leaving a country in shambles.

The legislation before us today requires a comprehensive, diplomatic, political, and economic strategy for Iraq. We must work with our international partners to bring stability to Iraq, and this legislation does so. A renewed commitment to diplomacy is not only the right thing to do to fulfill our commitment to the Iraqi people, it also begins restoring our Nation's standing in the world.

I urge all of my colleagues to stand with the American people by voting for the bill before us today. This legislation takes a strong step forward in ending this long and costly war. In doing so, it is worthy of this House, worthy of the constituents we all serve, and worthy of the sacrifices of our soldiers and their families.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to yield 4 minutes to my distinguished friend from Redlands, I would simply say that my friend from Worcester never mentioned the word ''victory'' in his analysis.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). The Chair advises all Members that prefatory remarks before yielding time will be deducted from their time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I appreciate the Speaker's help in this matter, but in the meantime, I appreciate my colleague yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the wheels have finally come off the appropriations process. One need only to look at the sorry state of affairs in which we find ourselves as we address these appropriations bills.

Earlier today, the House passed a Transportation-HUD appropriations conference report that is $3 billion over the budget request. The President has said he will veto this legislation.

Tomorrow the House will vote to sustain the President's veto on a bloated Labor-HHS bill that is $10 billion over the budget request. That will essentially send the bill back to the drawing board.

And if that is not enough, consider this. It is now 3 days after Veterans Day and there is still no sign of the majority moving to considered the MilCon-VA bill, a freestanding bill identical to the MilCon-VA conference report that was removed from the Labor-HHS conference report by a point of order in the Senate, by the way, in the other body.

That bill was introduced by Congressman WICKER this week. This legislation, which the President said he would sign, could be brought to the House floor today. It now appears that a Democrat majority has no intent of bringing this legislation to the floor before Thanksgiving.

The appropriations process this year has been reduced to what Shakespeare might refer to as ''a tale full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.''

For all of the time and energy put into these bills this year by Members and our overworked, highly professional staff, the end result thus far is all sound and fury and very little to show for it.

That leads us to the legislation we are now considering, the so-called bridge fund. Frankly, that legislation is so ill-conceived and damaging to our troops, I hardly know where to begin.

First, let me say that we learned that this bill would be considered by the Rules Committee while we were waiting for the Rules Committee hearing on the THUD conference report to begin last night. I was given no notice whatsoever, nor was I provided any opportunity to testify. It is a sad state of affairs when the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee isn't even given the courtesy of paper notice

to testify on legislation as important as this. I can't imagine the wails and screaming I would have heard last year if the ranking member had been put in that position.

The House is being asked to consider a funding bill that reflects the priorities of Speaker PELOSI and a deeply divided, extremely left-leaning Democratic Caucus. It attempts to bridge these widening divisions over the war in Iraq through providing funding only on the condition that troops are withdrawn beginning 30 days after the bill's enactment.

□ 1800

Our troops are badly in need of funding to continue their mission, but this legislation ties the hands of our Commander in Chief during a time of war, places military decisions in the hands of the politicians, and micromanages our combatant commanders in whom we place the ultimate responsibility for prosecuting military actions.

If the majority's goal is to end the war or withdraw our troops, then that should be addressed in separate legislation. The majority cannot have it both ways, pretending on the one hand to support our troops while on the other hand undercutting our ability to prosecute their mission.

Men and women of good conscience can disagree about the war in Iraq, but on one thing we must all agree: Our men and women in uniform must continue to receive our unqualified support and the resources they need to complete their mission successfully.

By appeasing the wishes of the Out of Iraq Caucus, the Democrat majority has chosen to place partisan politics above the lives and well-being of our troops in harm's way. This action is reckless and irresponsible. There is absolutely no reason why a clean bridge fund could not have been included within the DOD conference report which the President signed yesterday. Again, the Democrat majority chose to place politics ahead of our troops.

My colleagues, consider carefully the consequences of our actions here today. Passage of the bridge fund legislation in its present form will signal to the insurgents and terrorists that the United States doesn't have the political will to continue supporting the fledgling Iraqi democracy. Al Qaeda and other enemies of freedom will simply lay in wait until our troops are withdrawn. And with the collapse of this fragile democracy, our efforts, and the sacrifices of our troops, will have been for nothing.

There is no question that the President will veto this bill. In the meantime, our troops will face the uncertainty resulting from the majority's mixed signals and lack of a clear commitment.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops and oppose this legislation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, the last person in the world I will take lectures from on the appropriations process is the gentleman from California. The fact is that when he was the chairman of the Appropriations Committee last year, they never bothered to send any veterans health care legislation to the President at all. They simply, after the election, shut down the Congress and went home without sending one dime to veterans.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Would my colleague yield?

Mr. OBEY. No, I will not. You've had your time.

Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate not being interrupted. It's a technique which they use on that side of the aisle time after time. I hope it comes out of their time, not mine.

The fact is that they never bothered to send a dime to the needy veterans of the country. And so it was only after the Democrats took control of the House that we added $3.4 billion to the veterans health care budget and sent it to the President, and then later in the year in the regular bill, we have added $3.6 billion more. So I will be happy to compare the record of this party with his party any time on the issue of veterans health care.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the Chair how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 9 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 19½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and the bill because I believe it does two critical and important things.

First, it provides $50 billion to finance military withdrawal from Iraq, to be completed by the end of next year. I voted against the beginning of the war, and I have consistently tried to end America's involvement in the war. Saddam Hussein is gone, there were no weapons of mass destruction, and there was no Iraqi involvement with al Qaeda or with 9/11. Al Qaeda in Iraq is now in shatters and subject to attack by both Shiites and Sunnis and poses no ongoing threat to the United States. We have no stake in the Iraqi civil war, and it is time to end our occupation.

I signed a letter to the President back in July with over 60 of my colleagues vowing not to support any more money for the war in Iraq unless it was for the protection and redeployment of our troops. I believe this bill is consistent with that commitment. The time has come to end the war, and the money we provide should be used only for that purpose.

The second critical thing this bill does is to end torture by the United States Government. By including in this bill the American Anti-Torture Act, which was introduced by Representative DELAHUNT and myself, we are saying, once and for all, no more torture. The law now requires the Department of Defense to follow the Army Field Manual, which bars torture or cruel and inhuman procedures such as waterboarding. This bill extends these limits to every U.S. government agency, including the CIA, and ensures a single, uniform, baseline standard for all interrogations of people under U.S. control. In short, that means no more waterboarding, no more clever wordplay, no more evasive answers, and no more uncertainty with regard to what is allowed and what is not allowed. It is time to restore the honor of the United States and to force the administration to act in a manner consistent with the Constitution.

When this bill is passed, the President could have two options: He could sign this bill and help bring the war in Iraq to a speedy end. Or he could veto the bill, in which case he will have to explain why he is denying funds for the troops. But we will not vote for further funding without a requirement to withdraw the troops as in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, let's end this war and let's end torture. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my very good friend from Columbus, Indiana (Mr. PENCE), a hardworking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in opposition to the rule and the bill.

The tide is turning in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, but nothing changes on Capitol Hill. Here we go again. Another Democrat plan for redeployment from Iraq, tying some $50 billion in necessary combat funds to a Democrat plan for withdrawal.

With unambiguous evidence of progress on the ground in Iraq, the Democrats in Congress seem to have added denial to their agenda of retreat and defeat. And the evidence of our progress is unambiguous.

I have seen many different Iraqs in my five trips, some hopeful, some not hopeful. But the news coming out of Iraq just in recent days from independent and official sources is encouraging.

U.S. military fatalities are down sharply: 101 Americans lost their lives in uniform in June; 39 in October. Iraqi civilian deaths are down sharply: 1,791 casualties in August; 750 in October. Mortar rocket attacks by insurgents in October were the lowest since February 2006. Iraqi officials say they plan to reduce checkpoints, ease curfews, and

open some roads around Baghdad because of the improving security situation. And this weekend, the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said that sectarian violence between Shia and Sunni in the neighborhoods of Baghdad has declined by more than 75 percent in the last 12 months. And yet here we are again, another plan for retreat and defeat in Iraq.

And it is not just the official sources that say we have made progress. The Associated Press just reported, ''Twilight brings traffic jams to the main shopping district of this once affluent corner of Baghdad, and hundreds of people stroll past well-stocked vegetable stands, bakeries, and butcher shops.''

The Washington Post recently wrote, ''The number of attacks against U.S. soldiers has fallen to levels not seen since before the February 2006 bombing of a Shia shrine in Samarra that touched off waves of sectarian killing.''

And the New York Times noted just last week, '''American forces have routed al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the Iraqi militant network from every neighborhood in Baghdad,' a top general reported today, 'allowing American troops involved in the surge to depart as planned.' ''

I urge my colleagues to reject again this Democrat plan for withdrawal as a part of the supplemental appropriations bill, but I urge my countrymen to give our soldiers a chance. Freedom and stability are beginning to take hold in Iraq. We cannot lose faith in ourselves or in our fighting men and women.

It would be Winston Churchill who exhorted his own people as follows: ''Nothing can save England if she will not save herself. If we lose faith in ourselves, in our capacity to guide and govern, if we lose our will to live, then indeed our story is told. If, while on all sides foreign nations are every day asserting a more aggressive and militant nationalism by arms and trade, we remain paralyzed by our own theoretical doctrines or plunged into the stupor of after-war exhaustion, then indeed all the croakers predict will come true and our ruin will be swift and final.'' So said the man who saved western civilization.

To my countrymen and to my colleagues, I say again: Reject this legislation, give our soldiers in a widening and undeniable success in Iraq a chance, and we will all, Republicans and Democrats, celebrate some day a free and democratic Iraq that will be a legacy for our children and our grandchildren for generations to come.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

The gentleman says give the Iraqi Government a chance. We are on our fifth year, Mr. Speaker. Three American soldiers lost their lives in Iraq yesterday, bringing the total to 3,858 deaths. I think we have given them more than a chance.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON).

Ms. SUTTON. I thank the gentleman for the time.

All of us in this Chamber and in this Nation support our troops. They have fought bravely, with love of this great country uppermost in their hearts. They have done all that we have asked them to do. They have done their job well. And now in this Congress, Mr. Speaker, we must do ours.

The President has indicated that he thinks this war will continue for another decade. But, Mr. Speaker, we must not concede to a 10-year war. Over 3,850 brave American lives have been lost; 163 Ohio soldiers have been killed; more than 28,000 of our Nation's finest have been wounded. The year 2007 has been the deadliest year for U.S. troops since this war began 4½ years ago.

Our troops have been stretched woefully thin, exposing this Nation to greater risk, not less. We have already spent over $450 billion on the war in Iraq. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the President's war policies could cost $2.4 trillion in the next decade. And the President insists in getting that money that it come with no strings, no oversight, no accountability, no questions asked. And, in return, he offers to the American people and to our brave troops no end in sight. It is time for a new direction. We must not proceed further down the road to a 10-year war.

This bill requires a transition in the mission of U.S. forces in Iraq from combat to force and diplomatic protection. It provides for targeted counterterrorism operations. And this bill prohibits deployment to Iraq of troops who are not fully equipped and fully trained. It prohibits the use of torture, as described in the Army Field Manual. And it changes direction from the 10-year war plan being offered by the President toward a responsible plan redeploying our troops, while providing our troops with the resources they need.

When I visited Iraq, I saw some of the hardships and the obstacles our troops face, and I also saw the commitment and dedication in each of those men and women. They truly took my breath away. They deserve a policy that is worthy of their commitment and their sacrifice.

The bill before us today gives our troops the support, the equipment, the training they need to responsibly redeploy. It repairs the readiness of our military and refocuses our efforts on fighting terrorism around the world.

Last November, people across the Nation cast their ballots seeking a change in direction. After more than 4 years and countless taxpayer dollars, this Congress has a responsibility to tell this President that the status quo is not acceptable. It's time to bring a responsible end to the war in Iraq and to focus on fighting terrorism and protecting the Nation.

□ 1815

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I will say to my colleagues that it's very interesting to listen to this debate, because as we've proceeded, I have yet to hear the word ''victory'' come from the other side of the aisle at all. I have yet to hear anyone interested in trying to build a democracy.

Now, we saw three elections take place in Iraq, as we all know, with a 70 percent voter turnout.

We know that there are problems there. My friend from Worcester correctly said that we have problems with corruption in government in Iraq. We've had corruption problems in this country as well. But the fact of the matter is we have seen dramatic improvement. There is no doubt about the fact that we've seen improvement.

And I've got to say, Mr. Speaker, that we continue to hear this term ''redeployment.'' That means one thing. It doesn't mean victory. It doesn't mean build a democracy. It means withdraw and lose. And I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, we are determined to ensure that that doesn't happen.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, some refer to this as a bridge fund connecting monies from one year to the next to finance this Iraq war.

A bridge is built to overcome an obstacle, and the obstacle here is George Bush. Granting this President 50 billion more dollars without reasonable restrictions to end this war is just building another bridge to nowhere.

Today, instead, we use this funding to build a bridge that brings our troops home by beginning a safe, orderly, phased redeployment from Iraq.

The President can no longer defy our Constitution as the sole ''decider.'' America has decided that he's wrong, dead wrong, too many deaths wrong, and it's elected representatives in this Congress are now declaring ''no more blank checks.''

Despite the sacrifices of our troops in this deadliest year of the war, this surge has failed completely to achieve its purpose of political progress. ''Retreat,'' you say; you've had a 5-year retreat from political reality. Progress, you say; not in Iraq, not in political reconciliation; progress, perhaps only in your self-defeating propaganda as you repeatedly waved your ''mission accomplished'' banner.

The continued cost of this war in hemorrhaged blood and $3 billion of taxpayer money every week is not acceptable or sustainable.

Mr. President, no more ''cut-and-run''. We will not cut these reasonable restrictions from this legislation, and we will not run from your veto threat.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). All Members are advised to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds, and I do so to say I still have yet to hear the term ''victory'' come from the other side of the aisle. I still have yet to hear anyone talk about the notion of building a democracy in Iraq so that self-determination and the rule of law and the building of democratic institutions can, in fact, have a chance to succeed. And there is no recognition of the fact that we have seen a tremendous number of reduction in IED attacks, and the number of overall attacks has dropped dramatically.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill to change the mission of the United States Armed Forces in Iraq and undertake their redeployment. It is time to set a real plan to end this war, fought courageously by our troops on the ground, but recklessly mismanaged by our administration at home.

2007 has been the deadliest year for American troops since the start of the war in Iraq; 860 U.S. casualties since January. And almost 1 year after the President announced a so-called surge, the Iraqi Government has made no progress toward political reconciliation and is nowhere near taking responsibility for security in all of its provinces.

Without any progress or end in sight, the cost of the war continues to rise. The recent Joint Economic Committee report estimates the cost of the war at $1.3 trillion from 2002 to 2008; yet just this week the President vetoed critical funds for education, job training and health care, and, yes, he vetoed the children's health care bill.

With its latest $200 billion request for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the administration has asked for a total of $800 billion, all paid for with the government's credit card.

Mr. Speaker, with this bill we put forth a plan and a clear path toward change. We require the start of the redeployment of U.S. forces within 30 days of enactment, with a goal for completion of redeployment by December 15, 2008.

It prohibits the deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq who are not fully trained and fully equipped, and changes the mission of U.S. forces in Iraq to diplomatic and force protection, targeted counterterrorism operations, and limited support to Iraqi security forces. And notably, the bill prohibits torture once and for all.

We provide $50 billion to meet the immediate needs of the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and defer consideration of the remainder of the President's request.

The President and his stubborn Republican allies in the Congress have acted recklessly in Iraq and with our Nation's standing in the world. And the American people pay the price. Our young men and women are paying the price.

The Bush administration rushed to war and never had an exit strategy. If we, in the Congress, do not provide one, who will?

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I've still not heard the term ''victory'' or ''building democracy.''

I would inquire of the Chair, how much time is remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 3¾ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 10¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. DREIER. I think at this juncture I might reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I and everybody in this Chamber, hopefully, wants to see democracy flourish in Iraq. But the fact of the matter is that the status quo isn't producing that. And maybe, just maybe, the corrupt and inept Maliki government will get its act together if it finally realizes that we won't be there forever, that this will not be an endless war.

Our troops have sacrificed enough. They have sacrificed enough.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2¼ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the American people get it. Over 50 percent of the American people believe that we should now begin a reduction of our troops.

As I listened here on the floor of the house, and I listened to my good friends on the other side of the aisle claiming the me-me's and the I-I's, I hear no one talking about victory.

Victory in what sense? So that we can pound our chests and brag about what this Congress and this President has done?

We're talking about lives here. We're talking about lives. And I am sick and tired of listening to people bragging about who can claim a victory.

Well, my belief is that the soldiers on the battlefield, the most deadliest year that we've ever had, 2006, we buried more than we could ever imagine. Those soldiers have already claimed victory. They took Fallujah. They took Baghdad.

And my concern is why have we not championed the victory of those soldiers? Why haven't we welcomed them home, given them accolades because they have been victorious?

Someone on the other side has not read this bill. This bill allows for a redeployment in an orderly manner, and it demands that the President use these dollars to redeploy.

I am not going to trample on the graves of dead soldiers and continue a war that has no end. That government has the ability in Iraq to diplomatically deal with democracy. We have died so they can deal with democracy.

It is time to end this war now and to bring our soldiers home with the dignity and victory they deserve.

Right now, in the Nation's hospitals, we are seeing the results of his victory. We are seeing soldiers with brain injury, soldiers with no limbs. And we have a broken health care system that can't even address the question of those soldiers with posttraumatic stress brain injury and otherwise.

My voice is gone, but I am tired of this question of victory because I believe, and I have a bill, and I ask my good friend from California to join it, the Military Success Act of 2007 that chronicles the victories of our soldiers.

We can bring them home with dignity. I am not going to tolerate one more dead body. And it is time to end this war and end it now.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4156, introduced by my colleague, Mr. OBEY. I would like to thank him for his ongoing leadership as chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and on this important issue in particular.

The legislation we are considering today provides our troops with the resources they need, but it does not give the President the blank check he has asked for to fund an endless combat operation in Iraq. Instead of his additional $200 billion, we are considering a $50 billion package, which institutes a redeployment timeline, as well as other critical directives designed to transition our role in Iraq and bring our troops home.

Madam Speaker, the funds provided by this legislation are, crucially, tied to a requirement for the immediate start of the redeployment of U.S. forces. It sets December 15, 2008, as the target date for the completion of the redeployment, and requires redeployment to begin within 30 days of enactment.

As lawmakers continue to debate U.S. policy in Iraq, our heroic young men and women continue to willingly sacrifice life and limb on the battlefield. Our troops in Iraq did everything we asked them to do. We sent them overseas to fight an army; they are now caught in the midst of an insurgent civil war and continuing political upheaval. The United States will not and should not permanently prop up the Iraqi Government and military. U.S. military involvement in Iraq will come to an end, and, when U.S. forces leave, the responsibility for securing their nation will fall to Iraqis themselves. However, whether or not my colleagues agree that the time has come to withdraw our American forces from Iraq, I believe that all of us in Congress should be of one accord that our troops deserve our sincere thanks and congratulations.

For this reason, I extremely please to have worked with the Democratic leadership to include language recognizing the extraordinary achievements of our men and women in uniform. Paragraph 2 of Title I reads, ''the performance of United States military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan should be commended, their courage and sacrifice have been exceptional, and when they come home, their service should be recognized appropriately.'' I believe that the inclusion of this language makes it clear that we are proud of the accomplishments of our troops, and we look forward to commending them as they return safely home.

I also worked with the Leadership to include the language in Paragraph 3 of Title 1. This paragraph reads, ''the primary purpose of funds made available by this Act should be to transition the mission of United States Armed Forces in Iraq and undertake their redeployment, and not to extend or prolong the war.'' This language makes explicit that this legislation is providing funding for the safe and responsible redeployment of our troops, not for the continuation of combat operations.

This legislation protects our troops, by providing them with the funding they need to safely and successfully redeploy from Iraq. It also prohibits the deployment of forces to Iraq who are not fully trained and fully equipped. In addition, this legislation includes an extension to all U.S. Government agencies and personnel of the current prohibition in the Army Field Manual against the use of certain interrogation techniques.

Mr. Speaker, this bill contains important language that changes the mission of U.S. forces in Iraq to diplomatic and force protection, targeted counterterrorism operations, and limited support to Iraqi security forces. I firmly believe that we must make diplomacy and statecraft tools of the first, rather than the last, resort. We must seek constructive engagement with Iraq, its neighbors, and the rest of the international community, as we work to bring resolution to this calamitous conflict that has already gone on far too long.

Because of my deeply held belief that we must commend our military for their exemplary performance and success in Iraq, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 4020, with the support of a number of my colleagues, entitled the ''Military Success in Iraq Commemoration Act of 2007.'' This legislation recognizes the extraordinary performance of the Armed Forces in achieving the military objectives of the United States in Iraq, encourages the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe a national day of celebration commemorating the military success of American troops in Iraq, and provides other affirmative and tangible expressions of appreciation from a grateful Nation to all veterans of the war in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we have already expended 3,500 American lives and $400 billion in taxpayer dollars in Iraq. We have occupied the country for over 4 years. And our President continues to push a strategy devoid of clear direction and visible targets, while rejecting congressional calls to solidify an exit strategy.

Last November, the American people clearly stated that they did not want to see an endless conflict in Iraq; they went to the polls and elected a new, Democratic Congress to lead our Nation out of Iraq. I am proud to be a member of the Congressional class that listens and adheres to the will of the American people, as we did when both houses of Congress approved Iraq Supplemental bills that instituted a timetable for U.S. withdrawal. We need a new direction, because we owe our brave, fighting men and women so much more. Washington made a mistake in going to war. It is time for politicians to admit that mistake and fix it before any more lives are lost.

This Congress will not, as the previous, Republican, Congress did, continue to rubber stamp what we believe to be an ill-conceived war. As we continue to receive reports on the situation in Iraq, it is important that we continue to look forward, to the future of Iraq beyond a U.S. military occupation.

Despite the multitude of mistakes perpetrated by President Bush and former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, our troops have achieved a military success in ousting Saddam Hussein and assisting the Iraqis in administering a democratic election and electing a democratic government. However, only the Iraqi government can secure a lasting peace. Time and time again, the Iraqi government has demonstrated an inability to deliver on the political benchmarks that they themselves agreed were essential to achieving national reconciliation. Continuing to put the lives of our soldiers and our national treasury in the hands of what by most informed accounts, even by members of the Bush Administration, is an ineffective central Iraqi government is irresponsible and contrary to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Our Nation has already paid a heavy price in Iraq. Over 3,810 American soldiers have died. In addition, more than 27,660 have been wounded in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003. June, July, and August have marked the bloodiest months yet in the conflict, and U.S. casualties in Iraq are 62 percent higher this year than at this time in 2006. This misguided, mismanaged, and misrepresented war has claimed too many lives of our brave servicemen; its depth, breadth, and scope are without precedent in American history. In addition, the United States is spending an estimated $10 billion per month in Iraq. This $10 billion a month translates into $329,670,330 per day, $13,736,264 per hour, $228,938 per minute, and $3,816 per second.

For this huge sum of money, we could have repaired the more than 70,000 bridges across America rated structurally deficient, $188 billion, potentially averting the tragedy that occurred August 1 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We could have rebuilt the levees in New Orleans, $50 billion, protecting that city from future hurricanes that could bring Katrina-like destruction upon the city. We could have provided all U.S. public safety officials with interoperable communication equipment, $10 billion, allowing them to effectively communicate in the event of an emergency, and we could have paid for screening all air cargo on passenger planes for the next 10 years, $3.6 billion. And, we could have enrolled 1.4 million additional children in Head Start programs, $10 billion. Instead of funding increased death and destruction in Iraq, we could have spent hard-earned taxpayer dollars on important progress here at home.

The Foreign Affairs Committee, of which I am proud to be a member, has recently heard a string of reports from military and civilian officials about the political, military, social, and economic situation in Iraq. Two weeks ago, the Government Accountability Office, GAO, informed the Congress that the Iraqi government has met only 3 of the 18 legislative, economic, and security benchmarks. Despite the surge, despite increasing U.S. military involvement, the Iraqi Government has not made substantial progress toward stabilizing their country.

President Bush rationalized his surge, over opposition by myself and other House Democrats, by arguing it would give the Iraqi government ''the breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas,'' bringing about reconciliation between warring factions, Sunni and Shia. However, non-partisan assessments, such as last week's GAO report, have illustrated that escalating U.S. military involvement in Iraq is instead hindering that nation's ability to move beyond the devastation of war and death, to build a successful new government, and to create a stable and secure environment. In the 7 months since the surge began, increased American military presence has not been able to end the relentless cycles of sectarian violence that continue to plague Iraq. Nor have larger numbers of U.S. troops been successful in unifying and strengthening the Iraqi Government.

Instead, the security situation continues to deteriorate. Sectarian violence remains high, and even the Bush administration has noted the unsatisfactory progress toward political reconciliation. The Sunni-led insurgency continues, with insurgents conducting increasingly complex and well-coordinated attacks. The August 2007 National Intelligence Estimate cited ongoing violence, stating, ''the level of overall violence, including attacks on and casualties among civilians, remain high; Iraq's sectarian groups remain unreconciled.'' The report went on to note that al-Qaeda in Iraq, AQI, ''retains the ability to conduct high-profile attacks,'' and ''Iraqi political leaders remain unable to govern effectively.''

The ever-increasing sectarian violence is causing immense daily challenges for Iraqis. Millions have been displaced, and an Iraqi Red Crescent Organization has reported an increase of nearly 630,000 internally displaced persons from February 2007 to July 2007. The same organization predicts an additional 80,000 to 100,000 persons are displaced each month. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that 1.8 million Iraqis are now refugees, with an additional 40,000 to 50,000 fleeing to neighboring countries each month. Iraq has become a humanitarian disaster, and one that continues to get worse every day.

The United States military is a skilled and highly proficient organization, and where there are large numbers of U.S. troops, it is unsurprising that we see fewer incidents of violence. However, it is our responsibility to take a longer-term view. The United States will not and should not permanently prop up the Iraqi Government and military. U.S. military involvement in Iraq will come to an end, and, when U.S. forces leave, the responsibility for securing their nation will fall to Iraqis themselves. And so far, we have not seen a demonstrated commitment by the Iraqi Government.

In addition, evidence suggests that not only is increased U.S. military presence in Iraq not making that nation more secure, it may also be threatening our national security by damaging our ability to respond to real threats to our own homeland. The recently released video by Osama bin Laden serves to illustrate that President Bush has not caught this international outlaw, nor brought him to justice. Instead, he has diverted us from the real war on terror to the war of his choice in Iraq.

The former Chairman and Vice Chairman of the 9/11 Commission, Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, share this view. In a recent op-ed, Kean and Hamilton note that our own actions have contributed to a rise of radicalization and rage in the Muslim world. Kean and Hamilton write that ''no conflict drains more time, attention, blood, treasure, and support from our worldwide counterterrorism efforts than the war in Iraq. It

has become a powerful recruiting and training tool for al-Qaeda.''

Our troops in Iraq did everything we asked them to do. We sent them overseas to fight an army; they are now caught in the midst of an insurgent civil war and political upheaval. I have, for some time now, advocated for congressional legislation declaring a military victory in Iraq, and recognizing the success of our military. Our brave troops have completed the task we set for them; it is time now to bring them home. Our next steps should not be a continuing escalation of military involvement, but instead a diplomatic surge.

Democrats in Congress will not continue to rubber stamp the President's ill-conceived war effort. Last November, the American people spoke loudly and clearly, demanding a new direction to U.S. foreign policy, and we here in Congress are committed to seeing that change be brought about. We are working to see the extensive funds currently being spent to sustain the war in Iraq go to important domestic programs and to securing our homeland against real and imminent threats.

President Bush and Vice President CHENEY have been given numerous chances and ample time by the American people and the Congress to straighten out the mess in Iraq. They have failed. It is pure fantasy to imagine that President Bush's military surge has created the necessary safety and security to meet economic, legislative, and security benchmarks. It is time for a new strategy, a new plan that will encourage Iraqis to take charge of their own destiny, seek constructive and sustained regional engagement, and substitute the ill-advised military surge for a thoughtful diplomatic one. It is time to be realistic and pragmatic, to recognize that our troops achieved what they were initially sent in for and that continued U.S. military engagement is not bringing about the desired results.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides our brave soldiers in Iraq with the resources they need, while requiring that the President begin to redeploy our troops. It keeps our soldiers safe, and it keeps our Nation safe. By bringing an end to this conflict, this Democratic Congress is making significant strides forward toward protecting and securing America.

I strongly urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting today's legislation, and in giving the troops the resources they need to safely redeploy from Iraq.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I'm very sorry that my friend wouldn't yield so that we could engage in debate. And I will say, victory means ensuring that our children don't face the threat of another terrorist attack like what we saw on September 11. We know that Iraq is the central point for al Qaeda, and I am absolutely determined to ensure that we achieve victory.

There have been tremendous achievements when it comes to democracy building. We can't ignore that. But we want to bring our troops home as soon as possible.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding. And I also want to associate myself with the words of the lady from Texas who just spoke.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the bill. To date, President Bush has asked us for a total of $804 billion for fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yesterday, the Joint Economic Committee, the committee on which I sit, concluded in a report that the real economic cost of these wars is $1.6 trillion. However, there are numerous hidden costs that could potentially bring the grand total to $3.5 trillion.

In response to the President's failing new strategy in Iraq and wasteful spending, Congress has chosen instead to ensure strict accountability. We have heard the American people and have chosen to exercise fiscal responsibility by considering this vitally important legislation.

Namely, the bill limits funding in the amount of $50 billion, in comparison to the President's original supplemental request of $196.4 billion, to continue our military operations in Iraq, while ensuring that the responsible and strategic redeployment of our forces begins no later than 30 days from the date of enactment.

It also provides troops with the resources needed for continued protection from improvised explosive devices.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to exercise their responsibility to the American people, to over 3,800 brave soldiers, 71 from Maryland who have died and who have paid the ultimate price, and to more than 2.3 million Iraqis who have fled their homes, by supporting the rule and voting in favor of this legislation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this is about whether or not we continue to fund the worst foreign policy fiasco in American history.

This is not about al Qaeda. In fact, if we had gone after al Qaeda when we had the opportunity, they wouldn't have been able to strengthen themselves in Pakistan and Afghanistan. But we've been diverted over to Iraq, where al Qaeda didn't even exist until our invasion gave them a recruitment tool and rallying cry.

And sure there's less violence in Baghdad, but the reason is because the Shiia have ethnically cleansed much of Baghdad. When we started, 60 percent of Baghdad was Sunni. Now, almost 80 percent of Baghdad is Shiia.

And the reason there's less violence in al-Anbar province is because the Sunni warlords have taken it upon themselves to drive out the al Qaeda insurgents.

Our military generals have told us this war does not lend itself to a military victory. The most we can do is to step up our diplomatic efforts.

But the fact is that we are supporting a government that doesn't deserve our support. It is not representative of the people of Iraq. It is endemically corrupt. And the reality is that when we look back and ask ourselves what have we accomplished, we are going to look at a government which is far more loyal to Iran than it is to the United States. That's what we've done, to empower our enemies.

We've created chaos throughout the Middle East. And isn't it time now to have a plan to start withdrawing our troops, to tell our military families that they have sacrificed as much as we could possibly expect of them?

But the reality is that this policy has never been worthy of the sacrifice of our soldiers and their military families.

□ 1830

And if you really believed in what you're doing in this war, you would support Mr. OBEY's attempt to pay for it. Not one dime of this war has been paid for. It's all been borrowed, borrowed from our children and our grandchildren. They deserve better and this bill is the best thing we can do for them right now.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 4 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me just first say this has been an interesting debate and I do think that victory, a dramatic reduction in the number of attacks, the fact that reconciliation is, in fact, taking place in Baghdad is something that cannot be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today, before the House voted for the 12th time to allow the House to go to conference with the Senate on the Veterans Affairs funding bill, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) and I had a brief colloquy after which a Member on the other side of the aisle claimed that we had misrepresented the facts about this Congress's track record on getting the Veterans Affairs appropriations measure signed into law.

Well, I take this as akin to being accused of lying. Here is what we said, and, Mr. Speaker, I will say it again: The House passed the Veterans and Military Construction funding bill on June 15, 2007, by a vote of 409–2, with the Senate following suit and naming conferees on September 6. Unfortunately, the majority leadership of the House has refused to move the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations act to conference and has refused to name conferees.

So whether the majority likes it or not, that is a fact. Now, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) and the gentleman from New York said that we were misrepresenting the facts. How is this so? For 68 days, Mr. Speaker, the message from the Senate requesting a conference has languished at the Speaker's desk without action. How is this fact disputable? Just look at the

calendar and count the days between September 7 and today, and you'll come up with 68. Every day the Democrats choose not to act to move this bill forward, our Nation's veterans lose $18.5 million.

Those are the facts surrounding this bill in this Congress. The gentleman from Texas went on earlier to malign Republicans for what we did or didn't do concerning veterans funding over the last 12 years, which begs the question, what does the last 12 years have to do with this year? Are Democrats trying to use past Congresses' shortcomings as excuses for their own failed policy? Otherwise, how is this even relevant?

I am sure that the gentleman from Worcester would stand up and attempt to deflect this plea by criticizing Republicans, just as his colleagues before him, and touting the increases in funding for our veterans provided by this Congress which all but two Members of this body voted for. The sad fact is that this Congress hasn't provided the funding that the gentleman has espoused. Why is that? That's because not one dime will flow from the Treasury to the Department of Veterans Affairs until the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill is signed into law, and in order to do so, this House has to go to conference with the Senate and send a bill down to the President to sign. So let's finally get that process started.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who is concerned about funding for our veterans must join us in voting against the previous question so that I can amend the rule and we can go to conference with the Senate on this much-needed and far-delayed funding measure.

I ask unanimous consent to have the text of the amendment and extraneous material appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD just prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the subject that we are debating here today, and that is the war in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, we have been fighting this war for nearly 5 years. That's longer than we fought World War II. My friends on the other side of the aisle have said over and over and over, just give the Iraqi Government a chance. Well, Mr. Speaker, after 5 years, I say, give me a break.

It is not us, not any of us in this Chamber who are in harm's way. But we have sent thousands and thousands and thousands of our fellow citizens to battle in Iraq. They are in harm's way. They wake up tomorrow in a situation where they are refereeing a civil war, and that, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, is wrong.

My friends on the other side of the aisle talk about al Qaeda. Well, we're all worried about al Qaeda, too. That's why we wish we were doing the job in Afghanistan better. That's why we wish we weren't so diverted from that mission in Iraq that we could actually have better results in Afghanistan than we're having right now. We are worried, Mr. Speaker, about the fact that al Qaeda is regrouping in Afghanistan, is regrouping in Pakistan. That should be a worry to every single Member in this Chamber. And yet we are stretched so thin, we are so preoccupied in Iraq that we have lost sight of what our central mission needs to be.

Mr. Speaker, victory is what is in the best interest of the American people. And this war in Iraq has not only diminished our standing in the world, it has spread our troops so thin that we can't complete missions like the one that we need to be completing in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, too often in this place we talk about numbers instead of the people behind those numbers. Yesterday, as I mentioned earlier, another three American soldiers lost their lives in Iraq, bringing the total to 3,858. Also yesterday, Mr. Speaker, CBS News reported that there is an epidemic of suicide among our soldiers and our veterans. Thousands and thousands of these men and women have taken their own lives. For too many, the war does not end when they return home. And behind each one of those numbers is a devastated family, a heartbroken father, a new widow, a child without a father. Mr. Speaker, we will be paying for this war for a very long, long time.

Now, my friends on the other side of the aisle say we all want the war to end, we all want our troops to come home. Well, I say to my friends, here is your chance. You have a voice. Use it. You have a vote. Use it. You have the opportunity to change the direction of this policy. You have the opportunity to force the Iraqi Government to live up to its promises. You have the opportunity to finally, finally, honor the will of the American people and to safely redeploy our troops. I ask my friends to seize that opportunity and to support this bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. DREIER is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 818 OFFERED BY MR. DREIER OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 3. The House disagrees to the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2642, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, and agrees to the conference requested by the Senate thereon. The Speaker shall appoint conferees immediately, but may declare a recess under clause 12(a) of rule I for the purpose of consulting the Minority Leader prior to such appointment. The motion to instruct conferees otherwise in order pending the appointment of conferees instead shall be in order only at a time designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within two additional legislative days after adoption of this resolution.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's ''American Congressional Dictionary'': ''If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.''

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of H. Res. 818, if ordered; and the motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 4120.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 209, nays 185, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 1103]

YEAS—209

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—185

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—38

Bono
Boozman
Burgess
Carney
Carson
Cleaver
Costa
Cubin
Cuellar
Davis (AL)
Doyle
Ellison
Feeney
Gordon
Holden
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
King (IA)
Knollenberg
Levin
Lowey
Mack
McHugh
Meeks (NY)
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Schakowsky
Sessions
Tancredo
Tiberi
Towns
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wolf

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS) (during the vote). Members are advised there are 5 minutes remaining in this vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there is 1 minute remaining in this vote.

□ 1856

Mrs. DRAKE, Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. KINGSTON changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. CLARKE changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1103, I was unable to vote for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Stated against:

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1103, had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 190, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 1104]

YEAS—219

Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baldwin
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel

Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—190

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, Tom
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Taylor
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—23

Abercrombie
Allen
Bachus
Bilirakis
Bono
Carson
Cubin
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Doyle
Gingrey
Hastert
Jindal
Jones (OH)
Levin
Mack
McCrery
Oberstar
Paul
Ruppersberger
Sessions
Weller
Wolf

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1902

So 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. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1104, I was unable to vote for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Stated against:

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1104, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

EFFECTIVE CHILD PORNOGRAPHY PROSECUTION ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4120, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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. 4120.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 0, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 1105]

YEAS—409

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
Bonner
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
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
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
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
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
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
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
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)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—23

Boehner
Bono
Carson
Cubin
DeFazio
Doggett
Doyle
Gutierrez
Hill
Jindal
Levin
Lewis (CA)

Mack	Oberstar	Stark
Marshall	Paul	Weller
McCrery	Ruppersberger	Wolf
Myrick	Sessions	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1909

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.

Stated for:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1105, I was unable to vote for medical reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during rollcall votes 1093 through 1105. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on rollcall 1093, ''yea'' on rollcall 1094, ''nay'' on rollcall 1095, ''yea'' on rollcall 1096, ''yea'' on rollcall 1097, ''yea'' on rollcall 1098, ''yea'' on rollcall 1099, ''nay'' on rollcall 1100, ''nay'' on rollcall 1101, ''yea'' on rollcall 1102, ''yea'' on rollcall 1103, ''yea'' on rollcall 1104, and ''yea'' on rollcall 1105.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3773, RESTORE ACT OF 2007

Mr. ARCURI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–449) on the resolution (H. Res. 824) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3773) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to establish a procedure for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3915, MORTGAGE REFORM AND ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING ACT OF 2007

Mr. ARCURI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–450) on the resolution (H. Res. 825) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3915) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to establish licensing and registration requirements for residential mortgage originators, to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 818, I call up the bill (H.R. 4156) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4156

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

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—POLICY ON REDEPLOYMENT AND CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

SEC. 101. It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the war in Iraq should end as safely and quickly as possible and our troops should be brought home;

(2) the performance of United States military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan should be commended, their courage and sacrifice have been exceptional, and when they come home, their service should be recognized appropriately; and

(3) the primary purpose of funds made available by this Act should be to transition the mission of United States Armed Forces in Iraq and undertake their redeployment, and not to extend or prolong the war.

SEC. 102. (a) No person in the custody or under the effective control of the United States Government shall be subject to any treatment or technique of interrogation not authorized by and listed in the United States Army Field Manual FM2–22.3 Human Intelligence Collector Operations.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to any person in the custody or under the effective control of the United States Government pursuant to a criminal law or immigration law of the United States. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the rights under the United States Constitution of any person in the custody or under the physical jurisdiction of the United States.

SEC. 103. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used in contravention of the following laws enacted or regulations promulgated to implement the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (done at New York on December 10, 1984)—

(1) section 2340A of title 18, United States Code;

(2) section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (division G of Public Law 105–277; 112 Stat. 2681–822; 8 U.S.C. 1231 note) and regulations prescribed thereto, including regulations under part 208 of title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, and part 95 of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(3) sections 1002 and 1003 of the Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006 (Public Law 109–148).

SEC. 104. (a) The Congress finds that United States military units should not enter into combat unless they are fully capable of performing their assigned mission. The Congress further finds that this is the policy of the Department of Defense.

(b) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to deploy any unit of the Armed Forces to Iraq unless the President has certified in writing to the Committees on Appropriations and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives at least 15 days in advance of the deployment that the unit is ''fully mission capable''.

(c) For the purposes of subsection (b) the term ''fully mission capable'' means capable of performing a unit's assigned mission to the prescribed standards under the conditions expected in the theater of operation, consistent with the guidelines set forth in the Department of Defense's Defense Readiness Reporting System.

(d) The President, by certifying in writing to the Committees on Appropriations and the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives that the deployment to Iraq of a unit that is not assessed fully mission capable is required for reasons of national security and by submitting along with a certification a report in classified and unclassified form detailing the particular reason or reasons why the unit's deployment is necessary, may waive the limitations prescribed in subsection (b) on a unit-by-unit basis.

SEC. 105. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act are available immediately for obligation to plan and execute a safe and orderly redeployment of United States Armed Forces from Iraq.

(b) Within 30 days after enactment of this Act, the President shall commence an immediate and orderly redeployment of United States Armed Forces from Iraq, which shall be implemented as part of the comprehensive regional stability plan described in subsection (g). The President shall endeavor to begin such redeployment with units of the Armed Forces that have been deployed in excess of 365 days, except to the extent those units are needed to provide for the safe withdrawal of other units of the Armed Forces or to protect United States and Coalition personnel and infrastructure.

(c) The reduction in United States Armed Forces required by this section shall be implemented in conjunction with a comprehensive diplomatic, political and economic strategy that includes sustained engagement with Iraq's neighbors and the international community for the purpose of working collectively to bring stability to Iraq.

(d) The goal for the completion of the transition of United States Armed Forces to a limited presence and missions as described in subsection (e) shall be a date that is not later than December 15, 2008.

(e) After the conclusion of the reduction and transition of United States Armed Forces to a limited presence as required by this section, the Secretary of Defense may deploy or maintain members of the Armed Forces in Iraq only for the following missions:

(1) Protecting United States diplomatic facilities, United States Armed Forces, and American citizens.

(2) Conducting limited training, equipping, and providing logistical and intelligence support to the Iraqi Security forces.

(3) Engaging in targeted counterterrorism operations against al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda affiliated groups, and other terrorist organizations in Iraq.

(f) Not later than February 1, 2008, and every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report setting forth the following:

(1) The current plan for and the status of the reduction of United States Armed Forces in Iraq and the transition of the Armed Forces in Iraq to a limited presence whose missions do not exceed the missions specified in subsection (e), including the associated force reductions and adjustments and expectations with respect to timelines and the force levels anticipated to perform those missions.

(2) A comprehensive current description of efforts to prepare for the reduction and transition of United States Armed Forces in Iraq in accordance with this section and to limit any destabilizing consequences of such reduction and transition, including a description of efforts to work with the United Nations and countries in the region toward that objective.

(g) Not later than February 15, 2008, the President shall submit to the Congress in classified and unclassified form a comprehensive regional stability plan for the Middle East, which shall include a military, diplomatic, political and economic strategy that provides for the national security interests of the United States in the region and for the engagement of targeted counterterrorism operations. The plan shall include a detailed description of the projected United States military force presence in and around the Middle East region for the 5-year period beginning on October 1, 2008.

SEC. 106. The amounts appropriated by this Act are sufficient to fully meet the immediate needs of the United States Armed Forces deployed to Iraq. Congressional consideration of additional funding shall be deferred until the first report required by section 105(f) is submitted to the Congress.

TITLE II—SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE—MILITARY

MILITARY PERSONNEL

MILITARY PERSONNEL, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Military Personnel, Army'', $713,700,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, NAVY

For an additional amount for ''Military Personnel, Navy'', $95,624,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for ''Military Personnel, Marine Corps'', $56,050,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Military Personnel, Air Force'', $138,037,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Army'', $27,429,490,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy'', $2,071,560,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps'', $2,429,323,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Air Force'', $3,582,560,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide'', $1,330,540,000, of which not to exceed $333,000,000, to remain available until expended, may be used for payments to reimburse key cooperating nations, for logistical, military, and other support provided to United States military operations, notwithstanding any other provision of law: *Provided*, That such payments may be made in such amounts as the Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, may determine, in his discretion, based on documentation determined by the Secretary of Defense to adequately account for the support provided, and such determination is final and conclusive upon the accounting officers of the United States, and 15 days following notification to the appropriate congressional committees: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall provide quarterly reports to the congressional defense committees on the use of funds provided in this paragraph.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY RESERVE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Army Reserve'', $61,223,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY RESERVE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Navy Reserve'', $47,500,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve'', $26,157,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Air Force Reserve'', $8,089,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Army National Guard'', $378,381,000.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For an additional amount for ''Operation and Maintenance, Air National Guard'', $34,422,000.

AFGHANISTAN SECURITY FORCES FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the ''Afghanistan Security Forces Fund'', $500,000,000: *Provided*, That such funds shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purpose of allowing the Commander, Office of Security Cooperation Afghanistan, or the Secretary's designee, to provide assistance, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to the security forces of Afghanistan, including the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction, and funding: *Provided further*, That the authority to provide assistance under this heading is in addition to any other authority to provide assistance to foreign nations: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may transfer such funds to appropriations for military personnel; operation and maintenance; Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation; and defense working capital funds to accomplish the purposes provided herein: *Provided further*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds so transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That contributions of funds for the purposes provided herein from any person, foreign government, or international organization may be credited to this Fund, and used for such purposes: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall notify the congressional defense committees in writing upon the receipt and upon the transfer of any contribution, delineating the sources and amounts of the funds received and the specific use of such contributions: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 5 days prior to making transfers from this appropriation account, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such transfer: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter to the congressional defense committees summarizing the details of the transfer of funds from this appropriation.

IRAQ SECURITY FORCES FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the ''Iraq Security Forces Fund'', $500,000,000: *Provided*, That such funds shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purpose of allowing the Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command—Iraq, or the Secretary's designee, to provide assistance, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to the security forces of Iraq, including the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction, and funding, and to provide training, reintegration, education and employment programs for concerned local citizens, former militia members and detainees and former detainees: *Provided further*, That the authority to provide assistance under this heading is in addition to any other authority to provide assistance to foreign nations: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may transfer such funds to appropriations for military personnel; operation and maintenance; Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation; and defense working capital funds to accomplish the purposes provided herein: *Provided further*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds so transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That contributions of funds for the purposes provided herein from any person, foreign government, or international organization may be credited to this Fund, and used for such purposes: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall notify the congressional defense committees in writing upon the receipt and upon the transfer of any contribution, delineating the sources and amounts of the funds received and the specific use of such contributions: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 5 days prior to making transfers from this appropriation account, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such transfer: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter to the congressional defense committees summarizing the details of the transfer of funds from this appropriation.

IRAQ FREEDOM FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For ''Iraq Freedom Fund'', $3,168,000,000, to remain available for transfer only to support operations in Iraq and to fight terrorism: *Provided*, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence shall, no fewer than 30 days prior to making transfers under this authority, notify the Committees on Appropriations in writing of the details of any such transfer made for intelligence activities: *Provided further*, That funds transferred shall be merged with and be available

for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriation or fund to which transferred.

JOINT IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE DEFEAT FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For an additional amount for ''Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Fund'', $1,638,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010: *Provided*, That such funds shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purpose of allowing the Director of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization to investigate, develop and provide equipment, supplies, services, training, facilities, personnel and funds to assist United States forces in the defeat of improvised explosive devices: *Provided further*, That within 60 days of enactment of this Act, a plan for the intended management and use of the Fund is provided to the congressional defense committees: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report not later than 60 days after the end of each fiscal quarter to the congressional defense committees providing assessments of the evolving threats, individual service requirements to counter the threats, individual service requirements to counter the threats, the current strategy for predeployment training of members of the Armed Forces on explosive devices, and details on the execution of this Fund: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense may transfer funds provided herein to appropriations for operation and maintenance; procurement; research, development, test and evaluation; and defense working capital funds to accomplish the purpose provided herein: *Provided further*, That this transfer authority is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense: *Provided further*, That upon determination that all or part of the funds so transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purpose provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, not fewer than 5 days prior to making transfers from this appropriation, notify the congressional defense committees in writing of the details of any such transfer.

PROCUREMENT

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Aircraft Procurement, Army'', $302,200,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

PROCUREMENT OF WEAPONS AND TRACKED COMBAT VEHICLES, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Procurement of Weapons and Tracked Combat Vehicles, Army'', $1,574,217,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Procurement of Ammunition, Army'', $154,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Other Procurement, Army'', $1,976,100,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, NAVY

For an additional amount for ''Aircraft Procurement, Navy'', $25,300,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, NAVY

For an additional amount for ''Other Procurement, Navy'', $88,281,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

PROCUREMENT, MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for ''Procurement, Marine Corps'', $729,232,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Aircraft Procurement, Air Force'', $147,800,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Other Procurement, Air Force'', $42,125,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

PROCUREMENT, DEFENSE-WIDE

For an additional amount for ''Procurement, Defense-Wide'', $102,588,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

OTHER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS

DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM

For an additional amount for ''Defense Health Program'', $649,001,000; of which $599,001,000 shall be for operation and maintenance; and of which $50,000,000 shall be for research, development, test and evaluation, to remain available until September 30, 2009, only for peer reviewed research on traumatic brain injury and psychological health, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. Appropriations provided in this Act are available for obligation until September 30, 2008, unless otherwise provided in this Act.

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 202. (a) Upon a determination by the Secretary of Defense that such action is necessary in the national interest, the Secretary may transfer between appropriations up to $4,000,000,000 of the funds made available to the Department of Defense in this Act.

(b) The Secretary shall notify the Congress promptly of each transfer made pursuant to the authority in this section.

(c) The authority provided in this section is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense and is subject to the same terms and conditions as the authority provided in section 8005 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008, except for the fourth proviso.

SEC. 203. Funds appropriated in this Act, or made available by the transfer of funds in or pursuant to this Act, for intelligence activities are deemed to be specifically authorized by the Congress for purposes of section 504(a)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 414(a)(1)).

SEC. 204. None of the funds provided in this Act may be used to finance programs or activities denied by the Congress in fiscal years 2007 or 2008 appropriations to the Department of Defense or to initiate a procurement or research, development, test and evaluation new start program unless such program or project must be undertaken immediately in the interest of national security and after written prior notification to the congressional defense committees.

SEC. 205. (a) From funds made available for operation and maintenance in this Act to the Department of Defense, not to exceed $500,000,000 may be used, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to fund the Commander's Emergency Response Program, for the purpose of enabling military commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their areas of responsibility by carrying out programs that will immediately assist the Iraqi and Afghan people.

(b) Not later than 15 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report regarding the source of funds and the allocation and use of funds during that quarter that were made available pursuant to the authority provided in this section or under any other provision of law for the purposes of the programs under subsection (a).

SEC. 206. (a) During fiscal year 2008, funds available in this Act to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance may be used, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to provide supplies, services, transportation, including airlift and sealift, and other logistical support to Coalition forces supporting military and stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

(b) The Secretary of Defense shall provide quarterly reports to the congressional defense committees regarding support provided under this section.

SEC. 207. (a) Supervision and administration costs associated with a construction project funded with appropriations available for operation and maintenance, Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, or Iraq Security Forces Fund, and executed in direct support of the Global War on Terror only in Iraq and Afghanistan, may be obligated at the time a construction contract is awarded.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term ''supervision and administration costs'' includes all in-house Government costs.

SEC. 208. Each amount appropriated or otherwise provided in this Act is designated as an emergency requirement and necessary to meet emergency needs pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 204 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

SEC. 209. (a) Not later than January 15, 2008 and every 90 days thereafter through the end of fiscal year 2008, the Secretary of Defense shall set forth in a report to the Congress a comprehensive set of performance indicators and measures for progress toward military and political stability in Iraq.

(b) The report shall include performance standards and goals for security, economic, and security force training objectives in Iraq, together with a notional timetable for achieving these goals.

(c) The report shall include, at a minimum, the following specific provisions:

(1) With respect to stability and security in Iraq, the following:

(A) Key measures of political stability, including the important political milestones that must be achieved over the next several years.

(B) The primary indicators of a stable security environment in Iraq, such as number of engagements per day, numbers of trained Iraqi forces, trends relating to numbers and types of ethnic and religious-based hostile encounters, and progress made in the transition to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC).

(C) An assessment of the estimated strength of the insurgency in Iraq and the extent to which it is composed of non-Iraqi fighters.

(D) A description of all militias operating in Iraq, including the number, size, equipment strength, military effectiveness, sources of support, legal status, and efforts to disarm or reintegrate each militia.

(E) Key indicators of economic activity that should be considered the most important for determining the prospects of stability in Iraq, including—

(i) unemployment levels;

(ii) electricity, water, and oil production rates; and

(iii) hunger and poverty levels.

(F) The criteria the Administration will use to determine when it is safe to begin withdrawing United States forces from Iraq.

(2) With respect to the training and performance of security forces in Iraq, the following:

(A) The training provided Iraqi military and other Ministry of Defense forces and the equipment used by such forces.

(B) Key criteria for assessing the capabilities and readiness of the Iraqi military and other Ministry of Defense forces, goals for achieving certain capability and readiness levels (as well as for recruiting, training, and equipping these forces), and the milestones and notional timetable for achieving these goals.

(C) The operational readiness status of the Iraqi military forces, including the type, number, size, and organizational structure of Iraqi battalions that are—

(i) capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations independently, without any support from Coalition forces;

(ii) capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations with the support of United States or Coalition forces; or

(iii) not ready to conduct counterinsurgency operations.

(D) The amount and type of support provided by Coalition forces to the Iraqi Security forces at each level of operational readiness.

(E) The number of Iraqi battalions in the Iraqi Army currently conducting operations and the type of operations being conducted.

(F) The rates of absenteeism in the Iraqi military forces and the extent to which insurgents have infiltrated such forces.

(G) The training provided Iraqi police and other Ministry of Interior forces and the equipment used by such forces.

(H) Key criteria for assessing the capabilities and readiness of the Iraqi police and other Ministry of Interior forces, goals for achieving certain capability and readiness levels (as well as for recruiting, training, and equipping), and the milestones and notional timetable for achieving these goals, including—

(i) the number of police recruits that have received classroom training and the duration of such instruction;

(ii) the number of veteran police officers who have received classroom instruction and the duration of such instruction;

(iii) the number of police candidates screened by the Iraqi Police Screening Service, the number of candidates derived from other entry procedures, and the success rates of those groups of candidates;

(iv) the number of Iraqi police forces who have received field training by international police trainers and the duration of such instruction;

(v) attrition rates and measures of absenteeism and infiltration by insurgents; and

(vi) the level and effectiveness of the Iraqi Police and other Ministry of Interior forces in provinces where the United States has formally transferred responsibility for the security of the province to the Iraqi Security forces under the Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) process.

(I) The estimated total number of Iraqi battalions needed for the Iraqi Security forces to perform duties now being undertaken by Coalition forces, including defending the borders of Iraq and providing adequate levels of law and order throughout Iraq.

(J) The effectiveness of the Iraqi military and police officer cadres and the chain of command.

(K) The number of United States and Coalition advisors needed to support the Iraqi Security forces and associated ministries.

(L) An assessment, in a classified annex if necessary, of United States military requirements, including planned force rotations, through the end of calendar year 2008.

SEC. 210. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act shall be obligated or expended by the United States Government for a purpose as follows:

(1) To establish any military installation or base for the purpose of providing for the permanent stationing of United States Armed Forces in Iraq.

(2) To exercise United States control over any oil resource of Iraq.

SEC. 211. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be obligated or expended to provide award fees to any defense contractor contrary to the provisions of section 814 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109–364).

SEC. 212. During the current fiscal year, appropriations made available to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance in this Act may, upon determination by the Secretary of Defense that such action is necessary to meet the operational requirements of a Commander of Combatant Command engaged in contingency operations overseas, be used to purchase items having an investment item cost of not more than $500,000.

SEC. 213. Section 3303(c) of Public Law 110–28 shall apply to funds appropriated in this Act.

This Act may be cited as the ''Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 818, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 1 hour.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, because of unusual circumstances, I would choose at the floor well to yield control of the time to the former chairman of the committee, the ranking member of the Defense Subcommittee, BILL YOUNG of Florida.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida will be recognized.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we hear so many voices in this country and in this Chamber who are willing to fight to the last drop of someone else's blood. Those of us who are supporting this resolution today are being accused of being for ''precipitous withdrawal.'' I hardly think that seeing this war continue for another 14 months constitutes precipitous withdrawal.

Mr. Speaker, it is 56 months since the United States first launched its attack against Iraq. It is 4½ years since the President appeared before his ''Mission Accomplished'' banner on that carrier. It is almost 5 years since the administration ignored the advice of General Shinseki. It is 2½ years since Vice President CHENEY said that he thought the insurgency was in its last throes. Since that time, we have had 3,800 Americans killed and 28,000 wounded. We have had 8,000 Iraqi military personal killed and 38,000 civilians killed. We have had 4 million Iraqis displaced. 2.3 million of them have been displaced internally in the country. One and a half million have fled to Syria, 1 million to other countries. Not a pretty picture.

This war is the most colossal blunder in modern U.S. history. It is a mistake that has shattered our influence in the region, and it has made the one country in the region that we did not want to see strengthened, Iran, it has made them infinitely stronger in that region. We are in the process of borrowing $600 billion and we are not having the guts to pay the bill ourselves.

There is no sense of shared sacrifice in this country. The only families being asked to sacrifice are military families and they're being asked to sacrifice again and again and again and again. We aren't even willing to tax ourselves to pay for the cost of this war, so we're shoving off the cost to our kids. Shame on every one of us for making that decision.

In November, the public tried to send two messages to this Congress. The first was that they wanted a change in policy in Iraq. The second is that they wanted a change in domestic policy. And yet after blowing $600 billion in Iraq, after signing a Defense bill which adds $39 billion to spending levels over last year, the President has yesterday blocked our efforts to add $6 billion to pay for investments in education, health and medical research here at home.

□ 1915

The President is telling the American people, ''Forget what message you think you sent in November in the election.'' He is stiffing the American people. He is saying, ''Forget what message you thought you were sending to Washington; I am the 'Great Decider' and we are going to do things my way.'' That is what we are getting out of the White House. Instead of compromise and instead of searching for common ground, the President is making clear that he prefers to govern through confrontation, he prefers to go it alone, with one-third support in the country and one-third support in the Congress.

The same is true in Iraq. This is the same President who decided to go it alone, with almost no allies, who decided to go it alone when it came to evaluating intelligence, ignoring the caution alerts that were sent by the State Department intelligence people and the CIA analysts. He bulldozed through. When Baker-Hamilton was produced to offer an opportunity for change, the President simply used that as an opportunity to say ''full steam ahead, no change in course'', and he has deepened and intensified our involvement in Iraq.

At home, he insists that Congress cuts 50 percent out of vocational education; he insists that we cut 1,100 grants out of medical research at the National Institutes of Health; he insists that we cut rural health programs by 54 percent; he insists that we cut low-income heating assistance programs by 18 percent; he insists that we cut financial support for programs under No Child Left Behind that he mandated in the first place. He insists that we cut all of that, and yet he demands $200 billion more for Iraq. I say enough is enough.

He gave a speech to the American people which was designed for the purpose of public deception, in my view, because it was designed to leave the impression that the President intended to reduce steadily our troop commitment in Iraq, when in reality it was intended to assure that 6 months from now we have the same number of troops we have there that we had 6 months ago.

Mr. Speaker, the President is asking for $200 billion more, and as chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I announced that I had no intention of providing that money, but I made it clear I'd be happy to provide it all, provided that the President would recognize that we needed a policy change and would get on board with the determination to have a goal of removing our troops from combat operations by the end of next year. That is hardly precipitous.

So what this measure does, instead of giving the President $200 billion to continue the war, it gives him $50 billion to shut the war down. Instead of having troops there for the next 10 years, as the President indicated in his speech, we want to have them out by December of 2008. It requires redeployment to begin in 60 days, and it ends the authority for any agency of the United States Government whatsoever to engage in torture.

We are mired, Mr. Speaker, in Iraq because of the self-important illusions of hopeless romantics in the administration. We hear tell these days that the President talks a lot about Teddy Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. If that is the case, he is harboring dangerous illusions. He ought to heed the advice of a statesman 80 years ago who wrote the following. I will read excerpts from this letter.

''I am deeply concerned about Iraq. The task you have given me is becoming really impossible. Incompetent Arab officials are disturbing some of the provinces and failing to collect revenue. We overpaid on last year's account, which it is almost certain Iraq will not be able to pay this year, thus entailing a supplementary estimate. . . I have had to maintain troops in Mosul all through the year in consequence of the Angora quarrel. This has upset the program of relief and will certainly lead to further expenditures. . . . I do not see what political strength there is to face a disaster of any kind, and I certainly cannot believe that in any circumstances any large reinforcements would be sent . . . In my own heart, I do not see what we are getting out of it. I think we should now put definitely to the assembly the position that unless they beg us to stay, and stay on our own terms in regard to efficient control, we shall actually evacuate before the close of the financial year. I would put this issue in the most brutal way, and if they are not prepared to urge us to stay and to cooperate in every manner, I would actually clear out. . . .

''I think I must ask you for definite guidance at this stage as to what you wish and what you are prepared to do. At present, we are paying millions a year for the privilege of living on an ungrateful volcano out of which we are in no circumstances to get anything worth having.''

That was the real Winston Churchill speaking in 1922 in a letter to Lloyd George. It seems to me that the President in the White House today ought to heed the words of Winston Churchill so long ago and at long last reconsider a policy change in Iraq. That is what this legislation is designed to stimulate.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the majority chairman of the committee bringing this bill before the House because we do need the money, not for our troops at home, not for the basic bill, because that basic bill was signed by the President yesterday. What we need is to make sure that our troops in the field have the equipment that they need, the force protection measures they need, the body armor that they need, the MRAPs that they need, the ammunition they need, whatever they need to take on the enemy to accomplish their mission, to protect themselves while they are doing it. So I want to speak directly to the bill rather than to the politics or the history of the political aspect of this legislation.

Fifty billion dollars is a good number. I wish it would have been a little higher because I don't think it takes us all the way to where we need to be for a supplemental next spring as far as what we are doing in Afghanistan and Iraq, but the $50 billion that is in this bill, the dollars are good. What is provided by those dollars is needed for our troops in the field. That has to be the important decision that we make tonight: Are we going to fight a political battle here on the floor while our soldiers overseas are facing the enemy of terrorism? I don't think that is what we are here for today. I think we are here to pass this bill.

The gentleman from Wisconsin mentioned a policy change; that this bill is going to bring about a policy change. There was a policy change earlier in the year. Most everybody referred to it as the surge, and many Members of this body opposed the surge. But if you listened to the briefers this afternoon in the Rayburn building, that policy change has produced a lot of very positive effects.

So there was a policy change. But, nevertheless, whether you still support the policy change or not, that is up to everybody's individual decision. Despite what your position is on the war, on the battle, you have got to be prepared to provide for the troops that are there, whether you like the fact that they are there or not. I want them home. I want them home as soon as we can get them home.

Along with Chairman MURTHA of the subcommittee, I have seen too many wounded soldiers and marines in our military hospitals. We have both attended too many funerals of our war heroes who were sent home after having lost their life on the battlefield. So I want this war over and I want our troops home as soon as we can get them home in victory; victory in a war that didn't start on September 11 and it didn't start in March of 2003 when we went into Iraq or Afghanistan. It started back in 1983, October 23 of 1983. Terrorists bombed our Marine barracks in Beirut. Those marines were there as peacekeepers, not as part of any other expeditionary force, other than to keep the peace, and 241 of our military marines and soldiers lost their lives there.

In 1993, the World Trade Center was bombed; in June of 1996, the home of the airmen in Saudi Arabia in the Khobar Towers were bombed, and 19 of our airmen lost their lives. In August of 1998, our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed by terrorists and 11 Americans lost their lives and hundreds of others were injured. In October of 2000, the USS *Cole*, on a peaceful mission off the shore of Yemen, was bombed by terrorists and 17 lives were lost. All this started before September 11, and of course I don't think anybody denies what happened to us on September 11. So this war started a long time ago, and this threat is basically the same threat that we saw starting in 1983.

I am pleased that sufficient funds are included for the Army operation and maintenance account to allow for 6 months of war operations. Other accounts would apparently allow for only 4 months of operations, however. The size of the package is secondary to the policy provisions that have been attached to the bill. Many Members have stated they cannot vote for war funding without language requiring a withdrawing from Iraq. The reality is most of them have already done that.

When we passed the Defense appropriations bill, the basic Defense appropriations bill for 2008, we provided transfer authority, large amounts of transfer authority so that if we didn't get a bridge fund passed, if we didn't get a supplemental passed, the Services could reach into their basic accounts to pay for fighting the war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

So those who voted for that bill have already voted to fund the war, whether they like it or not. That legislation has now been signed into law, so the money is there to borrow. We are going to start hearing about cuts in services at military bases here in the United States if we don't pass a supplemental or a bridge fund and the Services will have to borrow from their basic funds. We don't want that to happen. We don't want the Services to run short on anything that they have to do to provide for the security of our Nation.

So whatever your position on the war, whatever decisions are going to be

made about withdrawal from Iraq, this money, this $50 billion and more will be needed in the next 6 months and it needs to be passed.

This bill was only filed last night. Some of the provisions have not been sufficiently reviewed, in my opinion.

□ 1930

I have read this bill twice, word for word, and I am concerned about some of the sections of this bill.

Section 102 regarding interrogations says in part that ''nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the rights under the United States Constitution of any person,'' and I will repeat, ''any person in the custody or under the physical jurisdiction of the United States.''

Now, to me, that means that terrorists who we capture on the battlefield, who have been killing our own American soldiers on the ground, I read that to mean that they will be given the same constitutional protections as any citizen of the United States of America. And I object to that. I don't think they deserve the protection of the Constitution.

I wonder, does that mean we have to read the terrorists their rights under the Miranda ruling? Can they be released on a technicality? Can they get out on bail? Those are protections guaranteed to American citizens. Are we going to give terrorists that same right? Well, this bill says that we are going to give terrorists that same right. Terrorists go by no rules. They do not subscribe to the Geneva Convention and they do not deserve the same protection under our Constitution that our constituents enjoy.

I think this bill needs a lot of repair work before it can become law.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS).

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of this bill and the effort by this Congress to bring accountability to the war in Iraq.

This war is in desperate need of a new direction. For nearly 5 years, our brave men and women have valiantly toed the line for this administration, and I'm proud to say that they have had great successes in their mission. We have seen a terrible dictator overthrown, tried and put to death, and in his place the people of Iraq carried out free and open elections. For all of this, we owe our soldiers and their families a debt of thanks.

But today's debate is not about the purpose of this war. We are here to make a decision on how best to bring accountability to this engagement. Today's legislation will keep soldiers on the ground to oversee diplomatic missions, protect U.S. citizens, equip and train Iraqis to stand on their own and continue to engage in targeted attacks on terrorists as we seek them out. This is a responsible strategy that worked for Eisenhower in South Korea when troops remained to oversee the DMZ after major operations had ended, and it can work for America today in Iraq.

However, I have long felt that it is time to remove our men and women from the kill zones of Iraq. Our soldiers are trained to do the job of the United States military, not the job of police-on-the-beat for the nation of Iraq. We need to redeploy our troops so they can continue to carry out the work of defending America from terrorist threats around the globe. It is time for the Iraqis to occupy their own country with their own military and police force.

This bill begins the redeployment of our combat troops, while continuing to fund initiatives for our men and women that protect them from IEDs, traumatic brain injury and more. But the days of a blank check from this Congress must come to an end. The American people deserve a new direction in Iraq, and this legislation is an important step.

I would like to add that I bristle when I hear the other side talk of ''cut and run'' Democrats. The legacy of the Democratic Party is one of great wartime leaders. Andrew Jackson may have done the cutting at the Battle of New Orleans, but it was Colonel Packingham who did the running. It was President Wilson who convinced the American people to take on the oppressors in the First World War. It was President Roosevelt who said ''we have nothing to fear but fear itself'' before leading the charge into the battlefields of Asia and Nazi Germany. And it was President Truman who ended that war by dropping a nuclear weapon.

I am a member of a Democratic Party that has never cut and run, but has been responsible with our men and women in regard to their safety and families, as well as our national security. We need a change in Iraq and a change in course. This must happen.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the very distinguished minority leader, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Let me thank my colleague from Florida for yielding.

Let me just say that the gentleman from Wisconsin, the chairman of the committee, is a Member that I know well and have great respect for, and along with the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, they have spent over 30 years doing everything they could to support our troops. But if you think that the debate that we are having tonight is something that we have heard before, it is. Over 40 times this year, we have had votes and debates in this house on the issue of Iraq.

Let me just say that my colleague from Wisconsin is known for his famous statement about Members coming to the floor of the House posing for ''holy pictures.'' Now, if there has ever been a case over my 17 years here in Congress of people posing for holy pictures, it is over this issue of Iraq.

When I came to the Congress in 1991 as a brand new Member, my first vote in this Chamber was on whether to go to war with the Iraqis in Kuwait. I remember coming here as a brand new Member, Members in the well of this House who had been here 30 and 40 years, tears in their eyes, talking about this being the most difficult vote they had ever cast. It was a very difficult moment for me and all of my colleagues. But we went through that, and we went through it successfully.

So when we have the issue of war debated here on the floor of the Congress, there is no issue, no issue that is more personal, no issue that is of greater significance to our country, than all of us casting our vote on sending our young men and women into battle anywhere overseas. So I understand the passion that we have on both sides of the aisle over this issue.

But I think we all have to understand that we are in Iraq for a very important reason. We went there to get rid of Saddam Hussein. I think everybody understands that. We went there to make sure that the weapons of mass destruction were gone. They are gone. Where they went, I don't think we will ever know. We went there to set up a democratically elected government, and, frankly, we have succeeded.

It was al Qaeda 3 years ago that made Iraq the central front in their war with us. We didn't start this war with al Qaeda. They did. And as the gentleman from Florida pointed out earlier, it didn't start on 9/11, it started back in the early eighties. And it persisted through the eighties and the nineties, and America and the rest of the world looked up, looked away, and just hoped the problem would go away.

Well, it didn't go away. After 3,000 of our fellow citizens died on 9/11, what was America to do? Look up, look away and just hope the problem would go away one more time? No. So we went to Iraq. But it was al Qaeda and it was Iran who have made this the central front in their war with us.

America has no choice but to succeed in our efforts in Iraq. We all know what failure in Iraq will bring. Failure in Iraq brings a destabilization of Iraq itself, a safe haven for the terrorists to operate from, a destabilization of the entire Middle East, the end of Israel as we know it, and who doesn't believe that if we leave Iraq and we leave in failure, that the terrorists don't follow us home and that we have to deal with the problem here on the streets of America?

This is not what America wants. America wants us to succeed, and it is success that we are having in Iraq. You all know the statistics. You have all seen the headlines over the last several weeks and the last several months. Our troops in Iraq are doing a marvelous job on our behalf. They are succeeding. They are training the Iraqi Army to take our place. The Iraqi Army is more

out in front than ever before. The amount of violence in Iraq is down significantly. Our troops, our troops, are dying in less numbers each and every day. Why? Because we are having success there.

So we ought to thank our troops, thank our troops for the great job they are doing, because General Petraeus put forward a plan that is working.

Now, I understand that a lot of my colleagues on the other side have invested all their political capital over the course of this year in failure in Iraq. It hasn't happened, thankfully, because for the good of our Nation, not today, not tomorrow, maybe not next week, but for my kids and their kids, success in Iraq is critically important. And I think all the Members in this Chamber understand just how important success is there. We are taking on an enemy that is growing in all parts of the world, and if we are not willing to take them on in Iraq, if we are not willing to draw the line and defeat them, where will we draw the line? Where will we stand up for America, and where will we stand up for American values? Iraq is the place to do it.

The bill that we have before us goes back to the same old tired plan, the plan for failure, if you will. That is what the bill that we have before us does. It ties the hands of the administration, it ties the hands of our generals, it ties the hands of our people on the ground, and it will lead to nothing other than failure.

We have been down this path. We have been down this path all year long. And I will admit to my colleagues, we have had plenty of mistakes that have been made in Iraq. There has never been a war when there haven't been a lot of mistakes made. You can go back to the Civil War and look at all the mistakes that were made. The First World War, the Second World War, Vietnam, there were a lot of mistakes that got made in wars, and mistakes have been made in this war.

But, ladies and gentlemen, you all know that we have no choice, no choice, but to succeed, and the plan that we have before us, to fund our troops for the next 4 months, will lead to nothing other than failure.

So I am going to ask my colleagues, let's stop the political games. We all know what is going on here. It is another political stunt, another political stunt trying to trap the President, trying to trap the generals and putting handcuffs on them. Let's stop it.

I think my colleagues on both sides of the aisle want us to succeed. Instead of playing these political games, what we ought to be doing is passing this bill cleanly. And we ought to be passing the Military Quality of Life Veterans bill, because our troops are coming home. We have got 3,000 troops that have been sent out of Diyala on their way home. We are going to have troops coming home all year. And if we don't pass the Military Quality of Life Veterans bill, the benefits they are entitled to, the services we ought to be providing to those veterans coming home will not be there.

So let's vote ''no'' on this bill. Let's find a way this week to make sure that the veterans bill is up on this floor and passed and in the President's hands.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), the chairman of the Defense appropriations subcommittee.

Mr. MURTHA. As the gentleman from Florida said, we just passed a $459 billion bipartisan Defense appropriation bill, and it funds the troops, it funds the health care, it funds almost all the Defense Department. It does not fund the war in Iraq.

Now, when I spoke out 2 years ago, I said we need stability in the Middle East. All of us want stability in the Middle East. We can talk about Iraq, but it's not in isolation that you talk about Iraq. You have to talk about Pakistan and what's happening in Pakistan and why we haven't had an overall diplomatic success there. You can talk about Turkey, on the verge with tanks moving towards the border and might go into Kyrkystan, which would completely disrupt what is going on in Iraq.

You can talk about Iran and the policy that we have had in Iraq and how it has disappointed us with the influence that Iran has gained. When we were attacked, Iran was one of the first countries to come to the support of the United States with their concern about what had happened, their concern about al Qaeda.

What we are trying to do here today is stop torture. We do it by saying the Army Field Manual has to be the guideline for torture. If you're going to have prisoners, and I have talked to service people, Colin Powell agrees with this, Gates agrees with this, almost all the military understands if you don't have guidelines set by the Army Field Manual, it hurts our troops. It's pretty hard to argue. If you're for torture, I don't say you vote for this or you vote against this bill, but this stops torture by saying you've got to comply with the Army Field Manual.

The other thing we say in this bill is you have to have fully equipped and fully trained troops. Can anybody argue about that? Is there anybody that can say to me we shouldn't have fully trained and fully equipped troops? I don't think so.

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The other thing, it sets a goal. And the goal is to start the redeployment out of Iraq and have them out within a year. That doesn't mean that we are going to necessarily get it, but we have to start it. At some time we have to convince the Iraqis that we need to change the direction and they are going to have to take responsibility. I think they have started that. I think we have backed off a little bit.

What we did in Vietnam was make the mistake that every time they made a mistake, we took over. In this particular case, we have to let the Iraqis continue to do their job.

Now, the government has let us down; there is no question about it. The government has not changed the policies. There has been ethnic cleansing. There have been 4 million people ethnically cleansed either by sending them out of the country or by moving them from Sunni areas into Shiite areas or vice versa.

This is one of the reasons that the military commanders have said over and over, the Iraqis are finally taking an interest. The al Qaeda has been defeated, according to what the military commanders are saying.

What is the point in us being there if al Qaeda has been defeated? I said a couple of years ago, there are only 2 or 3,000 al Qaeda, and the Iraqis know where they are and know what they have to do to take care of them.

I am convinced that this bill starts to force the Congress to have oversight. We are the board of directors, somebody said to me today. The President is the executive officer. We are the board of directors. When the board of directors sees the policies going in the wrong way, and actually, the people of the United States are the board of directors and we act for the board of directors by the people of the United States. If we think it is going the wrong way, we have to change the policy.

This is a change in policy. This holds the President accountable for the decisions he is making. It doesn't tie the commanders' hands. No torture. They are supplied with equipment and training. That is not tying the hands of the commanders. And we are starting to get them out already.

Al Qaeda has been defeated. The civil war has wound down. It is time to get us out. Let's remember, stability in the Middle East doesn't depend just on Iraq. It depends on Pakistan with nuclear weapons or the possibility of nuclear weapons. Stability depends on Iran. Stability depends on Syria. Stability depends on Turkey, our allies. We need a diplomatic effort.

As I said and the Chief of the Joint Chiefs said, we cannot win this militarily; it has to be won by the Iraqis and it has to be won diplomatically.

This helps us hold the administration accountable, and I would ask for all Members to vote for a bill that changes the direction of this Congress and this country in this effort in Iraq.

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
TITLE II--SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS	
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE--MILITARY	
Military Personnel	
Military Personnel, Army (emergency)	713,700
Military Personnel, Navy (emergency)	95,624
Military Personnel, Marine Corps (emergency)	56,050
Military Personnel, Air Force (emergency)	138,037
Total, Military Personnel	1,003,411
Operation and Maintenance	
Operation and Maintenance, Army (emergency)	27,429,490
Operation and Maintenance, Navy (emergency)	2,071,560
Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps (emergency)	2,429,323
Operation and Maintenance, Air Force (emergency)	3,582,560
Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide (emergency)	1,330,540
Operation and Maintenance, Army Reserve (emergency)	61,223
Operation and Maintenance, Navy Reserve (emergency)	47,500
Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve (emergency)	26,157
Operation and Maintenance, Air Force Reserve (emergency)	8,089
Operation and Maintenance, Army National Guard (emergency)	378,381
Operation and Maintenance, Air National Guard (emergency)	34,422
Subtotal, Operation and Maintenance	37,399,245
Other Operation and Maintenance	
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (emergency)	500,000
Iraq Security Forces Fund (emergency)	500,000
Iraq Freedom Fund (emergency)	3,168,000
Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Fund (emerg)	
Attack the network	498,500
Defeat the Device	900,000
Train the Force	200,000
Staff and infrastructure	40,000
Total, Joint IED Defeat Fund	1,638,500
Subtotal, Other	5,806,500
Grand total, Operation and Maintenance	43,205,745

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
Procurement	
Aircraft Procurement, Army (emergency)	302,200
Procurement of Weapons and Tracked Combat Vehicles, Army (emergency)	1,574,217
Procurement of Ammunition, Army (emergency)	154,000
Other Procurement, Army (emergency)	1,976,100
Aircraft Procurement, Navy (emergency)	25,300
Other Procurement, Navy (emergency)	88,281
Procurement, Marine Corps (emergency)	729,232
Aircraft Procurement, Air Force (emergency)	147,800
Other Procurement, Air Force (emergency)	42,125
Procurement, Defense-Wide (emergency)	102,588
Total, Procurement	5,141,843
Defense Health Program	
Operation and maintenance (emergency)	599,001
Research, development, test and evaluation	
Traumatic brain injury and psychological health research (emergency)	50,000
Total, Defense Health Program	649,001
General Provisions	
Special transfer authority (Sec. 102) (emergency)	(4,000,000)
Total for the bill (net)	50,000,000
RECAPITULATION	
Military Personnel	1,003,411
Operation and Maintenance	37,399,245
Other Operation and Maintenance	5,806,500
Procurement	5,141,843
Defense Health Program	649,001
Total, Department of Defense	50,000,000

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY	
INCREMENTAL WARTIME OPERATING COSTS	22,532,921
RESET (UNIT AND INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE)	3,920,014
SERVICEWIDE TRANSPORTATION	976,555
(COMMANDER'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM) (NA)	(500,000)
TOTAL, O&M, ARMY	27,429,490
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY	
INCREMENTAL WARTIME OPERATING COSTS	2,071,560
TOTAL, O&M, NAVY	2,071,560
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS	
INCREMENTAL WARTIME OPERATING COSTS	2,034,499
DEPOT MAINTENANCE	245,319
SERVICEWIDE TRANSPORTATION	149,505
TOTAL, O&M, MARINE CORPS	2,429,323
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE	
OPERATING FORCES/FLYING HOURS	3,582,560
TOTAL, O&M, AIR FORCE	3,582,560
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE	
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND	696,000
DLSA OFFICE OF MILITARY COMMISSIONS	1,540
DCSA COALITION SUPPORT	333,000
DCSA LIFT AND SUSTAIN	150,000
GLOBAL TRAIN AND EQUIP	150,000
TOTAL, O&M, DEFENSE-WIDE	1,330,540
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY RESERVE	
OPERATING FORCES SUPPORT	61,223
TOTAL, O&M, ARMY RESERVE	61,223
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY RESERVE	
MISSION AND OTHER FLIGHT OPERATIONS	38,841
INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE	31
MISSION AND OTHER SHIP OPERATIONS	937
COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS	2,233
COMBAT SUPPORT FORCES	5,458
TOTAL, O&M, NAVY RESERVE	47,500

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS RESERVE	
BASE OPERATION SUPPORT	48
OPERATING FORCES	25,301
TRAINING SUPPORT	808
TOTAL, O&M, MARINE CORPS RESERVE	26,157
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE RESERVE	
PRIMARY COMBAT FORCES	8,089
TOTAL, O&M, AIR FORCE RESERVE	8,089
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	
PRE-DEPLOYMENT AND POST-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING	378,381
TOTAL, O&M, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	378,381
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR NATIONAL GUARD	
AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS	32,274
MISSION SUPPORT OPERATIONS	2,148
TOTAL, O&M, AIR NATIONAL GUARD	34,422
RECAPITULATION	
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY	27,429,490
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY	2,071,560
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS	2,429,323
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE	3,582,560
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE	1,330,540
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY RESERVE	61,223
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY RESERVE	47,500
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, MARINE CORPS RESERVE	26,157
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE RESERVE	8,089
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	378,381
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR NATIONAL GUARD	34,422
TOTAL, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE	37,399,245

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

PROCUREMENT

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
SUMMARY	
ARMY	
AIRCRAFT	302,200
WEAPONS, TRACKED COMBAT VEHICLES	1,574,217
AMMUNITION	154,000
OTHER	1,976,100
TOTAL, ARMY	4,006,517
NAVY	
AIRCRAFT	25,300
OTHER	88,281
MARINE CORPS	729,232
TOTAL, NAVY	842,813
AIR FORCE	
AIRCRAFT	147,800
OTHER	42,125
TOTAL, AIR FORCE	189,925
DEFENSE-WIDE	
DEFENSE-WIDE	102,588
TOTAL PROCUREMENT	5,141,843

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

PROCUREMENT

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
PROCUREMENT, MARINE CORPS	
LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLES (LAV)	
LAV PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (PIP)	23,000
LAV RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION (RAM)	33,600
MODIFICATION KITS	
MULTIPURPOSE TANK BLADE	2,200
TACTICAL CONCEALED VIDEO SYSTEM	400
5/4T TRUCK HMMWV (MYP)	53,482
MARINE AIR COMMAND CONTROL SYSTEM (MACCS)	29,000
INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT EQUIPMENT	
ANGEL FIRE SENSOR PACKAGE	8,000
MOTOR TRANSPORT MODIFICATIONS	
MTVR ARMOR	60,000
EOD SYSTEMS	
CREW	172,800
PHYSICAL SECURITY EQUIPMENT	
GBOSS	340,000
FIELD MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	
FAMILY OF FIELD MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	6,750
TOTAL, PROCUREMENT, MARINE CORPS	729,232
AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE	
C-17 LAIRCM	72,000
C-5 DEFENSIVE SYSTEM INSTALLATION	11,700
TO EQUIP DEPLOYING AIRCRAFT	
F-15 ARC-210 BLOS COMMS UNR	39,700
F-16 SLOS UON	24,400
TOTAL, AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE	147,800
OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE	
MEDIUM TACTICAL VEHICLES	3,500
HALVORSEN LOADER	13,500
VEHICLE COUNTER SNIPER PROTECTION KITS	1,625
AIR FORCE PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM	13,000
NIGHT VISION GOGGLES	2,500
REMOTE OPTICAL VIDEO ENHANCED RECEIVER (ROVER)	5,500
BLUE FORCE TRACKING (BFT)	2,500
TOTAL, OTHER PROCUREMENT, AIR FORCE	42,125
PROCUREMENT, DEFENSE-WIDE	
CV-22	52,200
C-130 MODS	6,400
SPEAR	1,000
TACTICAL COMBAT CASUALTY CARE KITS	4,964
SOF COMBAT ASSAULT RIFLE (SCAR)	4,593
AN/PVS-15A NIGHT VISION GOGGLES	1,057
MOUT RANGE CONTROL SYSTEM	3,316
GROUND MOBILITY VEHICLES	1,846
SUSPENSION UPGRADE TO TACTICAL GROUND MOBILITY VEHICLE	10,112
U-28 BLOCK 20 UPGRADE	17,100
TOTAL, PROCUREMENT, DEFENSE-WIDE	102,588

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

PROCUREMENT

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
OTHER PROCUREMENT, ARMY	
HMMWV RECAP PROGRAM	465,000
HIGH MOBILITY MULTI-PURP WHEELED VEHICLE (HMMWV)	427,000
HEMTT EXTENDED SERVICE PROGRAM	40,000
KNIGHT FAMILY	50,000
FAMILY OF MEDIUM TACTICAL VEH (FMTV)	80,000
TACTICAL BRIDGE, FLOAT-RIBBON	21,000
FAMILY OF HEAVY TACTICAL VEHICLES (FTHV)	70,000
TACTICAL TRAILERS/DOLLY SETS	29,000
GROUND STANDOFF MINE DETECTION SYSTEM	13,000
NIGHT VISION DEVICES	45,000
NIGHT VISION THERMAL WEAPONS SIGHT	11,000
MOBILE MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT SYSTEM	13,000
ALL TERRAIN LIFTING ARM SYSTEM	11,000
GENERATORS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIP	18,500
DIGITAL TOPOGRAPHIC SUPPORT SYSTEM (DTSS) (MIP)	6,000
CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ESP	4,500
DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS, PETROLEUM & WATER	4,500
CBRN SOLDIER PROTECTION	54,300
ITEMS LESS THAN $5.0M (TAC VEH)	4,000
FIRE SUPPORT C2 FAMILY	3,500
TRUCK, TRACTOR, LINE HAUL, M915/M916	3,200
DEFENSE ENTERPRISE WIDEBAND SATCOM SYSTEM	9,300
SAT TERM, EMUT (SPACE)	3,400
ARMY GLOBAL COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM (AGCCS)	2,800
PROPHET GROUND (MIP)	4,600
ITEMS LESS THAN $5.0M (MAINT EQ)	12,100
INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROGRAM-ISSP	1,500
RAPID EQUIPPING SOLDIER SUPPORT SYSTEMS (INCL WARLOCK)	400,000
MODIFICATION OF IN-SERVICE EQUIPMENT (OPA3)	160,000
NAVSTAR GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (SPACE)	3,200
ROUGH TERRAIN CONTAINER HANDLER	3,000
ARMORED SECURITY VEHICLES (ASV)	1,500
CI HUMINT INFO MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CHIMS) (MIP)	1,200
TOTAL, OTHER PROCUREMENT, ARMY	1,976,100
AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, NAVY	
GEN II MISSILE WARNING SYSTEM (COMMON ECM)	17,000
P-3 ISR UPGRADES (P-3 SERIES)	1,200
EP-3 ISR UPGRADES (EP-3 SERIES)	4,500
CH-53 AMARC (H-53 SERIES)	2,600
TOTAL, AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, NAVY	25,300
OTHER PROCUREMENT, NAVY	
UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES FOR EOD TEAMS (EOD EQPT)	37,000
BOARDING PARTY BODY ARMOR (PHYSICAL SECURITY EQPT)	3,100
EOD ROBOTS (EOD EQPT)	1,200
AIRCREW BODY ARMOR (AVIATION LIFE SUPPORT)	750
CREW (EOD EQPT)	35,400
WMD DETECTION (PHYSICAL SECURITY EQPT)	3,000
NCIS VEHICLES (PHYSICAL SECURITY VEHICLES)	900
IN THEATER AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL (ATC EQPT)	6,111
MEDICAL SUPPORT EQUIPMENT	820
TOTAL, OTHER PROCUREMENT, NAVY	88,281

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT- 2008

PROCUREMENT

(IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS)

	RECOMMENDED
AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, ARMY	
UTILITY FIXED WING F/W CARGO AIRCRAFT	5,000
UH-60M BLACKHAWK (MYP)	47,400
AH-64 MODS	113,600
CH-47 CARGO HELICOPTER MODS	120,000
COMMON GROUND EQUIPMENT	10,000
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL	6,200
TOTAL, AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT, ARMY	302,200
PROCUREMENT OF W&TCV, ARMY	
BRADLEY BASE SUSTAINMENT	400,000
STRYKER VEHICLE	521,000
FIST VEHICLE (MOD)	30,000
BFVS SERIES (MOD)	48,000
IMPROVED RECOVERY VEHICLE (M88 MOD)	135,000
M1 ABRAMS TANK (MOD)	200,000
ABRAMS UPGRADE PROGRAM	225,000
M249 SAW MACHINE GUN, 5.56MM (SAW)	8,700
M249 SAW MACHINE GUN MODS (GZ1290)	6,517
TOTAL, PROCUREMENT OF W&TCV, ARMY	1,574,217
PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, ARMY	
40MM ALL TYPES	65,700
30MM ALL TYPES	40,000
25MM ALL TYPES	300
105MM ARTILLERY AMMUNITION ALL TYPES	10,000
MODULAR ARTILLERY CHARGE SYSTEM (MACS)	18,000
SHOULDER FIRED ROCKETS ALL TYPES	20,000
TOTAL, PROCUREMENT OF AMMUNITION, ARMY	154,000

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds just to point out, and I agree strongly with Mr. MURTHA's statement about torture. I don't think Americans want to be known as a Nation that do torture.

But we have put prohibitions on torture in our Defense appropriations bills almost from the beginning of the war, and so we have made it very clear that we are opposed to the use of torture. We just wish the other side would go by the same rules.

I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California, the former chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. HUNTER.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time. I want to also thank everyone who works on this committee and has spent so much time over the years working to prepare our military forces to be able to handle contingencies and wars around the world. We appreciate that, and you have lots of great experience.

But let me tell you, this provision in this particular bill is terrible for the warfighters. Let me talk about a small piece of it.

You have what I call a 15-day wait, notify and hold provision. That means before any unit can go into Iraq, a 15-day period, waiting period, has to expire after you have notified the Armed Services Committees and the Defense appropriations committee that unit is ''ready for battle'' and meets a mission-capability standard.

Now, the problem with that is we have a war against terror in which teams, whether they are special operations teams, medivac teams, EOD teams, special fire support teams like C–130, A–6 gun ships are constantly moving across the boundaries between Iraq and the rest of the world. Some of our assets come off of carriers. Some of them come out of Incirlik, Turkey. Some from Kuwait and some of them come from other places.

This idea that before a special forces team can move across a line you must have a 15-day notify and wait period is totally unworkable.

I want to give to you what Admiral Fallon, head of the Central Command, said when we asked him what he thought about the notify and hold provision. He said, ''I would ask for consideration that we not limit the flexibility of our commanders in allowing them to use forces that might be necessary to meet a situation or a mission which they might be asked to undertake. And so I would opt to allow our commanders to have the flexibility of making that decision rather than have some dictated requirement in advance.''

I would say to my good friend, Mr. MURTHA, who has several times stated that the administration should listen to its generals: Every team that goes into that warfighting theater goes in because one of the battlefield commanders has requested their presence.

I can remember talking to my son when he was in the battle of Fallujah as an artillery officer and he was inside the city as a forward observer. And I asked him what the most important platforms we had out there were. He said the A6 C–130 gunship. I said, Where are they? He said, They come and they go.

Ladies and gentleman, we move firefighting teams, all types of special operations crews and teams, EOD teams, A6 C–130 gunships across those borders constantly, and to have a requirement where you are going to have to give a 15-day notification and wait before you can move that unit in is devastating to our warfighting capability.

I would ask for a ''no'' on this measure.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as one who opposed the invasion of Iraq and as one who has led efforts to end the occupation of Iraq, I rise today to support the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act of 2007.

First, I would like to thank Speaker PELOSI, Chairmen OBEY and MURTHA for really crafting this historic legislation that takes the first step to end the occupation of Iraq. This bill's main purpose, main purpose, is to begin to fund the end of this occupation.

This is also the very first time that this Congress will explicitly tie funding to bringing our troops home. It mandates a start date for the President to begin redeployment of our brave troops within 30 days of his signature. It also once again puts Congress on record prohibiting the establishment of permanent military bases and United States economic control of Iraqi oil and also of torture.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is not perfect. I strongly feel that there should be additional clarity on the numbers and nature of U.S. forces that remain for protection of diplomats and training of Iraqi forces. And given the President's determination to protect his legacy by allowing the occupation to continue indefinitely, we really must be wary of providing him opportunities to prolong or extend this war.

So we made sure in this legislation that this bill explicitly states that ''the primary purpose of this $5 billion should be to transition the mission, redeploy troops in Iraq, and not to extend or prolong the war.''

But I am also disappointed that the end date in this legislation is a goal no later than December 2008. But hopefully, the Senate will pass this and send it to the President.

This legislation does conform to what Congresswomen WATERS, WOOLSEY and myself have been working on all year. Earlier this year, we authored the Lee amendment that stipulates funding for Iraq should be used to fully fund, fully fund, the safe and orderly redeployment of our troops from Iraq. We did this way back in March. Now, 92 Members of Congress wrote to the President to put him on notice to this effect. So I am glad this remains the main purpose of this legislation.

This legislation represents for many of us a very important step forward to end the combat operations in Iraq. Otherwise, believe you me, I would never vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation does not give the President a blank check for his occupation. It provides a down payment on redeploying our troops from Iraq and ending the occupation. It clearly says these funds are to be used to begin to end the death, the violence, and the destruction that the Bush administration has brought on Iraq, which he has brought on our brave young men and women, and our country and the world.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from New Jersey, the former vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I rise in strong opposition to this legislation, the process that brought it here tonight, but not to the money that is badly needed for our troops in the field.

For each of the last 3 years, the Defense appropriations bill, ably led by Chairman YOUNG and Chairman MURTHA, has included a straightforward bridge fund to cover the cost of ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Indeed, the continuing resolution we passed last month gave our military access to the bridge funding until November 16. This funding allowed our warfighters, all volunteers, the ability to fuel their Stryker vehicles and Humvees, restock their ammunition, resupply their mess halls, power the systems that allow them to keep in touch with their families at home, and even to ship their new MRAP vehicles to the battle zone so they may be better protected from IEDs. And yes, protect their fellow soldiers and innocent Iraqis.

But bowing to antiwar sentiment, the majority leadership pointedly chose to keep this important bridge funding out of the defense bill that we approved last week.

So while our brave warfighters are hard at work in Iraq in a hellish environment, they find they have to watch their own backs from those in Washington who want to choke off funding for their missions, both military and humanitarian.

I submit that this deliberate attempt to starve our operations in Iraq threatens the very safety of those troops and the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis. No, Mr. Speaker, we should be sending to the President a clean bridge fund that does not tie the hands of commanders in the field and allows them to build on their undeniable successes in recent months in Iraq. Cutting money does tie their hands, limits those commanders' options, as does the setting of date certain.

My colleagues, the ill-advised process this House started last week is not without its costs. While Congress deliberately procrastinates, and some say throws roadblocks in front of our brave warriors battling violent international terrorists every day, military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan will run out of money, causing the Department of Defense to borrow from other important programs to support their operations.

I am told this process could completely drain the Army's operations and maintenance accounts by the end of next January.

In fact, it is my understanding that the Deputy Secretary of Defense has warned that the military would have to start preparing in December, next month, to close domestic military facilities, lay off civilian workers, and delay contracts if the bridge funding is not provided. This could have very damaging consequences for those communities privileged to host a military installation.

Mr. Speaker, I am also troubled that this bill requires the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and slaps restrictions on the mission of U.S. troops, again, both military and humanitarian.

This harkens back to what was recently described by the junior Senator from Connecticut as the ''narrative of defeat and retreat.'' As Senator LIEBERMAN said yesterday, and I quote, ''Rather than supporting General Petraeus and our troops in the field, antiwar advocates in Congress are instead struggling to deny or disparage their achievements, and are now acting, once again, to hold hostage the funding our troops desperately need and to order retreat by a date certain, regardless of what is happening on the ground.''

I would remind my colleagues that even the Iraq Study Group warned us against setting arbitrary deadlines. We should let the troops and their commanders do their work.

I have always maintained that our brave troops' service in Iraq should be as short and as safe as possible. This legislation does nothing to advance either of these goals. I urge rejection of this bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include tabular and extraneous material on H.R. 4156.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. OBEY. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA).

Mr. MURTHA. I would say to my good friend from New Jersey, he voted for the $459 billion bill where we had a CR that fully funded the MRAPs, fully funded, $16 billion for the year. We are not holding up the MRAPs. And we provided the transportation.

□ 2000

We were very careful with this bill. The gentleman knows how careful I am in taking care of the troops. The gentleman knows how careful he is in taking care of the troops. None of us are trying to put roadblocks in the way. What we are trying to do is hold the administration accountable for what they have done. We want stability in the whole Middle East, not just in Iraq. So we have got to focus also on the future of the country. Russia is starting to come up, China is starting to come up. And in our bill, which the gentleman from New Jersey was a part of, we started to look ahead. Iraq is occupying us as well as we occupying Iraq.

So I have to say to the gentleman, I just want to make sure we keep the facts straight. We have fully funded the MRAPS, even though it's costing $150,000 per MRAP to get them overseas because of the lateness of the request.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

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

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this Iraq supplemental bridge fund. While no one is declaring victory in Iraq, the tide is turning. But nothing changes here on Capitol Hill. And here we go again, by some estimates, the 41st effort by the majority to come to this floor and force a precipitous and reckless withdrawal of forces from Iraq, another Democrat plan for redeployment from Iraq tying $50 billion in necessary combat funds for our troops to a Democrat plan for withdrawal.

With unambiguous evidence of progress on the ground filling the newspapers of America, the Democrats in Congress seem to have decided to add denial to their plan of retreat and defeat in Iraq. And the newspapers speak for themselves.

The Washington Post last week wrote, ''The number of attacks against U.S. soldiers has fallen to levels not seen since before the February 2006 bombing of a Shia shrine in Samarra that touched off waves of sectarian killing.'' The death toll of American troops in October fell to 39, the lowest since March 2006.

And on Thursday last, The New York Times noted, '' 'American forces have routed al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the Iraqi militant network, from every neighborhood in Iraq,' a top general said today, 'allowing American troops involved in the surge to depart as planned.' ''

The Washington Times would say, ''Responding to the good news, Speaker Pelosi has unveiled her newest legislative strategy to damage the war efforts. House Democrats this week,'' they wrote, ''will try to enact a bill calling for immediately beginning to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq. The surrender language will be attached to a 4-month, $50 billion funding.''

''The contrast could hardly be more striking,'' they said. ''American soldiers performing heroically and successfully, risking their lives on the battlefield in Iraq, Speaker Pelosi and the Democrat leadership by contrast look for ways to advertise American weakness to the enemy.''

And I say from my heart, with great respect to the good and patriotic Americans with whom I differ on this point, I urge my colleagues to reject this Democrat plan for withdrawal. But I also urge my countrymen to give our soldiers a chance. I know things have not always gone as we had all hoped in Iraq.

In my role as the ranking member of the Middle East Subcommittee and before, I have traveled to this war-torn country five times over the last 4½ years. I have seen success and I have seen less than success. I have seen advance and I have seen failure. But today, we are seeing hope spring. Freedom and stability are beginning to take hold in Iraq. And I say from my heart, we cannot lose faith in ourselves. We cannot lose faith in freedom. We must reject this latest plan for retreat and defeat.

Mr. OBEY. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This is almost the 250th time I have been down on this House floor to talk about Iraq in the last 2 years. I can't remember, so I say almost how many times it's been.

During that time, the American people have been demanding two things, that the Congress step up to our responsibility and bring our troops home, and that we take bold steps to face up to the President by using our power, the power of the purse, to hold him accountable for what is going on in Iraq.

Today, Speaker PELOSI is leading the House of Representatives in a bold direction. It is the first time so far that we have tied funding to redeployment. Ninety-two Members of the House have written a letter to the President demanding that no more funding for Iraq go forward without it, meaning bringing our troops home and redeployment.

This vote also leads to next year's appropriations where we can use the power of the purse and fully fund bringing our troops home in a very responsible and very timely and actually safe way.

This bill is not perfect. It is the boldest step yet, however, and we must support it. I would not support it if we were not tying the funding to responsible redeployment. I would not support it unless there was a start date for the President to begin the redeployment of our brave men and women in uniform. This bill is the beginning, but it is a bold beginning. I think we should consider everything that is in it, and then build on that for the future and get our troops home as soon as possible.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it seems like not that long ago, but it was a year or so ago, we heard repeatedly: We're losing in Iraq. We're losing in Iraq. We've got to have a policy change. We're losing in Iraq. We've got to have a policy change. And we got a policy change.

It's kind of refreshing to hear so many say we're winning, and a little bit surprising to hear we're winning, so we need a policy change. We're winning, so we need a policy change? We know if we pull out too quickly, we don't leave a stable area.

Hearing comments earlier about somebody won't listen to anyone else; they get no input. I thought they were talking about the Democratic majority. Just today on FISA, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, I'm told at 1:30 that we've got to have amendments in by 4 o'clock on a bill that we weren't even allowed to see. You want input? Let's start it right here on the floor.

I heard comments about Vietnam mistakes. The biggest mistake that history teaches us about Vietnam was that it was micromanaged from Washington. If you want documentation, go to Sam Johnson's book. After the carpet bombing finally took place and we went after and took it to them, the bombing stopped, we gave away the farm at Paris, and as the prisoners left the Hanoi Hilton, one of the leaders said, ''You know, you Americans are so foolish. If you'd have kept it up another week, we would have had to unconditionally surrender.'' But we were micromanaged from Washington.

We show the greatest reverence for those who have given their last full measure of devotion not by pulling out before we leave a stable area, but by seeing that we finish the job and leave a stable area so they will not have died in vain.

I leave with a comment of Travis Buford's mother as we stood there by his casket in Nacogdoches, Texas at the funeral home earlier this year. I said to his mother as we stood near his coffin, ''Is there anything I can do?'' She gritted her teeth and she said, ''Go back and tell the Congress to shut up and let the military finish their job.''

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, after that very thoughtful statement, I would like to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN).

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in support of H.R. 4156 because people in Wisconsin want their country back.

This bill supports our troops and demands the President begin to move our forces away, away from Iraq and back after our real enemies, Osama bin Laden and his followers.

Iraq will forever be President Bush's war, an unnecessary war based on lies and deceptions. His poor judgment has written perhaps the saddest chapter in our Nation's history, wearing down our military and the endless, centuries-old Iraqi civil war.

The vote today will end not the hatred between the Shiites and Sunnis, but it will redirect our efforts away from Iraq as soon as humanly possible. A ''yes'' vote supports our troops by protecting them from a President who does not understand reality.

People in Wisconsin have asked me to deliver their message here, here on the House floor: I want my country back. I want my country back. Tonight, we will begin to move our country in a new direction, away from Iraq and back after Osama bin Laden and his followers.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in strong opposition to H.R. 4156, the so-called Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations of 2008, because in fact, Mr. Speaker, the bill should be called the Disorderly and Irresponsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. What we are debating tonight, disguised as a genuine bridge fund to sustain operations in the global war on terror, is nothing more than another defeatist measure intended to placate the Democrats' liberal base as we approach this Thanksgiving recess.

The Democratic leadership apparently has decided it's more to stand with the Out of Iraq Caucus, MoveOn.org and Code Pink than with our brave men and women in uniform. Rather than funding our soldiers' needs and delivering a decisive blow to the terrorist campaign in Iraq, the Democrats are again conditioning the funding on a date certain for withdrawal.

At a time of sustained progress by our forces, Mr. Speaker, it seems that what is great news for America and for our troops is consequently bad political news for a Democratic majority who has literally bet the farm on a defeatist agenda.

Just last weekend, Prime Minister Maliki stated that violence between Sunnis and Shias has nearly disappeared from Iraq, disappeared from Baghdad, with terrorist bombings down 77 percent.

The Washington Post reported that attacks against United States soldiers have fallen to levels not seen since the February 2006 bombing of the Shia shrine in Samarra. And an Investor's Business Daily article detailed that military analysts, including many who are opposed to the war, have concluded that the United States and its allies are on the verge of winning in Iraq. And, thankfully, United States casualties in Iraq are at their lowest level since March of 2006, Mr. Speaker. Now is not the time to risk impeding the progress we are making. Now is the time to continue building on the turnaround we have made, and to state unequivocally that we are on the verge of victory in Iraq and that we will finish the job.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot give in to the terrorists' extremist views and sinister plans for the Middle East and the world. And we certainly should not send a message to the terrorists that such a capitulation will begin in 30 days and will wrap up by December of 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on tying funds for our troops to a date certain withdrawal from Iraq. I urge all my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this dangerous bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2156, the so-called "Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations of 2008." Because, in fact, this bill is a "disorderly and irresponsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act."

Let me be very clear, Mr. Speaker. What we are debating today—disguised as a genuine bridge fund to sustain operations in the Global War on Terror—is nothing more than another defeatist measure intended to placate the Democrat's liberal base as we approach the Thanksgiving recess.

The Democratic leadership has decided it is more important to stand with the "Out of Iraq Caucus," MoveOn.org and Code Pink than with our brave men and women in uniform. Rather than funding our soldiers' needs and delivering a decisive blow to the terrorist campaign in Iraq, the Democrats are again conditioning the funding on a date-certain withdrawal.

At a time of sustained progress by our forces, Mr. Speaker, it seems that what is great news for America and for our troops is consequently bad political news for the Democrat majority and their defeatist agenda.

Mr. Speaker, a July New York Times editorial authored by Michael O'Hanlon and Kenneth Pollack stated "We are finally getting somewhere in Iraq, at least in military terms. . . . The soldiers and marines told us they feel that they now have a superb commander in General David Petraeus; they are confident in his strategy, they see real results, and they feel now they have the numbers needed to make a real difference."

In September, General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker spoke optimistically about the future of Iraq citing concrete progress. Acknowledging we still had a long way to go, they recognized we had achieved tactical momentum and were building momentum toward local reconciliation. Indeed, local Iraqis were turning against extremists.

Last weekend Prime Minister al-Maliki stated that violence between Sunnis and Shi'ites has nearly disappeared from Baghdad, with terrorist bombings down 77 percent. The Washington Post reported that attacks against U.S. soldiers have fallen to levels not seen since before the February 2006 bombing of a Shi'ite shrine in Samarra. An Investor's Business Daily article detailed that military analysts—including many who are opposed to the war—have concluded that the U.S. and its allies are on the verge of winning in Iraq.

And thankfully, U.S. casualties in Iraq are at their lowest level since March 2006. Now is not the time to risk impeding the progress we are making. Now is the time to continue building on the turn-around we have made and to state unequivocally that we are on the verge of victory in Iraq, and that we will finish the job.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind my colleagues of the consequences of giving up on Iraq: the collapse of a democratic Iraqi government, likely leading to mass killings and genocide in the nation; an emboldened al-Qaeda; regional instability; Iran and Syria setting the course of Iraq's future; and Israel being pushed into the Mediterranean sea.

The stakes are too high for political posturing. Ayman al-Zawahiri has said ''the Jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: expel the Americans from Iraq.''

Mr. Speaker, we cannot give in to their extremist views and sinister plans for the Middle East and the world. And we certainly should not send a message to the terrorists that such a capitulation will begin in 30 days and will wrap up by December of 2008.

Mr. Speaker, never have I been so glad that we've got General Petraeus leading our troops in Iraq and not the Democratic leadership of this house. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on tying funds for our troops to a date-certain withdrawal from Iraq. I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. OBEY. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER).

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I have had to listen as my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle have made comments like, give our soldiers a chance.

This is not about our soldiers. This is about a failed policy. I think we need to go over some of the facts again, the facts that 70 percent of Americans remember but my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle seem to have forgotten.

Number one. There were no Iraqis on the plane that day.

Number two. There were no weapons of mass destruction.

□ 2015

They weren't there. They were never found.

Number three. There was no al Qaeda in Iraq before the war, so it doesn't matter if we reduce the number. There were none before the war.

Number four. This could have been a war against terrorists, should have been a war against terrorists, not a war against the Iraqis.

Now we have almost 4,000 dead Americans. We don't even know how many dead Iraqis. It's a terrible tragedy in our Nation. And we're making decisions to spend billions of dollars in Iraq while we tell our people, sorry, we don't have money for education. Sorry, we don't have money for health care. Sorry, we don't have money to build bridges.

Bring these troops home. And this is what we are doing responsibly. We're saying ''no'' to the President and ''yes'' to the American people.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, before we vote on this measure, the American people need to know that U.S. troops in Iraq have achieved significant security gains. Violence against U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians has fallen dramatically, and forces of chaos have had their safe havens and supply lines systematically eliminated. In fact, it was recently announced that the curfew in Baghdad may soon be lifted.

Mr. Speaker, we can all agree that the goal is to end the war, but this must be done in a solicitous and strategic manner. While there is clearly military momentum in Iraq, the situation remains fragile and complex, and our work continues to be very dangerous and difficult. Establishing an arbitrary deadline for withdrawal of our troops would potentially undermine the stabilization of the country, especially in light of recent security gains.

However, I would submit that one area of potential agreement in this body involves a renewed spirit of diplomacy for the region. It is time for a diplomatic surge. The gains made possible by the steadfast competence of our troops gives rise to a new diplomatic potential in the effort to curtail regional destabilizing influences, promote political and economic progress, as well as provide for the safe and stable transition of refugees throughout the area.

The recent meeting in Istanbul, Turkey of countries neighboring Iraq, the upcoming meeting in Annapolis to further the Middle East peace process, and the United Nation's own recent reengagement in Baghdad are all positive diplomatic trends that should be aggressively supported and augmented by our efforts in this House to facilitate the rapid stabilization of Iraq, potentially empowering an even more rapid drawdown of our troops and a sustainable peace for the country.

Mr. OBEY. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HARE).

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4156.

For the last 4 years, President Bush has demanded more and more money from this Congress for the war in Iraq, draining funding from domestic priorities in the process. And this year's just no different.

True to form, in October the President casually requested an additional $200 billion to continue his failed policy.

Mr. Speaker, every time I travel back to my district, constituents plead with me to stand up to this President and end the war. Fortunately for them, the days of the rubber-stamp Congress are over. This bill before us holds the President accountable.

The bill provides only $50 billion of the President's $200 billion request, which serves to meet the immediate needs of our troops currently deployed, while the balance is dependent upon progress in Iraq.

The funding is also conditioned on the redeployment of troops from Iraq to begin within 30 days of enactment, with a target for completion by December of 2008.

Passage of this bill is the first step towards forcing a change of course in Iraq, shifting the mission from the combat forces to a comprehensive strategy.

I urge all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 4156.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, would you advise us as to the time available on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 32¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reserve my time at this point.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, leadership is about getting results. I want to thank our leadership for bringing a bill to the floor for the first time that gets results.

I've never voted for funds for this war, and I've been waiting a long time to vote for a bill that would bring our troops home.

On March 20, 2003, the United States invaded Iraq. It was a mistake then, and every day we've failed to correct this mistake costs us in cash, in credibility, and in lives. Every day we are not working to get out of Iraq, we make our Nation weaker and less safe. Every day that we do not get our troops out of Iraq is another day of mistakes.

The road out of Iraq starts with the first step. This bill is the first beginning. To start a withdrawal, this bill jump-starts that withdrawal. It starts in 30 days.

Passing this bill tonight makes clear that the U.S. House of Representatives has acted to bring our troops home, to end this war, and to put our country back on the right track. This leadership deserves your support.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, today I'm proud to join with a unified Democratic Caucus to cast my vote in support of H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act. This legislation marks the first time redeployment language has been attached to funding, and includes the strongest worded language to date, by stating Congress's explicit commitment to end the war in Iraq as safely and quickly as possible and bring our troops home.

The letter my colleagues LYNN WOOLSEY, BARBARA LEE and I sent to President Bush stating that we would only support funding for the redeployment of our troops has grown from 70 to 92

signatories. As the letter stated, and as the title of this legislation echoes, we choose to support our military and look out for the best interests of this country by funding an orderly and responsible redeployment from Iraq.

While this bill is far from perfect, there's a lot in this bill to be proud of. This bill requires the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq within 30 days. It prohibits the deployment of U.S. troops not deemed fully trained, and it effectively bans the awful practice of waterboarding by any affiliate of a U.S. agency. I applaud the shared commitment of the Democratic Members in both the House and Senate to end the war in Iraq.

I share the public's dismay at the slow pace of Congress's action to end President Bush's failed war. It is, of course, the administration, not Congress, who ultimately deserves the blame for this terrible war. Before every major debate on the Iraq war, like clockwork, President Bush fires up the propaganda machine to twist reality and obscure the facts on the ground.

Those who stand in the way of real change in Iraq must be held accountable. They must not be allowed to quietly throw wrenches in the gears of change slowly rotating within this country.

A large and growing majority of Americans now believe it was a mistake to invade Iraq and that Congress should force a change in the President's irresponsible policies.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, before us tonight is yet another Democrat plan, a plan for failure. I guess it's really not quite so much a plan as just a schedule for failure.

It seems ironic to me that when there is actually success, the Democrats are having a hard time seeing the success. And that's, perhaps, because the success that is going on in Iraq is not a big government, Washington, D.C. beltway kind of success. It's not the Parliament in Baghdad where the success is going on. No, it's a uniquely American and a special success. It's the success that bubbles from the hearts of the very people that are involved, from the local communities, from the streets, and particularly from the sheiks. It's the kind of thing that happened in America where local communities stood up against the biggest military power in the world and defended our declaration in the same way these sheiks now are paying a tremendous price. One, Sheik Meshin al-Jamari, he was encouraged to come back from his safe haven in Jordan. He came back to take up responsibility for his tribal area just to the east of Fallujah. And what was the cost when he turned on al Qaeda? First, his daughter was killed, then his brother shot, and then his family rounded up inside a house in Karma, and the house imploded upon their heads. And yet, that sheik is standing firm because he does have a vision for the possibility that there will one day be an Iraq where people can be free.

Our General Allen was asked by some of the Iraqis in his tribe, they said, When the British left, they left us a big skyscraper. When America leaves Iraq, will you leave a skyscraper? And General Allen said, No. We'll leave the ideas that leave you a free people. And one day there will be Iraqis who come to us and they will say, Hey, GI Joe, we believe it too. We believe that there is a God that gives inalienable rights to all people, the right to life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and we will also stand with you because you have that hope.

It is my hope that the Americans and the Democrats will rediscover why we have always gone to war in America, because we do believe in our battle cry from years ago that there is a God that gives basic rights to all people and that we must have the courage to stand behind those things. I hope that the Congress will vote to reject a plan of defeat.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. The war in Iraq is a disaster and it's time to bring our brave troops, the men and women who volunteered to serve their country for the right reasons but were sent to Iraq for the wrong reasons. It is time now for them to come home.

For that reason, I support this bill which, for the first time, ties funding to the responsible redeployment of our troops out of Iraq, beginning within 30 days of passage and to end in December 2008.

I'm supporting this bill for another important reason. It establishes once and for all that the United States of America does not torture people. This bill is not confused about waterboarding. Waterboarding is clearly made illegal, as well as electric shocks and mock executions and every other gruesome interrogation method that is currently prohibited in the Army Field Manual.

The American people elected the Democratic majority in this House last November because they're done with the war. They're sick and tired of losing American lives in Iraq. And they're sick and tired of losing vital programs at home to continue to finance this tragic war.

This is a vote of conscience. I urge every one of my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard significant discussion tonight about al Qaeda. And people seem to think that Iraq, the Iraq war was necessary in order to tackle al Qaeda. Well, that's backwards.

I can recall being out at CIA headquarters after 9/11. I can recall sitting out at CIA headquarters watching the Predator aircraft as they flew over Afghanistan, transmitting pictures back here in the search for bin Laden and al Qaeda. And I remember what those CIA people out there said, and the frustration they expressed because half of their resources were being diverted from the search for bin Laden and al Qaeda to prepare for the attack on Iraq.

It isn't that the war in Iraq was necessary to get at al Qaeda. The war in Iraq diverted us from concentrating on al Qaeda and bin Laden.

□ 2030

And we are still suffering the consequences today.

So let's keep the facts straight. Let's keep history straight. And let's keep our heads straight. The fact is that Iraq got in the way of our effort to get at al Qaeda and we have been suffering from that fact ever since.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished Speaker of the House.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and appreciate his leadership in bringing this important legislation, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, America honored our veterans, something that we do every day in our hearts but which we openly celebrated on that day. I am very proud that this year we could celebrate also the biggest increase in veterans benefits in the 77-year history of the Veterans Administration thanks to the New Direction Congress.

Yesterday, the President of the United States signed the Defense appropriations bill with the biggest increase in defense spending, made necessary because we must rebuild the capacity of our troops, which capacity has been weakened by the war in Iraq. And today, we bring before the Congress new direction legislation regarding the orderly and responsible redeployment of our troops out of Iraq.

This legislation is necessary because whatever you may have thought about the war or the conduct of the war or the origin of the war, whatever you may think about the performance of the Iraqi Government there, and I have my views on that subject, the fact is we can no longer militarily sustain the deployment in Iraq. Staying there in the manner that we are there is no longer an option.

Our troops have performed their duties magnificently, excellently, patriotically, and courageously. We owe them the deepest gratitude for their courage, their patriotism, and the sacrifices that they and their families are willing to make. But even as they tried

to create and had their military successes, God bless them for that, the secure framework was established to enable the Iraqi Government to make the political change necessary to end the civil war. Well, the sacrifice of our troops was simply not met by the actions of the Iraqi Government.

How much longer should we expect our young people to risk their lives, their limbs, their families, for an Iraqi Government that is not willing to step up to the plate?

This legislation today offers something fundamentally different from what President Bush is proposing, a 10-year war, a war without end, costing trillions of dollars at the expense of our military readiness. In fact, it offers something different than this House has done before. Indeed, it provides the tools to our troops so that they can get their jobs done with the greatest respect for that job. But it also presents a strategy that will bring them home responsibly, honorably, safely, and soon.

The legislation is different because it ties the funding to a strategy for redeployment. It is different because the funding provided is for the short term so that we can measure the administration's plan, if there is such a plan, to redeploy the troops on the schedule established in this bill.

We do have a military crisis not seen since Vietnam. Equipment is wearing out and needs to be replaced. Our troops, wherever they are, are only being trained for counterinsurgency in Iraq instead of a wider training for a full range of missions that they may be called on to perform. The deployment schedule of the Bush administration is wearing down our forces, plain and simple.

The distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee has made this readiness issue the cornerstone of his opposition to this war in Iraq. The distinguished chairman of the appropriations subcommittee on Defense has told us over and over again that this deployment in Iraq cannot be sustained without weakening our national security, without diminishing the capacity of our armed services to meet challenges to our national security wherever they may occur. As such, this readiness crisis poses a grave threat to America's national security.

Yet under the President's plan, and this was expressed by representatives of the administration on more than one occasion, the President's plan would bring 30,000 troops, the number of troops that were sent in for the surge, that 30,000 troops would be redeployed back to the U.S. by July of 2008. So let's understand this. This means that by July of 2008, we will have the same number of troops in Iraq as we had in November of 2006 when the American people called for a new direction in Iraq. Again, we cannot afford the President's commitment in Iraq. It traps us. It traps us, and we cannot, while we are in that trap, address our readiness crisis.

This redeployment, in addition to undermining our military capacity to protect the American people, is also unsustainable financially. According to a recent report by the Joint Economic Committee, this war could end up costing American taxpayers $3 trillion. We will pay any price, as President Kennedy said, to protect the American people, but without us going into the shortcomings of this war and the President's execution of it, $3 trillion, think of the opportunity cost of that money in our readiness, in the strength of our country, in our reputation in the world.

The legislation before us is important. Again, the title of it is the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act. It would begin redeployment within 30 days of enactment and have a goal of completing the redeployment by December 15, 2008. The legislation requires a transition in the mission of U.S. forces from being in combat to diplomatic and force protection, to targeted counterterrorism and limited support for the Iraqi security forces. It would prohibit the deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq who are not fully trained and fully equipped. Thank you, Mr. MURTHA, for your leadership on that subject and on this one as well and so many others. It requires that all U.S. Government agencies and personnel abide by the Army Field Manual's prohibition against torture.

The legislation that Mr. OBEY has brought to the floor, and I salute your leadership over and over again on this subject and so many others, Mr. Chairman, the House must choose between the President's plan for a 10-year war without end, no end in sight, the longer we're there, the harder it is to come out, the longer we're there, the more severely it hurts our military readiness; or a Democratic plan for responsible, honorable, safe redeployment out of Iraq and soon.

Our troops have already paid too high a price for this war: 3,850 U.S. troops killed, 28,000 injured, thousands of them permanently. That is, of course, the biggest price to pay. But the price that we are paying in our reputation in the world for us not to be able to take our rightful place as a leader in the world to make the world safer, to make the region, the Middle East, more stable, and so many other challenges that the world faces, whether it's the eradication of disease, the alleviation of poverty, the curbing of global warming, keeping peace, ending the fury of despair that contributes to the violence in the world. The countries of the world are crying out for American leadership, and at the same time they disrespect us for what is happening in Iraq.

We must act now to provide a new direction because it is clear that the President has turned a blind eye to all of this. And in addition to what I said earlier, our troops paying the biggest price, our reputation in the world, the several-trillion-dollar price tag to the taxpayer, and the cost to our readiness, despite the fact that the President has turned a blind eye to the facts of Iraq and a tin ear to the wishes of the American people to take a new direction in Iraq and bring our troops home, we must act today. I hope that our colleagues will all support this legislation because in doing so and if it is enacted into law and if this policy is pursued, we can resume our rightful place in the world. We can refocus our attention, as Mr. OBEY said earlier, on the real war on terrorism, and we can make the American people safer by rebuilding and restoring the readiness and the capacity of our military to protect the American people wherever our interests are threatened.

All of us stand here and take an oath of office by pledging to protect and defend the Constitution. In that preamble, to provide for the common defense is one of our first responsibilities. Unless we do that, protect the American people, nothing else is possible.

So let us support this legislation which helps us honor our oath of office to defend the American people and to respect the sacrifice, the courage, the patriotism of our troops to make us the home of the brave and the land of the free.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on this important legislation.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. SKELTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in support of this resolution.

It's very important that we take a good look at where we are in the country of Iraq. It's important that we take a good look at the status of the United States military forces, in particular our Army, which is being stretched and strained nearly beyond recognition.

You can't help but have a great deal of pride in the young men and young women in doing the duty upon which they have been called. But it is important for us to turn the reins, give the baton over to the Iraqi forces, to the Iraqi Government. We cannot hold their hand there forever. It is important that we redeploy our forces in a responsible and reasonable manner so that their readiness is assured in case of some future challenge.

CALL OF THE HOUSE

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I move a call of the House.

A call of the House was ordered.

The call was taken by electronic device, and the following Members responded to their names:

[Roll No. 1106]

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—377

Abercrombie	Alexander	Arcuri
Ackerman	Allen	Baca
Aderholt	Altmire	Bachmann
Akin	Andrews	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
Bonner
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
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
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
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
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
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 (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
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
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Waxman
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

□ 2103

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIERNEY). On this rollcall, 377 Members have recorded their presence by electronic device, a quorum.

Under the rule, further proceedings under the call are dispensed with.

ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 29¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 26½ minutes remaining.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute simply to explain to the House that the intention is to have one remaining speaker on each side and then proceed to the votes.

With that, I yield back the remainder of my 1 minute and invite the gentleman from Florida to close.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the evening, we have heard some very, very interesting speeches. I listened with great respect to all of them. I agreed with some, I disagreed with some, I wasn't sure about some. Nevertheless, it was a good debate at a high level. I paid special attention to the very distinguished Speaker of the House because in her opening comments, she talked about how Monday, Veterans Day, America honored our veterans. She spoke about the Veterans appropriations bill in great, glowing terms. I agree with that. It is a really good bill. It provides a lot of benefits for the veterans. There are 400,000 veterans claims backed up. That bill provided money to hire additional adjudicators to get rid of that backlog and get the veterans what they need.

The problem is that as she spoke about the importance of this bill and what a great bill it was and great bill it is, she failed to say that the House passed it on June 15, the Senate passed it in September, and here we are in November still waiting to get that bill on the House floor.

I say, Madam Speaker, let's vote on the VA appropriations bill.

I mentioned the fact that there were great speeches. But, Mr. Speaker, tonight we will not be voting or be recorded on how those speeches went, or what those speeches said, or what those speeches included. We are not going to be voting on opinions. We are not going to be voting on politics. We are going to be voting on what is in this bill. What has been said about this bill is not necessarily what is actually written in the bill. But we are going to vote for what is written in that bill. We will be held accountable for our vote on what that bill says, not on what some speaker said about it.

One of the things that I mentioned in my opening comments that I was really offended by is that this legislation gives constitutional protection to terrorists, the same constitutional protection that all of our constituents enjoy. I refer to page 3 of the bill itself, ''Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the rights under the United States Constitution of any person in the custody or under the physical jurisdiction of the United States.''

Now, that gives terrorists the same protection that your constituents have. And that's just not right. By giving them that protection, do we give them for example, do we have to read them their Miranda rights if we capture them on the battlefield? Do we have to allow them to pay bail and get out of jail or get out of detention? What kind of rights will we be giving to terrorists with just this one sentence that says they shall have rights under the Constitution? These are terrorists, Mr. Speaker. These aren't even people who are signatories to the Geneva Convention. They don't play by any rules. They do whatever they must do, and they have killed thousands and thousands of Americans, and they have killed thousands and thousands of the Muslim populations.

Now, something about this bill, on page 6 of this bill, ''After the conclusion of the reduction and transition of United States Armed Forces to a limited presence as required by this section, the Secretary of Defense may deploy or maintain members of the Armed Forces in Iraq only for the following missions.'' Now, pay attention to this because this is what you will be allowing. For those of you that think you're getting troops out of Iraq, this is what this bill will permit. The Armed Forces in Iraq can be there for the following missions: ''Protecting United States diplomatic facilities, United States Armed Forces, and American citizens.'' We do that now. That is one of the things that we are doing right now.

So you think you're getting out of that. This bill keeps you in that. The next paragraph, ''Conducting limited training, equipment, and providing logistical and intelligence support to the Iraqi Security forces.'' We're doing that now. So if you think this bill is going to change anything, it doesn't because you are allowing them to stay

to do the same thing that they are doing now.

The next paragraph, ''Engaging in targeted counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda, al Qaeda affiliated groups, and other terrorist organizations in Iraq.'' Mr. Speaker, we're doing that now.

On page 12, we go to the Iraqi Security Forces Fund provided in this bill. ''For the 'Iraq Security Forces Fund', $500 million, Provided, that such funds shall be available to the Secretary of Defense, notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the purpose of allowing the Commander, Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq, or the Secretary's designee, to provide assistance, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to the security forces of Iraq.'' Mr. Speaker, we are doing that now. So if you think we're making a change here, read the bill.

It goes on to say, ''Including the provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction, and funding, and to provide training, reintegration, education and employment programs for concerned local citizens, former militia members and detainees and former detainees.'' Mr. Speaker, we're doing all that now.

So this bill doesn't make very many changes if you think this gets you out of Iraq. It doesn't. If you read the bill, you will see that it doesn't. Now, these are things that we would be allowed to do under this bill. But if this bill were successful, and it will not be because I have an idea the President would veto it in its present form, we would have to do all of these same things that we are doing today but with a smaller force, a smaller force, minus the surge, for example. The change in policy that we all demanded early on came about, and it was called the ''surge.'' The surge has had many positive effects. When you get to the point that The New York Times and the L.A. Times and the Washington Post are writing stories about the positive effects of the surge, you have to admit there is something real there in the surge. So do you want to go back and have to do all of the same things we are doing today with a smaller force? I don't think so.

We will have a motion to recommit. And if that motion to recommit is successful, we will have a bill that we can all vote for and that I believe the President would be willing to sign. So let's vote based on what is in this bill, not what the speeches say about it, not about the politics, not about the opinions, but let's actually vote on what is in this bill and let's support our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and anywhere else in the world where they might be deployed. We owe them no less. This bill is not a good bill today. Let's vote against it tonight and vote for the motion to recommit.

□ 2115

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, has the gentleman yielded back his time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has yielded back all of his time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 26 minutes remaining.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker and Members, I rise in strong support of the bill that is before us today. First and foremost, I want to point out that every Member on this floor, every Member knows that the brave men and women of our military have done a fantastic job, and every Member on this floor supports the brave men and women serving our country.

Mr. Speaker, too many of those brave men and women have been doing a fantastic job for way too many tours. Multiple tours. The last time I was in Iraq, I had lunch with a group of soldiers from California, one of whom was a firefighter from the North Bay in California, and he said, I used to have a house in your district, but I don't anymore. My ex-wife has it now. I said, I am sorry to hear that. He said, well, this is my fourth tour. I couldn't expect much else.

Our men and women have been put under a tremendous strain for far too long. Our military equipment has been depleted. Over $100 billion is needed to bring our military equipment up to standard. Our combat readiness has been depleted. This bill, this bill is about refocusing our area; to transition, transition our effort into force protection, diplomatic protection, counterterrorism, refocus our effort looking into the future for future problems that we may have. It's long past time to refocus our efforts; it's long past time to transition.

This bill does represent a change. We heard from the previous speaker that there wasn't much change. Mr. Speaker and Members, if there wasn't any change in this bill, we wouldn't be facing the opposition from the other side that we are facing tonight. This bill represents major change.

This bill represents a policy change that the American people are demanding. They demanded it in the November election; they demand it today. It's long past time for this transition to take place. This war can't go on forever. We know that on this side of the aisle and we know it on the other side of the aisle.

A lot of comparisons have been made tonight with Vietnam. I want to make just one. I served in Vietnam with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I didn't do anything exceptional. I showed up; I did my job. But there came a time in past Congresses that it was known that we were going to leave Vietnam, and from the time that we knew that our colleagues, our past colleagues knew that we were going to leave Vietnam, until we actually left Vietnam, 21,000 Americans died.

They knew, our colleagues in past Congresses knew that we couldn't sustain that. We weren't going to be in Vietnam forever. They knew we had to leave. From the time they absolutely knew it on this floor until we left, 21,000 brave American men died in Vietnam. I was one of the lucky ones. I was only wounded. I lost a lot of friends. We lost a lot of fellow Americans.

We cannot make that same mistake. We know that the Iraq war cannot go on forever. We know that on both sides of the aisle. It's time for a major policy change. This bill represents that major policy change. I urge everyone to vote ''aye'' for the underlying bill.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, after my oversight trips to Iraq in July and August of 2006, I concluded we needed to encourage the Iraqi government, and specifically Prime Minister Maliki, to take stronger action to improve the situation in their country, and that the best way to do this was to set firm timelines for Iraqi security forces to replace our troops who are doing police work.

I believe a workable timeline will incentivize the Iraqis to make the hard choices necessary to ensure stability among the three primary sects—Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds. We need to motivate the Iraqis to set firm deadlines for provincial elections, reconciliation and amnesty, and a final drafting of their constitution.

During 2005, Iraqis set timelines to establish and ratify a constitution and hold national elections. They accomplished each benchmark successfully. I do not believe they would have achieved this success if we had not pushed Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds to resolve their differences and compromise in order to meet the timelines we helped set.

The United States went into Iraq on a bipartisan basis, with two-thirds of the House and three-quarters of the Senate voting to authorize the use of force. I believe we need to draw down the majority of our troops on a bipartisan basis, and have sought to achieve bipartisan solutions to improve our operations and reduce the violence.

While H.R. 4156 is by no means a perfect solution, it does propose a tight, but arguably reasonable, timeline for drawdown of troops in Iraq similar to one I proposed earlier this year. It should help bridge the gap between Republicans and Democrats on the most important issue of our time. The bill would require our commanders to begin a redeployment of our troops in harms way within a month, and set a target date of December 15, 2008, to complete the task.

For me, a better bill would have been to give Iraqis and our troops an additional six months to complete the drawdown, but given this bill sets a target date, rather than a withdrawal date, it gives needed flexibility to our military leadership.

I do not believe we have the force structure to maintain the number of troops in Iraq now, and certainly do not have the capacity to increase the force.

Our troops have performed extraordinarily well, but it is unreasonable for us to ask them to return to Iraq for a third or fourth tour. I also believe it was a significant mistake to extend

their tours from 12 to 15 months and would be unconscionable to consider extending their tours beyond 15 months. Based on our military's current manpower, we will need to begin to draw down our forces by the beginning of 2008, and it would be wise to let the Iraqis know now this reduction will take place.

While I support this bill, I am disappointed the majority still has not allowed a single amendment on any Iraq-related bill. As I have said before, it is pretty arrogant to think we would criticize Iraqis for not being able to compromise and find common ground when Republicans and Democrats are unable to compromise and find common ground on the most important issue facing our Nation.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call for the passage of H.R. 4156, the ''Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Act.'' The war in Iraq cannot be won through the use of military force or another troop surge. The majority of the American people do not support the war in Iraq; a recent study stated that nearly 7 in 10 Americans oppose the war. Since the war began in 2003, 3,859 brave U.S. troops have died in Iraq. In 2007 the death toll has already reached 860 soldiers who have lost their lives, making it the worst year yet for the American military in Iraq. Currently, 28,400 soldiers have been wounded in Iraq since the war began with 12,750 suffering injuries so serious they were prevented from returning to duty.

President Bush's failed Iraq policies offer a war with no end in sight. There is no progress on political reconciliation between Shiites and Sunnis in the Iraqi government. Just this week, it was reported that the U.S. effort to organize nearly 70,000 local Sunni fighters to solidify security gains in Iraq is facing severe political and logistical challenges as the central government resists in incorporating them into the Iraqi police and army. Last month, the Shiite political alliance of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki called the U.S. military to halt the recruitments of Sunnis.

The bill in the house tonight will require the start of the redeployment of U.S. forces within 30 days of enactment, with a goal completion of redeployment by December 15, 2008. It will require a transition in the mission of U.S. forces in Iraq from primarily combat to force protection and diplomatic protection; limited support to Iraqi security forces; and targeted counterterrorism operations. H.R. 4156 will prohibit deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq who are not fully trained and fully equipped. The legislation also calls for an extension to all U.S. Government agencies and personnel of the current prohibitions in the Army Field Manual against torture. The bill will also provide to meet the immediate need of our troops, but defers consideration of the remainder of the President's nearly $200 billion request. At the current rate of expenditure, the additional funds will last 4 months.

Many insist that American troops cannot leave Iraq until we have achieved victory; and democracy has been established. History has shown us that civil wars and insurgencies are ended only through rigorous diplomacy, economic development, and national reconciliation between former enemies; not by a troop surge and an endless war. Diplomacy works, and now more then ever is the time to implement the recommendations of the Baker Hamilton Commission, and call for a regional peace summit in the Middle East.

Let's bring all parties who are involved in the conflict to the peace table, so they can begin to resolve their differences. If international diplomacy ended the intractable conflicts in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, the conflict between Israel and Egypt, and Rwanda; then international diplomacy can work in Iraq. Once we begin the strategic withdrawal of U.S. troops out of Iraq, and show the Iraqi people we do not wish to occupy their country, then and only then can we begin the real possibility of having an effective international peace conference.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the issue before the House today is straightforward. Do we think the President's Iraq policy is working so well that we should give him another $200 billion to continue it, or do we need a fundamental change in direction?

I truly believe we need to change an Iraq policy that is simply not working. From the beginning, the Bush administration has been wrong about the war in Iraq. If you set aside the administration's rhetoric, the reality is that the surge has not worked. The goal of the surge was to give the Iraqi Government breathing space to make the political decisions necessary to reduce the violence that is tearing Iraq apart. But 11 months into the troop surge, progress on political reconciliation continues to be all but nonexistent. Meanwhile, 2007 has already been the deadliest year for American troops since the start of the war in Iraq.

There is a clear choice before us. If you are satisfied with how the Bush administration has been conducting the war for the last 4½ years, you should oppose this bill. If, on the other hand, you believe the administration's strategy isn't working and want to require the President to change course, you should vote for this legislation.

Whatever small chance there is of the Iraqi factions coming together, it will not happen as long as the U.S. military commitment in Iraq remains open-ended. We need to change course.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the majority party's Iraq supplemental appropriations bill.

It is baffling that at the precise moment when the surge in Iraq is producing positive results, the majority party would like to pull the rug out from underneath our troops.

Violence is down. Sunnis in al Anbar have allied with U.S. forces against al Qaeda. Baghdad is regaining some sense of normalcy.

By no means can we declare ''victory'' but our troops can rightfully claim progress. Despite these positive developments, the majority party wants to withdraw our forces—as if the enemy won't follow us home.

I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: are they prepared to take responsibility for the disastrous consequences of an early withdrawal?

Are they prepared to witness the chaos and destruction in Iraq?

Most importantly, are they willing to pass this responsibility on to the next generation of Americans who may be forced to finish the job we did not have the courage to complete?

My colleagues are right: we have made a significant financial and personal investment in Iraq. Let us have the courage of our convictions to see it through.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill and pass a clean supplemental bill that provides support to those who are fighting and dying. We owe them that much.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Iraq Redeployment Act which sets forth a realistic strategy for the responsible redeployment of our combat troops in Iraq. The Bush Administration has requested another $200 billion dollar blank check for the war in Iraq to pursue a flawed strategy that has no end in sight and which continually puts our brave men and women in the armed services in the middle of Iraq's civil war.

The indefinite presence of American forces in Iraq has allowed the different factions there to postpone making the difficult compromises necessary to achieve stability and political reconciliation. Our intelligence community has publicly concluded that the political situation in Iraq is getting worse, not better. We cannot ask our troops to remain in Iraq when the different Iraqi factions have refused to take the steps necessary to achieve a greater stability.

We must embark on a new direction in Iraq. That's what this legislation will do. It allocates $50 billion for the purpose of beginning to responsibly redeploy our combat forces out of Iraq by the target date of December 15, 2008. The troops that would remain in Iraq beyond that date would focus on the more limited missions of training Iraqi security forces, providing logistical and intelligence support for the Iraqi security forces, and engaging in targeted counter-terrorist operations against Al-Qaeda and affiliated groups.

As the legislation states, ''the primary purpose of funds made available by the Act should be to transition the mission of the United States Armed Forces in Iraq and undertake their redeployment, and not to extend or prolong the war.'' This bill also states that the reduction of our armed forces in Iraq ''shall be implemented in conjunction with a comprehensive diplomatic, political and economic strategy that includes sustained engagement with Iraq's neighbors and the international community for the purpose of working collectively to bring stability to Iraq''—a strategy recommended by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group that the Administration has failed to pursue with any vigor or urgency.

This legislation also prohibits the deployment of any troops not fully equipped or trained, and extends to all U.S. Government agencies and personnel the limitations in the U.S. Army Field Manual on permissible interrogation techniques. We must send a strong message to the world that we do not support or condone torture.

We are on the wrong path in Iraq. This bill provides a much needed change in direction that will strengthen our national security, improve our position in the region and bring our men and women safely home.

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, one need look no further than the chaos in Pakistan or the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan to understand that troop levels in Iraq cannot be maintained—and that the surge, which I have always opposed, has done nothing to achieve political stability.

Today, with this bridge funding vote, Congress signals to the White House yet again that enough is enough, that the combat mission in Iraq must end, and that we will force that change.

No one in this chamber questions the courage or commitment of our brave women and men in uniform or their willingness to tackle

any challenge put before them. But we have sent them on an ill-defined mission with no apparent end point, and which consumes staggering amounts of our talent and treasure at the expense of countless other priorities.

This bill also redresses a glaring loophole in the Military Commissions Act—a bill I strongly opposed. By requiring that all U.S. Government agencies and personnel must adhere to interrogation techniques contained in the Army Field Manual, we send an unmistakable signal to the rest of the world that the United States—the world's oldest functioning democracy—does not permit cruel, inhumane and degrading practices, or torture, and complies fully with Federal law banning torture and our international obligations.

The Iraq Troop Redeployment Bill is good policy, and long overdue.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act. This bill will begin the long-overdue withdrawal of American troops from Iraq.

Yesterday, the President vetoed the Labor and Heath and Human Services-Education appropriations bill, which is the bill that provides funding for the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control, Low Income Home Energy Assistance, the Education Department, Pell Grants, and educational programs for the disadvantaged. He vetoed this bill because it contained a 2 percent increase over his request—an increase of $10 billion in a Labor HHS bill of roughly $600 billion. The President opposes even a 2 percent increase in the funding for these programs.

Meanwhile, the President has requested almost $200 billion more for his failed war in Iraq. That would make the total cost of the war in Iraq so far to over $600 billion and climbing, with no end in sight. President Bush's refusal to change course in Iraq is shocking, his failure to allow adequate rest for our soldiers between tours of duty is outrageous, and his demand for another $200 billion blank check for his war in Iraq while vetoing LIHEAP for the poor, education for disadvantaged children, Pell Grants for college students, and research into cures for life threatening disease is simply unacceptable to this House. What a misplaced set of priorities.

Instead of the blank check for an endless war, this bill requires President Bush to begin withdrawing American troops from Iraq within 30 days. Instead of unfairly sending inadequately equipped soldiers on multiple tours of duty, this bill prohibits the deployment of any troops who are not fully equipped and trained. And at the same time, this bill provides the necessary funds, in full, to our troops who are still in harm's way.

Our Republican colleagues must make a choice: will they stand with President Bush's attempt to throw more money and more young men and women into the mess in Iraq, or will they join with Democrats seeking a bipartisan agreement on redeploying American troops out of Iraq?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to specifically note a provision of this bill, which I wrote, to bar any funds in this bill from being used for the gruesome and indefensible practice of extraordinary rendition. I would like to commend and thank Chairman OBEY and Chairman MURTHA for again including this language, as they have in every defense appropriations and supplemental appropriations bill this year. Through the use of extraordinary rendition, as well as abusive interrogation techniques and extrajudicial incarceration of so-called ''enemy combatants,'' President Bush has largely forfeited the mantel of human rights champion which the United States has carried for so long. We must reclaim the international moral high-ground if we are to cure the root causes of terrorism around the world, and we can start by banning extraordinary rendition.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman OBEY for this strong and responsible bill, and urge all my colleagues to vote aye.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act.

The Iraq war is a failure and it's time for our troops to come home.

This bill calls for a responsible redeployment and provides for the checks and balances Congress is authorized to impose.

The administration does not have blanket authority and America does not have a bottomless checking account.

The President's policy in Iraq has been a complete failure, and Americans are calling for this war to end.

Our troops are now trapped in the middle of someone else's civil war.

Our military presence in Iraq is not making our country any safer.

Instead, this war has taken the lives of over 3,850 soldiers, including 13 brave young men from my District alone.

From Rialto, 37-year-old Staff Sergeant Jorge A. Molina was deployed in Iraq and died in hostile fire in the Anbar province.

From Rialto, 20-year-old, Specialist Luis D. Santos was deployed in Iraq and died of injuries sustained when a makeshift bomb exploded near his Humvee during combat operations in Buritz.

From Rialto, 22-year-old, Corporal Victor A. Garcia was deployed in Iraq and died by small arms fire in Baghdad.

From Bloomington, 25-year-old, Corporal Joseph A. Blanco was deployed in Iraq and died by small arms fire in Taji after sustaining injuries from a makeshift bomb.

From Fontana, 19-year-old Lance Corporal Fernando S. Tamayo was deployed in Iraq and died while conducting combat operations in Anbar Province.

From Fontana, 24-year-old Sergeant Bryan A. Brewster was deployed in Afghanistan and died after his helicopter crashed during combat operations in Afghanistan.

From San Bernardino, 22-year-old Corporal Nicanor Alvarez was deployed in Iraq and died in the line of fire in the Anbar province.

From San Bernardino, 19-year-old Petty Officer Alex Oceguera was deployed in Afghanistan, and died when a makeshift bomb detonated near his vehicle in Wygal Valley, Afghanistan.

From San Bernardino, 24-year-old Corporal Sean Grilley was deployed in Iraq, and died after being fired on by Iraqis during operations in Karbala.

From San Bernardino, 24-year-old Specialist Timothy D. Watkins was deployed in Iraq, and died when a makeshift bomb exploded near his vehicle during operations in Ar Ramadi.

From Ontario, 21-year-old Specialist Jose R. Perez was deployed in Iraq, and died by enemy small arms fire in Ramadi.

From Ontario, 31-year-old Sergeant First Class Rudy A. Salcido was deployed in Iraq, and died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his convey vehicle in Baghdad.

These are the true faces of the war. My deepest prayers go out to their families.

These soldiers are the reason why I am so adamant about bringing our troops back home, and why we must support this bill.

The President's failed policies on the Iraqi war effort must end. We are listening to America's concerns and will not stand by and watch this continue.

We need to bring back our loved ones and put our families here at home first.

It's time for America to put her priorities in order.

This Nation is in debt, but not because of domestic spending.

President Bush refuses to sign bills to pay for schools, children's health care, and to protect our workers.

However, he comes to us asking for another $200 billion to continue funding the Iraq war.

With just one week's worth of funding for the war, my District would never again face a shortage of teachers, of nurses, or of police officers.

As a veteran, I voted against this war in 2002 because no one could convince me why we had to be there in the first place.

The President believes Iraq is making our country safer.

The truth is, it is has put us at greater risk.

Our military is stretched so thin that we are at risk of not being prepared for any future emergencies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 818, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF FLORIDA

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. In its current form, I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. YOUNG of Florida moves to recommit the bill, H.R. 4156, to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

(1) In section 101—

(A) strike paragraph (3);

(B) in paragraph (1), insert ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(C) in paragraph (2), strike ''; and'' and insert a period.

(2) Strike sections 102, 104 and 106.

(3) In section 105—

(A) strike subsections (a) through (f); and

(B) in subsection (g), strike the subsection designation.

(4) Redesignate sections 103 and 105 as sections 102 and 103 respectively.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this motion to recommit is a simple forthwith motion. That means a vote for this motion will allow the House to immediately vote tonight on a bill that can pass the Congress and be signed into law. That means that our troops in harm's way will get the funding they need before Congress leaves town for a 2-week Thanksgiving recess.

The motion would amend the bill to strike the provisions which have nothing to do with providing for our troops and are nothing more than political gamesmanship. The motion would strip the provisions that give our enemies a complete blueprint and timeline for troop withdrawal. The motion would strip the provisions in the bill which signal to our troops and our enemies that Congress will not provide any more funding for our troops, except for withdrawal. The motion would strip the provisions in the bill that substitute politicians' judgments on troop deployment for the judgment of our military commanders in the field.

At the same time, we leave intact the $50 billion in critical funding included in the bill. We leave intact the prohibition on torture, which has been adopted previously by this Congress and Congresses before. But we strip the new provisions which could give terrorists killing our soldiers and our citizens constitutional protections under our legal system.

We modify provisions to more clearly express Congress's commitment to our troops and to bringing them home safely in victory as soon as possible. We leave intact a new requirement that the President submit to the Congress within the next 3 months a comprehensive, long-term strategy to achieve stability in the Middle East over the next 5 years.

As events of the last few months have shown, the situation on the ground has, and we all hope will, continue to improve dramatically. Congress has and will continue to debate the proper course of the war, as it should. However, we should not and cannot vote to hold troop funding hostage to that debate. The only ones hurt by that are our troops and their families.

As we go home to enjoy the holidays with our families, how can any of us look our soldiers' families in the eye and explain to them that we are withholding their funding so that we can score political points. That is just wrong. Our soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen and their families deserve more from all of us.

I urge adoption of this motion.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Who wishes to claim the time in opposition?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I certainly do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that I have a great deal of affection for the gentleman from Florida. I think he makes as good an argument for a bad case as you can possibly find. Let me simply say that this recommittal motion is very easy to understand, which is why it ought to be defeated. It simply gives the President all the money in this bill, unconditionally. It is simply a down payment on business as usual. It simply strips the timeline from this legislation. It renews the authority for torture. It eliminates the requirement that interrogation activities follow the Army Field Manual. Outside of those problems, it's a terrific idea.

So I would simply urge a ''no'' vote on the motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA).

Mr. MURTHA. I want the Members to know I carry in my pocket the names of 18 people who have been killed from my district. Two years ago, I said this is a failed policy wrapped in illusion. I am absolutely convinced that there's more instability in the Middle East today than there was then.

This recommittal motion works against everything we are trying to do. We want a plan. We want a plan in Iraq. We want stability in the Middle East. We don't have stability. Pakistan, Afghanistan, and of course Turkey might even go into the Middle East. So when you talk about victory, you're talking about stability, which we don't have. It's absolutely essential to put a plan in place that holds the President accountable.

All this time the President has asked for things and we have given them to him. For 5 years we have said to the President of the United States, You need money, we are going to give to it you. Now we are saying we are going to have a new plan, and that plan is going to change the direction of this war, and we are going to bring those troops who fought so honorably home to their families.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and ask for a ''no'' vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced the noes appear to have it.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 192, nays 231, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 1107]

YEAS—192

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carney
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Cooper
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Ehlers
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—231

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baldwin
Bartlett (MD)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Duncan
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)

Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Bono
Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Mack
Oberstar
Sessions
Weller

□ 2146

Messrs. MORAN of Kansas and LAMPSON changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 218, nays 203, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 1108]

YEAS—218

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baldwin
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stupak
Sutton
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—203

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boren
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Cooper
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNulty
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Souder
Stark
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Lewis (GA)

NOT VOTING—11

Bono
Carson
Cubin
Doyle
Hastert
Jindal
Mack
Oberstar
Pearce
Sessions
Weller

□ 2201

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY of Iowa). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

TIME FOR PAKISTAN TO STOP BEING A DICTATORSHIP

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

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, Thirty years ago, I was in law school studying, among other things, the Constitution and deepening my passion for freedom under law. With me at Santa Clara Law School was Munir Malik. That small Jesuit institution instilled in me a sense of duty to stand for principle that led me to this House. That same sense of duty led Malik to leave behind a lucrative career as a CPA and lawyer to return to Pakistan. Last year, he was named president of Pakistan's Supreme Court Bar Association. This May, he was the target of an assassination attempt. And, this month, he was arrested by our ally. Our ally? President Musharraf. His crime? Standing up for the rule of law.

Musharraf is liberating al Qaeda members in the western territories while arresting judges and lawyers who believe in law. Pakistan is using our money to do it.

It's time for Pakistan to tell us where Malik and the other lawyers are. Time for Pakistan to set them free. Time for Pakistan to stop being a dictatorship.

I include for the RECORD a letter from the faculty at Santa Clara Law

School asking for a return to the rule of law and the release of their former student.

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW ON GENERAL MUSHARRAF'S ABROGATION OF RULE OF LAW

We are deeply concerned about the abrogation of the Rule of Law in Pakistan. General Musharraf, in a brazen attempt to perpetuate his own rule, has used his state apparatus to disband the highest courts of the country. Thousands of lawyers, journalists, judges, human rights activists have been jailed. in many cases families have no idea of the whereabouts of the detainees.

Our own concern is particularly sparked by the arrest and detention of one of our graduates, Muneer Malik, the Immediate Past President of the Pakistani Supreme Court Bar Association. His fate is, of course, merely a small part of the overall tragedy taking place but as we know him to be a conscientious, industrious lawyer dedicated to the welfare of his country, and not in the least a threat to law and order; he symbolizes the injustice being practiced.

We, in fact, are not an organized political group. We have never before joined in a statement of this sort with each other. What brings us together in this plea is the fact that we are all professors of law who teach in the law school which graduated Mr. Malik and who share a respect for the rule of law. We deplore what has happened. We assume that many more people like him have been swept from public view. The Supreme and High Court judges have been locked in their own homes. Police have stormed into bar-association gatherings and have manhandled lawyers, some of them women, some of them septuagenarian! TV stations have been blacked out and police vans are carting off telecommunication equipment from private TV stations.

The U.S. must use all its influence and in no uncertain terms demand the restoration of the Supreme Court status quo ante Nov 2nd 2007. It must demand the immediate release of and accounting for all persons who have been jailed after the promulgation of the so-called emergency. It should be recalled that President Musharraf removed the Chief Justice once before, a short while ago, and that he was forced to rescind his order because of the pressure of world opinion. The embattled civil society in Pakistan must realize that America stands for the rule of Law and the liberty of all peoples.

Signed by:

George Alexander, Dean and Professor of Law Emeritus.

Patricia Cain, Inez Mabie Professor of Law.

Colleen Chien, Assistant Professor of Law.

Rev. Paul Goda, S.J., Professor of Law.

Allen Hammond, Phil and Bobbie San Filippo Professor of Law.

Ellen Kreitzberg Professor of Law.

Philip Jimenez Professor of Law.

Jean Love Elizabeth H. and John A. Sutro Professor of Law.

Gary Neustadter Professor of Law.

Michelle Oberman Professor of Law.

Robert Peterson Professor of Law.

Mack Player Professor of Law and Director, Center for Global Law and Policy.

Margaret Russell Professor of Law.

Catherine Sandoval Assistant Professor of Law.

Jiri Toman Professor of Law.

Gerald Uelman Professor of Law and Director, California Commission for the Fair Administration of Justice.

Stephanie Wildman Professor of Law and Director, Center for Social Justice and Public Service.

Nancy Wright Professor of Law.

Eric Wright Professor of Law.

David Yosifon Assistant Professor of Law.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY). 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.

SOUTHEASTERN DROUGHT

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call to the attention of Congress what is occurring in the Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. When you look at the statistics and look at the effects, there is only one word that can describe this drought—it is a total disaster.

This isn't a disaster like a tornado or a hurricane, where you have one big storm and it's over, or a big fire. This drought is a continuous process, and the impact adds up over time. The drought is the worst one on record in the Southeast and in my home State of North Carolina.

We know that this entire Southeast region has had about 19 inches less rainfall than we should have had this year, and some areas have received even less. You can see from this map what a large area of severe drought we now have.

The States that have been the hardest hit include Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Virginia.

In North Carolina, our Governor has ordered citizens to halt all nonessential water use. This drought has affected our farmers to an extent so great that it is now affecting our rural communities. Plants are having their production levels cut to save water. Some communities have only a few months of water supply remaining. In my district, the Second District of North Carolina, nearly the entire area has been afflicted by what is called an exceptional drought, and this is the most severe level. Farmers have been struggling all year from this truly epic weather condition.

Mr. Speaker, I am working in Congress to provide some relief. Last month, the House Agriculture Committee held a hearing to shine a spotlight on this growing disaster, and the Governor of our State, Governor Easley, testified himself as to the magnitude of this crisis.

Many of my colleagues may have seen this week that in my neighboring State of Georgia, the Governor has even called a meeting and asked for prayer. I am all for praying for rain, but, my friends, it is going to take more than prayer.

I have written a letter to the President asking for assistance. This letter was signed by 54 of my fellow colleagues here in Congress from both sides of the aisle.

Farmers are some of the most resourceful and ingeniously productive people around, but there is just so much that you can do to grow crops, raise livestock or poultry without one of the essentials of life, and that is water.

Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to raise a greater awareness, because we all need to work together to help solve this problem. People need to realize how serious it really is.

I am concerned that some folks may think the crisis might be solved if we get just a little rain. Unfortunately, our farmers tell me the damage has already been done, and I can agree, having visited a lot of farms. Even if we had a nice soaking rain this week and next week and the week after that and the week after that, it has been said that we will need 25 inches of rain in the next 6 months just to get the water level back to where it was. We've lost our cotton, our beans, our corn, and many of the other crops, and they won't be able to grow this winter unless we get more ground water. The crop this year is now lost.

The problem today is that too many Americans think that the food that they eat comes from the grocery store. I want them to understand, that's just where they go to pick it up. That food comes from a farm. They forget that it's the farmer out in the field working every day of the year to make sure that Americans have the most bountiful and least expensive food supply in the world. It's hard work, it's a huge gamble, and for the farmers in the Southeast this year, they lost.

It's time that this Congress, Mr. Speaker, joined hands and helped these folks. They have always been there for us, and now we need to be there for them.

Our farmers in rural communities desperately need assistance. It is my hope that we can pass the relief package before this year ends and that the President will sign it and will help these farmers and their families in rural communities across the whole Southeast be back in the fields next year providing food and fiber for the American people.

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

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

WAR IN IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the Joint Economic Committee of Congress

reported yesterday on the hidden costs of the occupation of Iraq. We learned that the true cost so far is $1.3 trillion, or nearly double the amount the administration has been talking and has requested. And the price tag could soar to nearly $3.5 trillion if we continue on the administration's reckless course in Iraq.

The hidden financial costs of our involvement in Iraq are staggering, but yesterday we also learned that there are hidden human costs as well that are truly, truly heartbreaking.

CBS News reported last night that the suicide rate among veterans is over twice as great as the suicide rate for the general population. In 2005 alone, there were at least 6,256 suicides among veterans in the 45 States that provided data to CBS. That is an astonishing 17 suicides per day for just that one year.

Those statistics are for veterans of all wars, and they are shocking. But the statistics for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan are even more devastating. Veterans aged 20 to 24 have the highest suicide rate of all. For these young men and women, the suicide rate is two to four times higher than the suicide rate for the general population.

And yet another report published yesterday in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that the mental health problems of Iraq veterans are much greater than previously thought. It found that Iraq veterans are more likely to report alcohol abuse, family conflicts, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder after being home for 6 months than immediately after their return. The suicide statistics tell us that the real Iraq death toll is significantly higher than the official count of just over 3,860. And the mental health statistics tell us that the real number of wounded is much, much higher than the reported number of around 28,000.

All of this terrible news means that we can no longer sit around and do nothing about the occupation of Iraq. We must take action immediately, and we must take it in two ways.

First, America must do a much better job of meeting the physical and mental health needs of our veterans. The administration has underfunded and ignored the Veterans Administration system, leaving veterans stuck in a bureaucratic nightmare that stops them from getting the health care that they need. Congress has passed a bill that would help veterans to get care much faster. It improves conditions at VA hospitals and invests in new ways to treat physical and mental problems caused by the war. The President needs to sign that bill as soon as possible.

And, second, we must move immediately to end the occupation of Iraq and redeploy our troops. That is why I voted today for H.R. 4156, the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act.

While the bill is not perfect, it essentially says that funds authorized for Iraq will not be used to continue the occupation, but are to be used to achieve the safe and orderly redeployment of our troops out of Iraq.

That is what I and many others have been demanding, and that is what the American people have been asking. It is time to stop the death. It is time to stop the suffering. It is time to bring our brave troops home and do everything we can to help them and their families to rebuild their lives. Anything less is unacceptable and immoral.

□ 2215

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY of Iowa). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

AMERICANS ARE PRAYING FOR RAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Kansas (Mrs. BOYDA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, tonight Americans across the Southeast are praying for rain. As drought conditions have stretched from weeks into months, residents face a stark reminder of how one of our most precious resources, water, can also be one of our most unpredictable.

The lessons of natural disaster all too familiar to the good folks back home in Kansas. In the past year, nearly every county in Kansas has suffered from disastrous conditions.

The weather has been hard on many of us, but especially on our farmers and ranchers, who depend on nature to earn their living. It's hard to find words to express their concern, their worry. Many have worked the same acreage for decades, and they've always trusted that if they treat their land right, if they plow its soil and they plant it carefully and tend it for many months, it will reward them with a crop that will earn their living.

But in so many counties, disaster conditions have slashed crop yields. Ranchers face their own problems as animal feed prices soar.

Kansas farmers and ranchers are good hardworking people, but lately they've found that the land and the weather are betraying them. That's why it's so important that earlier this year Congress passed a critical agricultural disaster relief package. These funds helped Kansans continue to farm and ranch in spite of the ever-present threats of drought, fire and other catastrophes.

Today I urge America to come together once again to show the same compassion to our brothers and sisters in the Southeast. Farmers are finding that no matter how much they care and the effort that they devote to their land, their crops simply won't grow. These hardworking families can't make ends meet and they need a helping hand from Congress.

I urge my colleagues to remember the struggles of farmers and ranchers in the Southeast, in Kansas and across America who continue to confront the challenge of this difficult weather.

And again, we're praying tonight for the rain for the Southeast, and it looks like we might get some rain, and we are just blessed.

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

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

THE ORDERLY AND RESPONSIBLE IRAQ REDEPLOYMENT ACT

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4156, the Orderly Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, just passed.

Let me be clear about why I voted for it. This legislation is a compromise that I hate, but it's the only way to move the agenda of the American people forward. This legislation is anything but perfect, but it does make important strides.

It requires the President to use funding to begin to redeploy U.S. soldiers out of Iraq within 30 days of enactment and sets a goal for complete redeployment by December 15, 2008.

It requires the President to implement a comprehensive diplomatic political and economic strategy to bring stability to Iraq. For the first time, the President will actually have a plan in Iraq.

It requires the President to report to Congress. It will end the secrecy that has surrounded everything about this war.

And it requires the President to accept what the rest of us know, that waterboarding is torture. It is a crime, and this bill says it's not going to be used in the interrogation of prisoners.

After World War II, we prosecuted Japanese soldiers for waterboarding U.S. prisoners of war. But the President's new Attorney General is walking around wondering about whether waterboarding is a crime.

House Republicans who voted ''no'' said they're willing to sacrifice the will of the American people at the altar of blind political obedience to the White House.

If Republicans in the Senate filibuster this bill, they'll be telling the American people to go away because

they intend to follow the President over the cliff.

If this legislation should reach the President's desk, it just might finally force him to confront reality. But I don't expect any of that to happen.

The President intends to hand Iraq over to the next President. In the meantime, this President is waging an Iraq veto war relying on Republicans to act as mechanical robots and rubber-stamp his vote on every single Iraq policy the Democratic majority has brought forward.

The American people may not understand how badly they've been deceived and misled by this administration, but it's going to continue. Sometime next spring, the President will announce things in Iraq are going so well he'll bring home a few thousand of our troops. He'll have them arrive in the fall during the election, when Republicans are desperate to explain why they ignored the American people. He will not tell us that 100,000 soldiers will be permanently stationed in Iraq at 14 military bases the administration has so artfully called enduring bases. Of these, five are superbases: Camp Victory North, al Asad Air Base, Balad Air Base, Camp Taji, and Tallil Air Base. These are huge bases with everything from video stores to supermarkets and rental cars. They are so big that one of them, Balad, 40 miles north of Baghdad, is the second busiest airport in the world, second only to Heathrow in the amount of air traffic.

Building enduring bases stands for indefinite U.S. military involvement in Iraq, which is not something the Congress or the American people want or will stand for.

The President is running a war by veto. If we could have a vote on a no confidence motion, this war would be over. But in our democracy, the ballot box is the only vote of no confidence and, regrettably, we have another year to wait to get rid of the President.

That only reinforces the need for today's vote. If Republicans won't support something as mild as this, then the American people need to know the Republicans are stonewalling. Every time we force the debate out in the open, the American people see it for what it is.

If Republicans continue to prolong the war, the American people will take charge next November and unelect even more Republicans.

We call this legislation a bridge fund, meaning to build a way to bring our soldiers out of Iraq and home where they belong. We're trying, and we're not going to stop until the American people can declare the mission accomplished and the men and women of our Armed Forces are home.

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.)

MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY AND NOT TO FAINT

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Luke records in his Gospel that ''men ought always to pray and not to faint.'' That's in Luke 18:1.

I believe in the power of prayer, and I should note that the power of prayer is beheld in the One to which we pray, God Almighty.

Yesterday, my Governor, Sonny Perdue of Georgia, hosted a special prayer service at the Georgia Capitol to pray that the Lord would provide rain for our drought-ravaged State. Governor Perdue wisely recognized that a request such as this must be made to a higher power, and I commend him for his humility and wisdom in calling on God to provide what man cannot provide.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Jeremiah 33:3, which states ''Call unto me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.''

The book of Hebrews, in 14:16 states, ''Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.''

We are a needy people, in desperate need of God's mercy and grace. Throughout Scripture, we are commanded to pray and seek God's face, not as a last resort but as the first order of business.

My home State of Georgia is facing one of the most severe droughts in its history. Our rivers and reservoirs are at record lows, and many of our communities face water shortages that could challenge their ability to meet water supply needs in the near and distant future.

The situation has gotten so bleak that the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, EPD, has declared a Level 4 drought response across the northern third of Georgia, which prohibits most types of outdoor residential water use. In fact, many nurseries and outdoor plant suppliers are going out of business because of this.

Worse yet, many forecasters are calling for a dry, mild winter that could result in serious water supply problems by spring.

I've had the privilege and honor of working with my fellow delegation members in a truly bipartisan effort to come up with practical responses, such as conservation and water management, to Georgia's water crisis. Despite our best efforts in Washington and in Georgia, there's no legislative solution to this problem. The issue at the heart of our drought problem is a severe lack of rain, and there is nothing that government can do to change that.

The Apostle Paul tells us to make our requests known to God with thanksgiving, so I gratefully acknowledge what the Lord has done for us already and boldly call upon Him to show favor on us yet again by sending rain to my beloved State of Georgia. God has not failed us before, and I'm confident He will not fail us now in our time of need.

At a time when religion has been continually forced from the public square, I want to offer my sincere thanks to Governor Perdue for his bold and faithful trust in the Almighty. His efforts helped unite hundreds of Georgians from all walks of life, leaders and citizens from varying faiths and denominations, races and ages for this prayer service.

So I join the Governor and fellow Georgians in calling out to God to provide rain from heaven, and I pray that the Lord will give wisdom and discernment to the Governor and each of us in leadership positions to address the drought and its devastating effects on our State and our citizens.

So I pray, Lord, You are sovereign and completely in control of all things, and I acknowledge Your awesome power and authority.

All things are in Your control, and nothing is too small or too great to bring before You. When you walked on the Earth in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, You spoke and stilled the waves and calmed the winds. You spoke into the existence, the heavens and the Earth. You created man in your image, and I know you can alleviate the severe drought conditions we face in Georgia.

So Lord, I ask in the name of Jesus that you bring down rain from heaven and refresh our land, fill our reservoirs and dry lakes and streams. I pray that You will quench our parched land, and I implore You, Lord, to show mercy upon us and to see us through this difficulty and show Your awesome hand in moving nature to suit Your will and bless Your people that call upon Your name.

Thank You, Lord for all that You have done and will continue to do for us. And I pray this in the precious powerful name of our Lord and Savior, in the name of Jesus Christ I pray this. Amen.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 2230

CONDEMNING VIOLENCE AGAINST PHILADELPHIA'S POLICE OFFICERS

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Last Wednesday, I attended the funeral of one of my constituents, a 25-year veteran of the Philadelphia Police Force. His name was Officer Charles Cassidy.

Officer Cassidy was shot and killed in the line of duty on October 31, 2007. He was 54, and he left behind his wife, Judy, and their three children, Jody, Casey and Cody.

I would ask everyone here tonight in the House of Representatives to join me in a moment of silence for Officer Cassidy and the 62 other officers killed in the line of duty this year in our Nation.

Thank you.

The pain I witnessed at Officer Cassidy's funeral, that of his family, of his fellow officers, and the citizens of the entire region is why I rise tonight to ask my colleagues to join me in condemning the significant and deplorable wave of violence against police officers across this Nation.

In the Philadelphia Police Department alone, in the past 2 months, five other officers have been shot while protecting our city.

They will all survive their wounds and continue to serve the citizens of the city of Philadelphia. They are:

Officer Richard Decoatsworth on September 24, 2007, who was shot in the face with a shotgun while making a traffic stop. He survived his injuries after 5 hours of surgery. I saw him at the funeral last week.

Officer Sandra Van Hinkel on October 28, 2007, was shot in the right leg during a gunfight near a nightclub.

And Officer Marino Santiago on October 30, 2007, was shot in the shoulder while responding to a shooting that left three people hospitalized.

And just last night, the city was once again shocked to learn that two undercover narcotics officers were shot while serving a warrant at a suspect's residence on Oxford Avenue not far from my Philadelphia district office.

And last May, I stood on this floor to remember another fallen police officer, another constituent, Philadelphia Police Officer Gary Skerski.

Unfortunately, Philadelphia is not alone in this battle against violent crime. Cities big and small are coping with the threat and the reality of violent crime. So far this year across the country, 63 officers have died from gunshots.

We cannot tolerate any more of this violence against our citizens or against our police officers. We, the political and civic leadership of this country, must commit our will to tackle the wave of violence and the lack of respect for the rule of law and law enforcement.

This means bringing all the forces we have within law enforcement and also within delinquency, criminal justice, human services, probation and parole, education, employment, mental health and drug addiction services to face the reality of what is happening and to say that this violence is no longer acceptable, that this violence must stop.

It also means that the President and this Congress must respond with action and the resources to enable Federal and local initiatives that will get illegal guns off our streets and put violent criminals behind bars.

Congress should quickly complete our work on the COPS Improvement Act and the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill to help our communities and the officers who face these very real threats every day on the streets of our cities. And they need better technology, improved equipment and training, and they need more police officers on the street.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in the effort to push these bills to finalization and to do all that we can to stop this deplorable violence in our midst.

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

(Mr. HOEKSTRA 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATERS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE LIFE OF CATHERINE RORABACK

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and accomplishments of Catherine Roraback of Canaan, Connecticut. Ms. Roraback passed away on Wednesday, October 17 in Salisbury, Connecticut, and will be greatly missed by her family, by her community, and by her country.

Ms. Roraback was best known for successfully arguing the landmark case of Griswold v. Connecticut in front of the United States Supreme Court in 1965. This groundbreaking case overturned an 1849 Connecticut law that banned the use of contraception. And this historic decision established the right to privacy that exists to this day as the foundation of many of our most revered constitutional freedoms.

Ms. Roraback was the only woman in her graduating class from Yale Law School in 1948, and she quickly established a law practice dedicated to protecting the rights of those that she called the ''dissenters and the dispossessed.'' Her groundbreaking work in the Griswold case was simply an extension of her life's work, which included the founding of the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union and serving on innumerable boards and commissions to serve her community and her State.

Mr. Speaker, Catherine Roraback was a national figure. But where she shined the brightest was at her desk in her law office in northwestern Connecticut, where she worked out of for almost her entire career. She was always a caring and fiercely intelligent adviser and advocate to her neighbors and her clients, and she was a mentor to generations of community leaders and advocates, including my friend and her cousin, State Senator Andrew Roraback, with whom I had the pleasure of serving in the State Senate for 4 years.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Ms. Roraback just a little in the last few years, and though we only got to spend a brief few moments together, I feel so blessed to have had the fleeting chance to get to know one of Connecticut's true heroes. She was an incredible woman with an incredible drive and a never erring sense of right and wrong. I was deeply honored to be her representative for the last 10 months, and I will strive every day to live according to her example.

In these very trying days, I think it's incredibly important to remember the lessons that Catherine Roraback leaves with us, the motivation that underlied her entire work as a lawyer and an advocate, because Catherine Roraback taught us that the basic rights that we enjoy every day to live and to speak freely cannot be dependent on one's lot in life. She also taught us that these rights, these precious civil liberties that we enjoy, cannot and should not be taken for granted. We must fight for them, now more than ever.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers go out to Catherine Roraback's family, her friends, and her beloved community.

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

(Ms. FALLIN 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 Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE WAR IN IRAQ

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. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we saw a varying level of discourse and debate over an enormously important and I might say singularly important issue that is facing the American public, and that is the question of the war in Iraq.

No matter how you touch the hearts and minds of Americans, whether or

not they suggest that this Congress and this President is not paying enough attention to the domestic concerns, woven into the crisis of where we stand today is the conflict in Iraq.

I think Americans understand Afghanistan more than we might think they do. They know that this Nation was attacked on September 11, 2001. They know that when the Nation is attacked, the Commander in Chief, leaders of this government have the responsibility of defending the honor and the security of America. They see Afghanistan as defending that honor and that security. They know that the Taliban, Osama bin Laden, those who collaborated were the basis of the attack against the World Trade towers and other sites in this country. They know that our lives have changed because of the horrific tragedy of 9/11. And they are willing to accept that. They faced up against new laws that seem to undermine their liberties, and within reason they are willing to acknowledge that things must change. I am grateful, however, that there are those of us who understand that the greatest success of a terrorist is to cause you to terrorize yourself. So many of us have asked to modify and assess the PATRIOT Act. We are looking to redo the FISA law that deals with electronic surveillance. But mostly in debating this question, Americans understand that their lives have changed.

But the Iraq War continues to be a questioning action by this administration. All of us have tried to give respect to the basis and the reason of this direction that this government took in the fall of 2002. I, for one, was very hesitant to speak about a war for oil. I recognize that there might have been many deliberations that have occurred that might have caused this administration to make this unfortunate leap of preemptive attack.

I have come full circle now, however, and I am enormously disappointed in the thought process and the respect not given to the American people. For the American people, over 56 percent, want this war to end, want these troops to come home, want to see a troop reduction.

So this debate today was not a frivolous debate. And the leadership of the Democratic Caucus, the leadership of this Congress took great pains to try to address this in a fair and dignified manner. They worked very hard to bring a concise document that spoke to the safety and security of the troops, the respect of the troops, the acknowledgment of their hard work; but yet to insist that a plan be laid out by this administration to reduce the number of troops in Iraq while at the same time ensuring that if there are outstanding conflicts, firefights, terrorists to be fought, that we'd have the troops on the ground.

I believe that this has been the most misdirected war that history will record. I believe that it beats out the Civil War, the War of 1812, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Persian Gulf. For any of those who opposed those wars, and I was not there for all of them, if there was any opposition for reasons that I don't know, this has to be the single most dangerous and devastating action that this Nation could have ever taken. There is no sense for it. There is no basis for it. But if there was a case that you could make, you could make the case that the military has done every single thing that it was asked to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is why I was moved to write the Military Success Act of 2007. It indicates that Congress recognizes that the military, in the invasion of Iraq, as authorized by a resolution given to the President in 2002, going into Baghdad was probably one of the best executed military operations in modern history, alongside of the Persian Gulf. The armed services successfully toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein.

And as I close, it lists a whole series of successes. And then it indicates that every single aspect of the 2002 resolution has been complied with. And, therefore, that means that the task of the 2002 resolution has ended. And it calls then for the troops to come home, for them to be acknowledged, for them to be given free, with no attachment, $5,000 for each returning troop from Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this was a difficult debate, but I think and know that we made the right decision. But we could do even more. We can affirm that these troops need to come home, and we can celebrate them for the heroes that they are.

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

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

THE 30 SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) is recognized for one-half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

We are here tonight with part of the 30 Something Working Group, and we are going to talk about what this House has been doing this week. We are here, it's late into the evening, and we have been working throughout the day on a variety of issues, and we are going to be at work tomorrow. I wanted to talk with my colleagues tonight. And we are going to have a full house. We are going to be joined by Mr. MURPHY from Connecticut, Mr. MEEK from Florida, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ from Florida, and Mr. RYAN from Ohio. We are going to have a discussion about some of the things that this House has been doing.

We took several significant votes this week, including the vote that was just discussed on Iraq. And we are going to discuss the policy in Iraq and the vote that we took today.

I wanted to start by talking about the President's veto earlier in the week of the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. Now, the President has found his veto pen, something that on appropriations bills he had not used until this Congress. And I think it's instructive to begin this debate by reminding my colleagues, as if they needed reminding, that we are talking about an administration that took office after 4 consecutive years of record surpluses, 4 consecutive years of budget surpluses, that were forecast to continue as far as the eye can see. In fact, the 10-year projection for budget surplus beginning in 2001 was more than $5 trillion of surplus over that 10-year period.

□ 2245

Well, what have we seen instead of that? We've seen seven consecutive budget deficits in the 7 years of this administration, deficits that are forecast to continue as far as the eye can see. And instead of that $5 trillion in surplus, we've seen more than $3 trillion in deficits in just 7 years.

So, this administration that's now lecturing us on fiscal responsibility and vetoing our appropriations bills, criticizing us for spending, this administration saw more than $8 trillion flip from a projected $5 trillion surplus to $3 trillion in deficit and counting. So, that's the context of what we're talking about.

So, we sent to the President the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, which includes programs like low-income energy assistance, home heating, the LIHEAP program. Now, I don't think there's anyone in this country that has not been affected by the price of oil. And home heating is something in the Northeast where I'm from in Pennsylvania, and in Connecticut where Mr. MURPHY is from, and in Ohio where Mr. RYAN is from, the price of home heating has continued to skyrocket. And we're going to get into some of the numbers, but that's one of the things that's in this bill. Well, I don't think that's excessive spending, to help people who would otherwise have their heat turned off.

We're talking about funding for community health centers. We're talking about funding for Head Start, a program for early childhood education. Is there anything more important in this country than early childhood education, making sure our children get off to a good start and begin their educational careers in a way that we're able to ensure that they get off and they're positioned to have the best start possible.

Now, what about medical research, the National Institutes of Health?

That's what we're talking about in this bill, funding for medical research. Is there anyone in the country that thinks we shouldn't be spending money to find cures and treatments for debilitating diseases across the board? That's what this bill is. That's what the Labor-HHS-Education bill funds, and the President vetoed that bill. And we're going to have a vote in this House to override that veto, and it's going to be a very close vote. We were two votes shy of having a veto override majority when the bill passed the House the first time. Two votes. That's what stands between us and overriding the President's veto.

And I would remind my colleagues as well that we were able to override the President's veto just last week. This is not something that can't be done. We had a Water Resources Development Act that had not passed in 7 full years. It's supposed to be reauthorized every 2 years. Congress after Congress, in recent years, has been unable to pass that bill, so we passed it. And we faced a Presidential veto; the President vetoed it. We were able to override that veto overwhelmingly, 300-plus votes in the House; they got 79 in the other body. And what's in that bill? That's another bill that the President, and I outlined his record on fiscal responsibility and he wants to lecture us on spending, for infrastructure improvements in this country. Building levees in New Orleans, does that sound like pork? Building flood prevention infrastructure all across this country.

There were projects in that bill in almost every congressional district in the country to prevent flooding, to help the waterways infrastructure in a way that we're investing for the first time in 7 years in flood prevention infrastructure. So we overrode that veto overwhelmingly. We do have the opportunity to do it again on the Labor-HHS-Education bill. And we're going to talk more about that.

At this time, I want to yield to my colleague Mr. MURPHY from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I thank my friend from Pennsylvania, and I appreciate his promptness in being here as I share with him today. We trust that the other members of the 30-Somethings will join us here today, but it falls very often on the new members of the 30-Somethings to make sure that we are here to begin the sharing of good news with the American people.

And I hope there is good news, Mr. ALTMIRE. I hope that people throughout this country who see the President's veto of this incredibly important bill, and you laid out very clearly and very succinctly what the President has vetoed, what he has said no to. We're talking about health care for kids. We're talking about good schools. We're talking about Head Start, medical research, home heating assistance for the elderly. And these are the basic building blocks of a compassionate society, and the President has said, very firmly and clearly, no to those.

And as you said, we're not very far away from having the requisite number of votes here on the House floor to override that veto. And I know that's kind of inside baseball for a lot of people, whether we have two-thirds or three-fourths or whatever the percentage is that we need. But it's important because, as you said, the President has found his veto pen for the first time in his tenure in office. And I think it's important to try to figure out what's different this year than as was the case in the last previous 6 years of his Presidency? And it's kind of funny because, if you look at the record, as you said, Mr. ALTMIRE, it seems a little odd to be having lectures from this administration on fiscal responsibility because this President and the Republican Congress over the last 6 years have increased Federal spending by 50 percent, 50 percent just over 6 years. We've put $3 trillion on top of the deficit, on top of the debt that this country owes, as we've watched the President and this Congress continue to spend and continue to borrow. We've seen the amount of foreign-held debt, and you know, this is something that Mr. MEEK and Mr. RYAN have been talking about for years and years and years. We've seen the amount of foreign-held debt during that time double. This is all under a Republican-controlled Congress, both Houses, and a Republican administration. And during that entire time, the biggest piece of the budget that has exploded has been the funding for this war.

Now, those of us who paid attention when the President initially rolled out his plans to invade Iraq, his very rosy and optimistic projections of our success there and the cost of that war, well, remember that he told the American people, his administration told the Congress that he thought that this war wasn't going to cost more than $50 or $60 billion to get the job done? And also, if you remember, that the Iraqis were going to welcome the Americans as conquering heroes. Well, we know that that $50 to $60 billion was a figure of fiction, historical fiction now, Mr. ALTMIRE, because now the estimates are that this war has cost us not $50 billion, not $100 billion, not $500 billion, but $1.3 trillion. And if we look forward to the projections associated with carrying out a war for the next 10 years, as this President has told this country he's planning to do, or that his war planners intend to do, we're talking about a $3.5 trillion commitment before this is all done. Now, that is a number that is almost impossible to get our hands around. I mean, what does $3.5 trillion mean to anybody? Well, what it means is that we're going to borrow more and more and more. We are going to put our children and our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren into hock in this country.

And so, when we hear this President sitting down and telling the American people that he's going to get tough on spending, and the way he's going to do that is by denying education to kids and health care to the sick and heat to the elderly, well, during that time he and his Republican Congress have spent like drunken sailors when it comes to a very mismanaged and misguided war in Iraq, you can't help but wonder where his priorities are and where this Congress' priorities were for the last several years.

So, it's all got to be, I think, in relation, Mr. ALTMIRE, because we're making choices here, as we have for the last 6 years. We've chosen not to spend on American hospitals and American children. We've chosen not to spend to help our elderly get what they need in order to keep their house heated for the winter. And instead, we've chosen to build Iraqi buildings and Iraqi hospitals. We've chosen to put more and more troops in harm's way in a war that is making this country less safe in the long run rather than more safe. This is all about choices, and it's time that we started making some different ones.

And that's why we got sent here, Mr. ALTMIRE. We got sent here to start investing in this country, to start making sure that our priorities look to this country, to the United States of America, first. And that's what the Labor-HHS appropriations bill does. It is the foundation of that compassionate government that we all believe in. It's about medical research. It's about schools. It's about hospitals.

And I hope, as you said, that there will be enough Republicans here who will join us, and we only need a handful, so that we can reverse that and bring back some common sense to our spending priorities in this country, Mr. ALTMIRE.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I wanted to mention one other issue that was in that bill. We talked about home heating assistance. We talked about health care for children, medical research. We talked about the Head Start program, but it's the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. And one of the programs that's in that bill that the President thought was excessive spending was additional 200,000 slots for job training for dislocated workers. And I can tell you, coming from western Pennsylvania where we know about dislocated workers and the need for job training and people to readapt when companies move and with the loss of manufacturing jobs, those are critically important programs that the President considers to be excessive spending. That's what we're talking about with this bill. That's what type of spending we're talking about.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. ALTMIRE, if you would yield for a moment.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Yes, I would.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Really, when it comes down to it, the only thing that's different here is the party that's writing the budget. I mean, really, when you look at it over time, what's different about the last six

budgets that this Congress passed that over time expanded Federal expenditures by 50 percent and the budget that we've passed, which simply reflects the fact that it costs a little bit more to heat your home if you're a senior, that it costs a little bit more to run a school than it did last year? What's different? I mean, the fact is is that it seems like it's just base partisan politics in the end, that all that really is different is that the Democrats are writing this budget this year and the Republicans were writing the last six budgets. And it is not a coincidence that over the last 6 years we saw nary a veto from this President while his party was in charge of the Congress, and now all of a sudden we have seen a flurry of vetoes on bills that reflect many of the same priorities, we think adjusted to make a little bit more sense for our communities, many of the same priorities that were reflected in the budgets for the last 6 years. And I think to a lot of us that came here to change the culture of this place, as much as we care about resetting our priorities and putting funding back into our communities, we also were sort of hoping that there was a little bit of a message sent in this election to change the partisan rancor that has really enveloped this place, and the President, by vetoing bills very similar to ones that he has signed in the past simply because a different party controls the House, I think does a disservice to the process and a disservice to the mandates that a lot of voters sent us here with, Mr. ALTMIRE.

Mr. ALTMIRE. And the last thing for context, before I turn it over to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ from Florida, you will remember, Mr. MURPHY and I both being freshman, the excitement of that first week in Congress and the things that we did that first week when we were first sworn in at the beginning of 2007. Well, perhaps the most important thing that we did was return to pay-as-you-go budget scoring, which is very simple. It's the same thing that we all do in our own checkbooks at home and the same thing every business in America has to do. It says that you have to have money on one side of the ledger if you want to spend it on the other, pay-as-you-go. If you want to decrease revenue or you want to increase spending, you have to find a way to pay for it, an offset, you have to find an offset. And every spending bill and every authorization bill that we have passed out of this House this year, every single one of them has been compliant with pay-as-you-go. It has paid for itself; it's been budget neutral.

So, the context of this debate with the President about his willingness to veto these bills and saying it's excessive spending, the American people should be aware of the fact that that's in the context of our returning to pay-as-you-go budget scoring. That's what led to the record surpluses of the 1990s that I referred to earlier. And the failure of this Congress to renew pay-as-you-go budget scoring in 2002 is what led to the record deficits that we're mired in today.

So, when you hear about the vetoes of these spending bills, please keep in mind that we're talking about bills that are compliant with pay-as-you-go budget scoring, bills that are budget neutral and that have the appropriate offsets when there are spending increases.

I would yield at this time to my good friend, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much, Mr. ALTMIRE. It is a pleasure again to join my colleagues in the 30-Something Working Group. And I'm so glad that our newest members of the Working Group, Mr. MURPHY and Mr. ALTMIRE, have been holding down the fort for the last little while talking about spending priorities, because that is actually the most glaring difference between the Republicans and the way they handled this institution and the Democrats and the way we are handling it.

Let's take the problem that we're facing here now that you've been talking about, and that is that the President vetoed the Labor Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill. And I am proud to sit as a member of the Appropriations Committee with Mr. RYAN. And I can tell you that the difference in the overall spending plan that the President put forward versus our 12 bills combined amounts to $22 billion. Now, $22 billion might sound like a big number, but let's put it in context.

□ 2300

Twenty-two billion dollars is approximately what we are spending in Iraq in 2 months. That's the difference between what Democrats in Congress are proposing to spend for all 12 bills combined, the difference between the President's proposal and the Democrats' proposal. That problem underscores the fact that the President only has one spending priority, and that is the war in Iraq. The problem is that the only spending priority that matters to President Bush is the war in Iraq. It's not even the war in Iraq and Afghanistan because he has so clearly shortchanged what was going on in Afghanistan when we started, which is where the war on terror, or the pursuit of bin Laden was ongoing that we abandoned when he shifted the focus of America to the war in Iraq, that it has blocked out the sun. His spending priority, his only one, the war in Iraq, has blocked out the sun and made it impossible for us to move forward on things like education, like expanding access to health care for children, like making sure that we can pass a stem cell research bill that the vast majority of this country supports.

I will just give you an example of one of the things that resulted from the veto of the Labor-HHS bill and that is the increase in Ryan White title IV funding for AIDS programs for families. We have an explosion of AIDS in this country. We absolutely need to make sure that we get a handle on it. There hasn't been an increase in title IV funding in years. Now that we are in charge and are making sure that we move this country in a new direction, we are focusing on the domestic priorities of Americans. Americans want us to withdraw our troops from Iraq in a responsible way and focus on things that they care about when it comes to their everyday lives. That is literally what the Labor-HHS appropriations bill does. It is an expression of our values. And our values reflect the needs of Americans when it comes to their health care, when it comes to their education, when it comes to their environment at work. And the priorities and values reflected in the Republicans' agenda is the war in Iraq.

Now, I think the American people clearly stated what their intentions were and what they wanted Congress to do last November 7, and we have repeatedly, and we did again tonight just before we came on the floor this evening for the 30-Something hour, they have repeatedly urged us in Congress to begin a responsible withdrawal of our troops, to stop sending the troops over for tour after tour, the same men and women, the same strain on their families, sending them over there without the equipment that they need, sending them over there without the proper training, with tours of duty that are beyond the appropriate length of time, stretching families, causing divorces, causing strain, psychological impact on children, but they don't care. It just doesn't matter. The President's priority is Iraq, and everyone else's opinion be damned.

I will be happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is not just the President. It is enough Members of Congress on the Republican side primarily that are standing by the President. They have to go to the voters next year and say, in my last term in Congress, I stood by President Bush. The thing is that when you talk about the war funding, the waste, the no-bid contracts, the Pentagon losing billions of dollars and nobody knows where it is, you don't hear our friends on the other side, Mr. Speaker, come up and pitch a fit about that. But if you want to talk about $1 billion or $2 billion more in health, education, job retraining, all of a sudden the sky is falling. All of a sudden the party that raised the debt limit five times and borrowed $3 trillion under President Bush is now concerned with a shift in funding to college education, Mr. MEEK, to community health clinics, Mr. ALTMIRE, to Head Start, to these fundamental programs that this country has stood behind. And the kicker is SCHIP, $35 billion over 5 years, and the President says that's too much spending so we can't provide health care for 10 million kids, poor kids, but we can just turn

around without a blink of an eye and ask for $200 billion to keep the war going in Iraq, without any kind of deadlines or timelines or any kind of shift in the focus. That's the frustrating part.

Before I yield to my friend, I would just like to say there has been a pattern here. On September 11 or after September 11, Mr. MURPHY, it was go shopping. And then during the whole SCHIP debate, it was, well, they can go to the emergency room, these kids. Then during Katrina it was, ''You're doing a good job, Brownie,'' consistently these flippant remarks that the President tends to make that lacks an understanding of the seriousness of some of these situations.

So it is frustrating as we are trying to make some investments into the United States of America, into this country, and the President consistently, with a small band of Republican supporters, is able to veto this, and unfortunately, we don't have enough votes in the House yet to override these vetoes.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you so very much, Mr. RYAN, and I want to thank the Members and Mr. ALTMIRE for hosting this hour and anchoring this hour for us. It is always good to see Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. She has been busy. There are a lot of appropriations bills coming through the floor. And Mr. MURPHY has so much to offer to this 30-something.

Mr. RYAN, I appreciate the fact that you took us down Memory Lane, especially what this administration has done. Being one that pays attention to history and appreciates those that have contributed to this country, whether it be in battle or service in the military and those families that are waiting for their loved ones to come home, whether it be a son or a daughter or a sister or a brother or a mother, waiting, I think it is important for us to recognize right here in the moment, I can't help but think and reflect on the contributions of those Americans before me, the sacrifices that they have made that was just regular order that we call here in Congress, it was just another day. But these were heroes and sheroes that stood on behalf of this country and wanted to carry out the will of the American people. Sometimes we get caught up here in Washington about what we think. I think it's important to note that seven out of 10 Americans have a bad feeling about what is going on in Iraq, the direction that we are going in. This New Direction Congress has tried to steer this administration in the right direction, but I'm just going to put it on the lap of those that are in Congress. The President is not running again.

I actually got up pretty early this morning and had a chance to go down to Morning Journal and have a chance to sit there and take calls from the American people. As you know, you get a cross section of Democrats, Republicans, independents, what have you.

But I think it is very, very important for us to realize, four Republicans tonight voted in the affirmative on H.R. 4156, which is the Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act of 2008. I think it is important that people note that in that bill, it put forth $50 billion under the $200 billion that the President called for. And the veto that you were talking about a little earlier as it relates to the health centers, as it relates to the research that has to take place dealing with the illness that many Americans are facing, family members that have cancer right now that need that research, need those dollars. The President vetoes those dollars.

So I think it is important for the Members here on the floor and the Members that are listening to what we are saying here on the floor and the staff members that are listening and the Americans that are listening that we pay very close attention. Everyone has to be a part of this paradigm shift in Washington, DC. It just can't be the majority we have here in the House and the one majority we have in the Senate, because if we had 60 votes, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, we would be able to move the agenda that the American people call for.

So my contribution tonight would be to, well, one, to our Republican friends on the other side of the aisle that don't allow us to have enough votes to be able to override the President, that the American people will hold them in judgment. To the Members in the Senate that feel that whatever the reason may be to not allow us to override the President, because the President is not running again, but you are, that the American people, independent, Republican, Democrat, first-time voter will let their voice be heard in 2008. That's the good thing about this whole thing, the fact that I know in this democracy that people are paying attention to what is going on.

You cannot justify, ladies and gentlemen, when you look in the face of 10 million children that have to receive health care and say that, well, it's okay for the President to veto and for me to stand by the President and not by those children, it's okay for us to continue on in a war with no accountability, and then we have the Blackwater incident, and then we have other incidents that are there. So the only thing that I am excited about is the fact that the American people are paying attention. But if it was about politics, I would just sit in my office and allow the President to do what he does and a very small majority as it relates to Republicans standing by the President because I know one day the Americans will rise up and the American spirit will rise up and we will see a different America. That is what I am praying for and I am hoping for very soon.

Mr. RYAN, I think you are 110 percent right. I think we need to remind the Members of the past. We need to make sure that we recognize those Members that were once Members of Congress but decided to follow the President, and the American people took them out of office, and as far as I am concerned, if you don't want to stand on behalf of those that sent us here, then you are making a career decision. The bottom line is we have men and women in harm's way right now.

Mr. ALTMIRE. That is a perfect segue for what I wanted to get into right now, and we are going to, I think, conclude on this topic because this is certainly the most important issue facing the country today is the war in Iraq. I think anybody would agree. What this House did today is, as the gentleman from Florida talked about, try to get a handle on this situation and try to put a plan in place where none exists today on what our mission is going to be in Iraq.

I was going to talk a little bit about what we did today in the House, what the bill said, and I will turn it over to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ to go into a little bit more detail. H.R. 4156 requires the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq to begin within 30 days of enactment with a target for completion of December 15, 2008. It requires transition in the mission of U.S. forces in Iraq from primarily combat to force protection and diplomatic protection, limited support to Iraqi security forces and targeted counterterrorism operations.

The bill prohibits deployment of any U.S. troops not fully equipped and trained. Is there anybody who can disagree with that? Waivable with a presidential national security certification. So it gives the President the ability to waive that requirement if he feels it is necessary. It extends to all U.S. Government agencies and personnel the limitations of the Army Field Manual on permissible interrogation techniques. That means no torture, something that this House has voted on in the past. It is in the Army manual today. It just says you have to abide by what is in the Army Field Manual as it is currently written. And finally, as we discussed, it provides $50 billion to meet the needs of the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan but defers the consideration of the remainder of the President's nearly $200 billion request.

So this is a responsible course of action. The House passed it today.

I will yield to the gentlewoman from Florida at this point to give her views on this issue.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Mr. ALTMIRE.

Here is the bottom line. There is a dramatic and stark difference between the Republicans' priorities and the Democrats' priorities. There is one priority, and only one that you will ever hear from the other side, and that is to continue to fund the war in Iraq, continue to put our troops in harm's way, continue to have their families separated from them, continue for them to have longer and longer tours of duty,

more and more strain, more and more tours of duty.

Here are our priorities. We passed the largest increase in veterans benefits in the 77-year history of the VA. We passed legislation to increase the minimum wage. We passed legislation to expand access to health care for 10 million children. We passed legislation to cut the student loan interest rate in half. The list goes on.

And what do you hear from the Republicans? Nothing. You hear, let's put more money into the war in Iraq. Let's lengthen the time that the men and women fighting on our behalf spend there. Let's send them over there for more and more tours of duty. Do you ever hear anything from that side of the aisle in terms of an agenda, in terms of getting anything done? All I hear is ''no.'' All I hear is, ''not going to do that.'' All I hear, again, is, ''Yes, Mr. President. Whatever you say, Mr. President.''

Our criticism of them, Mr. MEEK and Mr. RYAN, if you remember, in the 30–Something Working Group in the 109th was that they were the bobblehead Republicans who did nothing more than shake their head up and down and do whatever the President said. And nothing has changed. Well, guess what. A year from now, which is just about a year from now, they will be called to account just like you said, Mr. MEEK, and we will see just how many fewer Republicans there will be here that serve in this chamber, because I think the American people have had it up to here.

I would be happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I just want to make a point. It is not like we are out on a limb here. We just saw a poll that came out a few days ago from CNN that shows that seven in 10 Americans oppose this war. That is the highest number, 68 percent, 70 percent of Americans oppose this war, the highest number since the war began.

□ 2315

We are seeing almost by the week, by the day, new generals, new senior retired American military officials coming out and breaking with this President. We have already seen the Iraq Study Group, we have already seen dozens of foreign policy experts come out and plead with this President. Even many of his best friends, many of his father's advisors have pleaded for a new course.

The Democrats are on the side of the American public. The Democrats are on the side of the foreign policy community on Iraq. The Democrats are on the side of an increasing number of retired military generals and officials on this issue. As you said, there is just a very loyal, very recalcitrant block of Republicans who refuse to abide by the growing will of the American public on this issue. There will be a price to be paid for this.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman will yield. What is clear here is there is a threat of panic running through the caucus on the other side of the aisle because we are up to 16 of their incumbent Members who have decided to bail and who recognize that the ship is listing and has been listing badly and is in danger of just completely going down. There doesn't appear to be any likelihood of the ship righting itself in the near future. They aren't expected and aren't expecting to get their act together and focus on an agenda that the American people support because they have been a one-note, tunnel-vision party for far too long.

So you have 16 that have decided to retire already, with, we are sure, more to come. It's just not surprising because they do not share the priorities of everyday working families, Americans who want the Congress to focus on a new direction and not give them more of the same.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It's interesting, and I think you made the right point. It seems like the President has one priority, and one and only one, and that is the funding of the war. What is interesting is when you look at the Labor-HHS bill, some of the other bills we are trying to pass that increase the Pell Grants and some of the other things, we are not getting the level of support we should.

These vets need those programs. These veterans that are coming back, it's not like they are making a lot of money, many of them with their kids they are trying to send to college. So why wouldn't this apply? The vets aren't just fighting for the Defense appropriations bill that passes out of the House or the VA benefit package that passes out of the House. The veterans are fighting for America. They are fighting for a strong country that does research and development. Veterans have family members who get cancer. So they are very concerned, I would think, Mr. Speaker, with investments at NIH to continue cancer research. They have kids that may need health care. They have kids that go to school. They may have a kid that wants to participate in a Head Start program. In each instance, Mr. ALTMIRE, our fearless leader in this 30-Something group tonight, these vets are fighting for what makes America great, and that is freedom, that is investment, that is a strong economy. Those are the kind of things we are investing in.

So to say your only priority is the war and spending what is now projected by the end of the year $1.3 trillion in the war. The President says, and a small group of recalcitrant Republicans say here in the House: We can't fund it because we don't have the money to put in the health care and everything else.

Mr. MEEK. Will the gentleman yield for a second? I know you're an appropriator and we are talking about appropriations. You and Mr. MURPHY are kind of throwing around these big words tonight. Let it be known that some of us in the room just want to break it down a little bit here in this Chamber.

I can't go back to my district and tell Ms. Johnson and Ms. Rodriguez or Ms. Jones who worked their entire lives that because the President decides to veto the Labor-Health bill, and I think it's important that we share this with the Members, we can't tell those individuals to suck it up. I am sorry that you weren't in the Defense bill. I am sorry that it had nothing to do with Iraq and Afghanistan, that we can't be for you.

One thing I can say here in this House is that we are for them and that we are standing for those individuals, and they are Republicans and they are Independents and they are Democrats and they are nonvoters and individuals thinking about voting for the first time. They are the sick and shut-in on that sick and shut-in list when people go to wherever they worship, or whatever the case may be. They are the individuals counting on this Congress to stand for them.

The Congress is doing what we are supposed to do, Mr. ALTMIRE. But the bottom line is that the President has to do what he has to do, and he has to be the President of the United States of America, not just to secure the issue in Iraq. We have Americans here right now that need our support and our help.

I am glad that we are here and I am glad that we are putting the pressure on the minority party to do the right thing on behalf of their constituents and the American people.

Mr. ALTMIRE.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Thanks to all my colleagues who participated tonight. Thanks, especially, Mr. Speaker for the time allotted to us. Please, to continue the discussion, anyone can go to www.speaker.gov and go to the 30-Something Working Group and we can continue this discussion by e-mail.

I thank the Speaker.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the Speaker. The hour is late, the time is short. I do want to talk a little bit about health care this evening. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, in order to clear the air from the last 40 minutes, let's start off with a Bible verse. Let's start off reading from the Old Testament from the book of Habakkuk, Chapter 2. ''I will stand upon my watch, and I will set me upon the tower, and I will watch to see what he will say to me, and what I shall answer. And the Lord answered, Write the vision, make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie. Wait for

it, because it will surely come. It will not tarry.''

Mr. Speaker, I think those are important words. We are going to talk a little bit about the vision for health care, the future of health care in America. Sometimes we will have to wait for it, but it will come. It's a universal problem in this country. Some people think it has a universal solution; others disagree with that. But those two philosophies of health care, that that can be solved by the government or that that is better solved by individuals, those two competing philosophies are really going to be played out front and center over the next 18 to 24 months, both in this Congress and on the national stage in Presidential elections.

I may be oversimplifying the issue a little bit, but it underscores the basic arrangements. We sometimes appear to discuss health care only in the realm of insurance, government systems, third-party systems. In fact, Mr. Speaker, if you recall back in 1993, when the attempt was made with the Clinton health care plan, a lot of us who worked in health care at the time were perplexed, we were concerned because at the time the plan seemed to be less about health care and more about the transactions involving health care, that is, more about insurance than actual health care.

You know, back not too terribly long ago health care meant you called your doctor, you saw your doctor, you paid your doctor on the spot. Now, we have this convoluted system of third-party payers, government payers, private employee and self-pay. It's a complicated plan. It works. Hardly can be described as efficient. But it does work.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to ask ourselves: Is our goal in reforming health care, is our goal indeed in transforming health care to protect our patients or are we here to protect that third-party system of payment? Is our goal to provide Americans with a reasonable way to obtain health care, a reasonable way to communicate with their physician, with their doctor, with their nurse?

We really need to proceed carefully because the consequences of any poor choices we make over these next 18 to 24 months, the consequences of those poor choices will reverberate for decades. Not just in our lifetime, but in our children's lifetimes.

Mr. Speaker, I often stress that the fundamental unit of production of this great and grand American medical machine, the fundamental unit of production is the interaction that takes place between the doctor and the patient in the treatment room. It is that fundamental unit of production which we must protect, we must preserve, we must defend. Indeed, anything we do to try to transform or reform the health care system in this country, first off, we need to ask: Is it going to bring value to that fundamental unit of production of the American health care machine?

The test before us is do we protect people or do we protect the special interest groups. Do we protect big government or do we protect individuals? Do we believe in the supremacy of the State or do we believe in the sanctity of the individual? An educated consumer makes for a better health care system. We need to make health care reform about patients.

Let me just spend a little time talking about what are some of the predominant plans that we hear talked about, some of those placed forward by the Presidential candidates, something that we hear talked about on the other side of the aisle here in this House. It's often referred to as a single-payer system or universal health care coverage. It's got a nice ring to it. It's almost seductive. Why shouldn't the world's strongest and best economy, the world's strongest and best health care system provide free health care to all? Well, perhaps the words of P.J. O'Rourke penned back in 1993 in the Liberty Manifesto, when he stated, If you think health care is expensive now, wait and see what it costs when it's free.

Mr. Speaker, the American health care system has no shortage of critics at home or abroad. But, Mr. Speaker, it is the American health care system that stands at the forefront of innovation, the forefront of new technology. These are precisely the types of systemwide changes that are going to be necessary to efficiently and effectively provide care for Americans in the future. There's no way we can pay for all the care we are going to need to buy if we rely entirely on today's systems and solutions. There have to be new systems and solutions developed for the future, and they will deliver on that promise. The price will come down, but only if we give the system the freedom to act and develop those measures.

Now, the New York Times, not something that I normally read, but just a little over a year ago the New York Times, renowned for its liberal leanings, published October 5, 2006, an article by Tyler Cowan, who wrote at the time, ''When it comes to medical innovation, the United States is the world's leader.'' Continuing to quote, ''In the past 10 years, for instance, 12 Nobel prizes in medicine have gone to American-born scientists working in the United States, three have gone to foreign-born scientists working in the United States, and seven have gone to researchers outside of this country.'' He goes on to point out that five of the six most important medical innovations of the past 25 years have been developed within and because of the American system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, comparisons with other countries may be useful, but it is important to remember that the American system is always reinventing itself and it's always seeking improvement. It is precisely because of the tension inherent in this hybrid public-private system that creates that tension and creates that impetus for change. A system that is completely and fully funded by a payroll tax or some other policy has no reason to seek improvement. Its funding and its funding stream is going to be reliable and predictable, occurring day after day. There's no reason to try to improve a system like that. It's always in complete balance, complete equilibrium, and faces stagnation. But if there does become a need in such a system to balance payments or control costs, where is that going to come from? We have already seen from our experience within our own Medicare system that is going to come at the expense of the provider. It always has, it always will.

□ 2330

The difficulties faced by providers within the Medicare system on an ongoing basis are truly staggering.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is the United States is not Europe. American patients are accustomed to wide choices when it comes to hospitals, physicians and pharmaceuticals. Because our experience is unique and because our experience is different from other countries, this difference should be acknowledged and embraced, maybe even celebrated. But certainly when reform, either public or private, is discussed in this country, we need to be cognizant of that difference.

That is one of the many reasons why a universal health care system, or a single payer system, translate that to ''the government,'' to me seems almost inadvisable, and certainly doesn't seem sustainable over time as an option. So let's think about some of the principles that really should be involved when we talk about changes and improvements to our health care system.

Three principles that I focus on, and I think really form the crux of the basis of all activities regarding health care reform or transformation of the health care system, are affordability, accountability and advancements. Three things fairly easy to remember, almost an iteration when you put them right together.

Under affordability, one of the things I think we oftentimes forget is what does it really cost to deliver the care? How do we assign those costs? How do we allocate those costs? The pricing for health care services really ought to be based on what is indicated by the market. But that isn't always the case. Oftentimes it is what is assumed by administrators, and consumers and even physicians are completely insulated, completely anesthetized as to what the care costs or what it costs to deliver the care.

Now, an article or an op-ed from the Wall Street Journal earlier this year by Robert Swerlick, a dermatologist from Emory University, the title of his column was ''Our Soviet Health System.'' He laments the difficulty in finding a pediatric endocrinologist, but in turn it seems so easy to find a veterinarian who specializes in orthopedics for his Labrador Retriever. So he can't

find a doctor for his child, but he has no trouble finding one for his canine acquaintance.

Now, the reason for that is the administrative pricing system that really is dictated by our Medicare system. And I think Dr. Swerlick really hits the nail on the head. He says, ''The roots of this problem lie in the use of an administrative pricing structure in medicine. The way prices are set in health care already distort the appropriate allocation of efforts and resources in health care today. Unfortunately,'' he goes on to say, ''many of the suggested reforms in our health care system, including various plans for universal care or universal insurance or a single-payer system that various policymakers espouse, rest on the same unsound foundations and will produce more of the same.''

He goes on to say, ''The essential problem is this: The pricing of medical care in this country is either directly or indirectly dictated by Medicare.'' We have a system of Federal price controls in medicine in this country.

Again, continuing to quote, ''Rather than independently calculate prices, private insurers in this country almost universally use Medicare prices as a framework to negotiate payments, generally setting payments for services as a percentage of the Medicare fee schedule.''

This is an extremely important point, Mr. Speaker, and one that I don't think Members of this body truly grasp. It is so important, we are going to revisit it again in a minute when we talk about Medicare pricing and what is happening in the physician realm. But remember that, because that is an extremely important point.

Medicare administrators set the prices. Private insurance companies in this country tend to follow suit. So when you say we have got a market-based economy in health care, really nothing could be further from the truth.

''And,'' as Dr. Swerlick goes on to say, ''unlike prices set on market conditions, the errors created are not self-correcting. Markets may not get the prices exactly correct all of the time, but they are capable of self-correction, a capacity that has yet to be demonstrated by administrative pricing.''

Again, he goes on to associate this with the system that was in place in the old Soviet Union, and in fact correctly relates some of the problems in the old Soviet economy to the reason the old Soviet Union is not with us any longer. So we really need to pay careful attention to that.

Transparency, I think that is something that we talk about a lot, but we don't spend nearly the time focusing on the issue as we should. Transparency between pricing for physicians and hospitals is essential. We want to go to a system where there is more consumer-directed health care, where consumers are more informed. But in order for consumers to be informed, they have to have the ability to go and get the data.

Right now, the opacity built into the pricing structure between physicians and hospitals is significant, and, as a consequence, it becomes very, very difficult for the patient, the health care consumer, to be able to make those determinations.

The other aspect that enters into it, of course, is the issue of physician quality. Sometimes that is an intangible. Sometimes that is something that is difficult to know just from visiting a Web site or checking data that may be available, and that may be the word of mouth type of information that is delivered from one patient to another. A wait time, for example, in one office that is much longer than in another office, you might be willing to pay a little bit more to wait a little bit less time, or you might be willing to wait a little bit more time if the care delivered in that office is truly exemplary.

Now, Texas has taken some steps to make this more of a reality. I think people would like the ability for comparison. In fact, they would like to be able to go on-line for that comparison. I think Travelocity For Health Care, wouldn't that be a powerful tool to put into people's hands.

An example in Texas is what is called Texas Price Point. There is a Web site, www.txpricepoint.org, which was created to provide basic demographic quality and charge information on Texas hospitals and to promote additional or ready access to consumer and hospital information and the appropriate interaction that could occur as a result of that.

The program is very new. The data sometimes is a little too sparse, but it is a program that will build on itself over time and one that will I think provide significant utility to patients in Texas. And I believe other States have other programs. I think Florida has a program that is up and running. These are going to be critical. Some insurance companies have developed their own programs, and that will provide a critical knowledge base for patients who are covered by those insurance companies.

One of the things that is going to affect affordability, even accessibility as far as physicians are concerned, is what I alluded to earlier with the Medicare pricing.

Mr. Speaker, we had reported to us from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services the first of this month, not even 2 weeks ago, that the proposed physician payment cuts for next year will be just a little bit over 10 percent for doctors across-the-board in this country. That is untenable. Doctors cannot be expected to sustain that type of reduction.

There is no telling what it does to a physician's ability to plan. A physician's office, after all, is a small business, and if they are going to be facing this type of price reduction, it is very difficult to plan. Do you hire a new nurse, do you purchase a new piece of equipment, do you take on a new partner, when year over year the Medicare system visits this type of travesty upon physicians? And this Congress, through both Republican majorities and now Democratic majorities, and Democratic majorities that preceded 1994, have refused to deal with this issue in a way that corrects it once and for all and gets us past the problem.

The difficulty is that year over year, the physician pricing is set by a formula called the sustainable growth rate formula, and year over year for the past 5 years and projected for 10 years into the future, every year there is a cut to physician reimbursement.

Now, you might say that doctors earn enough money and it is the Medicare system, so what harm is there in that? Let's go back for just a moment to Dr. Swerlick's article about administrative pricing.

''Again,'' he said, ''the essential problem is this. The pricing of medical care in this country is either directly or indirectly dictated by Medicare, and Medicare uses an administrative formula, the sustainable growth rate formula, which calculates appropriate prices based upon imperfect estimates and fudge factors. Rather than independently calculate prices, private insurers in this country almost universally use Medicare prices as a framework to negotiate payments, generally setting payments for services as a percentage of the Medicare fee structure.''

So, let's think about that, Mr. Speaker. What happens on January 1 if this House does not take some action to prevent that 10 percent reduction in physician payments? What happens on January 1 is all of those insurance contracts that peg to Medicare reimbursement rates, all of those are going to be reduced by a factor of about 10 percent, or in some cases a little bit more. If a plan pays 120 percent of Medicare and Medicare is reduced 10 percent, that plan will reduce a concomitant amount, which will be a little bit in excess of 10 percent for their pricing on their physician services.

Again, it has ripples and effects far beyond, far beyond what it would be affected just by the Medicare system. And it leads to a problem, it leads to a problem of what happens with the physician workforce.

Now, just a little over 2 years ago, when Alan Greenspan, the former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board here in Washington, DC, was retiring and sort of made a tour around the Capitol, sort of a one last victory lap around the Capitol, and came and met with a group of us one morning, the question was inevitably asked, what do we do about Medicare? What do we do about the liabilities, the future liabilities in Medicare? How are we going to meet those obligations?

The chairman thought about it for a moment and then said, you know, I think when the time comes, Congress will take the action necessary and that the Medicare system will endure, will

be preserved. There may be some difficult choices and trade-offs that have to be made, but Congress at the correct time will make those choices.

He stopped for a moment and then went on to say, what concerns me more, is will there be anyone there to deliver the services when you require them?

And that really comes to the crux of the matter here. If we have a system within our Medicare reimbursement schedule for physicians where within the whole Medicare system itself, parts A, B, C and D, if only part B is affected by this, part A, which is the hospitals, they have a cost of living adjustment, part C, which is HMOs, they have a cost of living adjustment, part D, which is prescription drugs, they have a cost of living adjustment, if the only ones living under this onerous formula are the physicians, what happens over time?

Well, what happens is people will retire early, people will restrict their practices so they no longer see Medicare patients, physicians will restrict the procedures that they offer Medicare patients, perhaps preferring office procedures to surgical procedures that tend to be more labor intensive and time intensive.

It certainly has an effect on the law of supply and demand, if you will, as far as physician services are concerned within the Medicare system itself. For that reason, for that reason, it has a significantly pernicious effect on the physician workforce.

Remember, I started out this talk and I said we always want to focus on are we delivering value to that doctor-patient interaction in the treatment room? Well, I will submit if you don't have a doctor there for that doctor-patient interaction in the treatment room, it is impossible to deliver value of any sort, if you don't have the physician there in the first place.

So that is a critical part. A critical part of establishing and creating value for the patient is ensuring that there is indeed a capable and trained and caring physician there for that patient in the treatment room. And I worry that what we are providing for physician compensation within the Medicare system, which has ramifications throughout the entire private pay structure through the health care system, I do worry if that is a condition that can indeed be sustained.

Now, one of the other things that I think we oftentime lose sight of when we talk about affordability, we always talk about the number of uninsured that exist in this country. Sure enough, it is too big a number. The number varies, depending upon who you read.

But if we talk about the number today, we are probably going to talk about a number of around 47 million uninsured. And we always stop there and say, well, we have to do something about the 47 million who are uninsured, as if that was one homogenous population and one solution would work for everyone who is caught up in that category.

But the reality is, one of the large insurance companies in this country did a little investigating to see who makes up, who is involved in this population, this universe of people who are uninsured.

□ 2345

It turns out 10 percent are university students. If you say we have 47 or 48 million people uninsured, 10 percent of that is 4.8 million, nearly 5 million, are university students. Students who may arguably have health coverage available through their university or college. But even if they don't, this is a group of people that is pretty easy to insure. It is pretty inexpensive to insure.

So a solution for that group would be vastly different than some of the other groups identified. Twenty percent of that population is already eligible for Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Why States with outreach efforts have not identified those individuals, I don't know. Perhaps we ought to make it incumbent for States to do that work.

If we are providing Federal funds at all sorts of levels, maybe we ought to make it incumbent on States to do that outreach work so those individuals are enrolled in Federal programs to provide that. Again, think about it: 20 percent of 47 or 48 million people, that is almost 10 million people that could be taken off the rolls of the uninsured tomorrow because the programs already exist to take care of them. You don't need to create a new program or do something different from what you are doing right now. Current Medicaid, current SCHIP will cover 20 percent of that population.

And 20 percent earn almost $80,000 a year. That is not a huge sum of money, but certainly a group of people that might be considered to be able to provide something toward their own health care. I am not a fan of mandates. I don't think you get anywhere by telling people what they have to do. But if we allow insurance companies some freedom to create the types of programs that would be of value to that segment of the population, that would be affordable to that segment of the population, if we would perhaps remove some restrictions, maybe remove some mandates, or decide what are those things that are going to comprise a basic package of benefits so we can make it affordable and marketable to that group of individuals who arguably have some disposable income that they could use towards their health care rather than creating a huge, new Federal structure to bring them in. Maybe that is a tactic that could be taken.

Mr. Speaker, we don't like to focus a lot of time and energy on this, but we have to talk about it, and that is 20 percent of the people who fall into the category of the universe of uninsured people in this country are individuals who are in the country without the benefit of a Social Security number. Again, that is something that we as a country and we as a Congress do need to deal with. Whether that is increased efforts at controlling who is coming into our country and increased efforts at controlling our borders, but this is part of the problem that we as a Congress have yet to really face and deal with.

We made some efforts, to be sure, in the current State Children's Health Insurance Program. One of the recent legislative proposals that came through Congress and was passed by Congress that is still tied up in negotiations wanted to relax the verification required for someone being able to document or verify that they are in this country legally. I don't know. I think this body needs to decide what direction it wants to go on this. I don't know that is a terribly useful activity from my perspective. It might engender more people wanting to come into this country to get benefits, but that is something that this Congress has to take up and face no matter how difficult it is.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked about 10 percent university students, 20 percent already eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP, 20 percent who earn nearly $80,000 a year and 20 percent who are noncitizens. If we add those all together, that is approximately, 10, 20, 30, plus 5, so 35 million out of 47 million uninsured. We may have some solutions that are really just at our fingertips if we would expend a little bit of effort. And this is very frustrating to me. We never seem to want to do the effort to break down who is included in the population.

We are all too content to take the number 47 million uninsured and use it as a political bludgeon to beat each other over the head, but we are never willing to do the work that a private insurance company did in a relatively short period of time. We never seem to be willing to do the work. With all of our Federal agencies and bureaus that count numbers and people, we never seem to be able or willing to do the work to get this number, break it down into the smaller subsets, the smaller populations where, in fact, we may be able to provide some significant benefit.

Now, one of the things that I think we do need to talk about is on the aspect of accountability. First off, in any system that we talk about devising or implementing, we surely have to keep freedom of choice. We want to see the doctors we want to see when we want to see them. When hospitalization is required, freedom of choice has to remain central.

One of the things that oftentimes gets lost in the discussion when you look at the breakdown of how health care expenditures occurs in this country, approximately half is paid for by the Federal Government. When you look at the Medicare and Medicaid programs, we heard some discussion of the

HHS appropriations bill, $680 billion, almost $700 billion spent by this country every year by Medicaid and Medicare. Add to that the money spent in the veterans health service and add to that the money spent in the Indian health service and add to that the money spent in the Federal prison system, and you come pretty close to 50 cents out of every health care dollar that is spent in this country has its origin here on the floor of this Congress. So that is a pretty big chunk that comes from the Federal Government already.

The other half is not entirely private insurance, but certainly there is a large portion accounted by private or commercial insurance in this country. A portion, a portion is paid for by the patient out of their pocket.

I would include the growing number of people who are covered by health savings accounts in this group. Health savings accounts being a high-deductible insurance policy where a person is able to accumulate dollars, pre-tax dollars in a savings account dedicated to their health care. Those dollars are owned by the individual. They are dollars that would, if something happened to the individual, they would stay in the family. They don't go back to the Federal Government like Social Security. These are dollars that would stay around and be there to help your family. They would be there to help someone when they transition into the Medicare system.

Mr. Speaker, I had a medical savings account back in the 1990s when I was in the private practice of medicine back in Texas. I thought it was a great thing, not so much because of the money I was accumulating in this medical IRA. I thought it was a great thing because that was the time when HMOs were making big inroads into our medical practice in north Texas, and I liked the idea of being in charge of my health care decisions because I owned my own health insurance policy. As an individual policy, I felt I had much more power over what decisions were made for my health care and my family's health care.

So the whole concept of ownership, owning that medical IRA and being allowed to accumulate those savings to offset future medical expenses, that is a fundamental desire of many Americans. And I think that is a desire that should be encouraged and embellished. Why not be able to accumulate a few dollars dedicated toward your future health care needs? That is a pretty powerful tool to put into people's hands.

Again, for me the issue was being able to be in charge of my own health care, that individual freedom that comes with increased sovereignty. That was critical for me when I went out and looked for a medical savings account when they were first offered back in 1996 or 1997.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, whenever we talk about accountability within the health care system, independence of the patient, the patient as an independent agent is something that must be preserved. That preservation of autonomy for the patient or the patient's designee if a medical power of attorney is exercised, but that is who should be responsible for the care, to be able to accept care, to be able to decline care if a particular medical intervention is either sought or someone wishes to not participate in the medical intervention that is offered. That is a fundamental right that we really should not take away from people.

Advancements within the system. Again, the science of our medicine here in the United States is superior to that anywhere else in the world. You might say that our system of allocation or delivery system needs work, but no one can argue about the science that is present in the medical system in this country.

So, high standards. We want to keep those high standards. The underpinnings of the American medical system has always been that we have high standards and we enforce standards of excellence, and nothing in the future should change that or undermine that. In fact, pathways to facilitate future growth in excellence should be encouraged.

When you talk about expanding the role of the Federal Government in health care, you look at some other places where the Federal Government has a really big footprint, like our Social Security system, or the IRS. Are those systems administered with the highest standard? Or is it lowest common denominator? That is certainly a question worth asking before we increase that segment that is taken over by the Federal Government.

As far as innovative approaches, American medicine has always been characterized by embracing innovation, developing new technologies and treatments. The transformational times we have had in medicine in the last century, development of anesthesia and blood banking in the 1910–1920 time frame, development of large-scale production of antibiotics and anti-inflammatory agents in the 1940s, the development of antipsychotic and antidepressant medications in the 1960s, development of newer hypertensive agents in the 1960s, the beginning of the development of medicines or the recognition that elevated cholesterol levels could lead to disease, and the beginning of medicines that would begin to impact that in the 1960s, all of those transformational events. And during those same times, in the 1910 to 1920 time frame, you had a congressional investigation or commission to investigate the vast discrepancy between curricula in medical schools in one part of the country versus another, and the standardization of medical school curricula which was so critical for establishing that knowledge base of science that was going to carry us forward through the last century.

In the 1940s, you are the introduction of employer-based insurance because of a reaction to wage and price controls that were in existence in the 1940s. And finally in the 1960s, you had the interjection of Medicare and Medicaid, for the first time the Federal Government having a big footprint in paying for health care.

So all of those transformational times were where the science changed rapidly and the public policy changed rapidly. I think we are on the cusp of such a time right now. Things are going to be changing in the realm of the whole arena of personalized medicine. The threshold of that stretches just before us.

The whole concept of far earlier prevention than anyone has thought possible. We have all heard that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Well, we are going to get to use those ounces of prevention because of the studies and work that has gone on with studying the human genome and the whole phenomenon of genomic medicine. We are going to be able to get that ounce of prevention administered so much earlier. So we will get the equity from that pound of cure in so many ways that really we can't even fathom them at this point.

What is critical is that this Congress not get caught up in the transactional, not always get caught up in the insurance and the Medicaid and the Medicare. Don't be so caught up in the transactional that you block the transformational because that is the real tragedy. That is the real difficulty. That is the real danger to the generations for a decade from now, two decades from now, three decades from now.

That is why this Congress needs to be so focused on this issue. That is why all of us on both sides of the aisle need to make ourselves students of health care policy. We need to find out as much as we possibly can about it. We need to come to this floor every day and every night prepared to debate this on the merits and science. Leave the politics on the side. This is one of those issues that is too important to leave to politics.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SESSIONS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

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 Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ETHERIDGE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SCHWARTZ, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. LAMBORN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HOEKSTRA, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. FALLIN, for 5 minutes, today and November 15.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reports that on November 8, 2007, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 3043. Making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reports that on November 9, 2007, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 3222. Making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at midnight), under its previous order, the House adjourned until today, Thursday, November 15, 2007, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4112. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Asian Longhorned Beetle; Additions to Quarantined Areas [Docket No. APHIS-2006-0127] received November 5, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4113. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Housing Choice Voucher Program Homeownership Option; Eligibility of Units Not Yet Under Construction [Docket No. FR-4991-F-02] (RIN: 2577-AC60) received November 5, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4114. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Truth in Lending [Regulation Z; Docket No. R-1284] received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4115. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Consumer Leasing [Regulation M; Docket No. R-1283] received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4116. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Truth in Savings [Regulation DD; Docket No. R-1285] received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4117. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Equal Credit Opportunity [Regulation B; Docket No. R-1281] received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4118. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Electronic Fund Transfer [Regulation E; Docket No. R-1282] received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4119. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final rule — Academic Competitiveness Grant Program and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant Program [Docket ID ED-2007-OPE-0135] (RIN: 1840-AC92) received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Labor.

4120. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revisions to Landowner Notification and Blanket Certificate Regulations [Docket No. RM07-17-000; Order No. 700] received November 5, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4121. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 13-07 informing of an intent to sign the Weapons Effects and Protection Technology Project Agreement between the United States and Singapore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4122. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Export Licensing Jurisdiction for Microelectronic Circuits [Docket No. 070426097-7099-01] (RIN: 0694-AE02) received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4123. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Expanded Licensing Jurisdiction for QRS11 Micromachined Angular Rate Sensors [Docket No. 0612242561-7519-01] (RIN: 0694-AD92) received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4124. A letter from the Under Secretary for Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report that the Department intends to impose new foreign policy-based export controls on QRS11 Micromachines Angular Rate Sensors, under the authority of Section 6 of the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended, and continued by Executive Order 13222 of August 17, 2001, as extended by the Notice of August 15, 2007; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4125. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Saudi Arabia (Transmittal No. DDTC 086-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4126. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2007 to September 30, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4127. A letter from the Executive Director, Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation, transmitting pursuant to the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act, the Foundation's Form and Content Reports for the year ended September 30, 2007, as prepared by the U.S. General Services Administration; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4128. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Justice, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4129. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Justice, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4130. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4131. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4132. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4133. A letter from the Executive Director, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, transmitting a list of the eight audit reports issued during fiscal year 2007 regarding the Agency and the Thrift Savings Plan, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8439(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4134. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Regulatory Management Division, Office of the Executive Secretariat, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Receipt Requirement for Certain H and L Adjustment Applicants Returning From a Trip Outside the United States [CIS No. 2420-07; Docket No. USCIS-2007-0047] (RIN: 1615-AB62) received November 5, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4135. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 2006 Biennial Report on the Effectiveness of Grant Programs under the Violence Against Women Act, pursuant to Public Law 106-386, section 1003; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4136. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 2005 annual report on the STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program, pursuant to Public Law 106-386, section 2004(b); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4137. A letter from the Deputy Director of Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — United States Navy Restricted Area, Key West Harbor, at U.S. Naval Base, Key West, Florida — received November 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4138. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2007-91] received November 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4139. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 417. —— Definitions and Special Rules For Purposes of Minimum Survivor Annuity Requirements (Rev. Rul. 2007-67) received November 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4140. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Qualified Alternative Fuel Motor Vehicles (QAFMV) and Heavy Hybrid Vehicles — received November 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4141. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Department's final rule — 26 CFR 601.204: Changes in accounting periods and in methods of accounting. (Also Part 1, 446, 481) (Rev. Proc. 2007-67) received November 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4142. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Foreign Tax Credit: Notification of Foreign Tax Redeterminations [TD 9362] (RIN: 1545-BG23) received November 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4143. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Industry Overview Series Motor Vehicle Industry [LMSB Control Number: LMSB-04-0507-043] received November 5, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4144. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's report on Multilateral Development Banks' Assistance Proposals likely to have substantial adverse impacts on environment, natural resources, public health and indigenous peoples, pursuant to Public Law 100-202, section 537; jointly to the Committees on Financial Services and Appropriations.

4145. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification that the Department intends to use FY 2008 IMET funds for Sudan, pursuant to Public Law 110-5, section 520; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Appropriations.

4146. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a copy of Presidential Determination No. 2008-2, waiving and certifying the statutory provisions regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Office; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs 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. HASTINGS of Florida: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 824. Resolution providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3773) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to establish a procedure for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–449). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. ARCURI: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 825. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3915) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to establish licensing and registration requirements for residential mortgage originators, to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–450). 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. MOORE of Kansas:

H.R. 4172. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 to restore the estate tax and repeal the carryover basis rule and to increase the estate tax unified credit to an exclusion equivalent of $3,500,000; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4173. A bill to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to promote the participation of absent overseas voters in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, 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. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. EHLERS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. HOLT, Mr. OLVER, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H.R. 4174. A bill to establish an interagency committee to develop an ocean acidification research and monitoring plan and to establish an ocean acidification program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. FORBES, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 4175. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to data privacy and security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. TANCREDO, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. BAKER, Mr. DREIER, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. POE, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. AKIN, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. KELLER, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. DENT, Mr. COBLE, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. HERGER, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. REICHERT, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. RENZI, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. LINDER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. WOLF, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BUYER, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. BONNER, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. TURNER, Mr. EVERETT, Mr. KINGSTON, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. PORTER, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mrs. BONO, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ISSA, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WAMP, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. HAYES, Mr. PICKERING, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. HASTERT, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. MICA, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. KNOLLENBERG):

H.R. 4176. A bill to enhance national security by restricting access of illegal aliens to driver's licenses and State-issued identification documents; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. KIRK (for himself, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. LAHOOD):

H.R. 4177. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to designate Federal special security zones at airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. CASTLE:

H.R. 4178. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to remove an impediment to troubled debt restructuring on the part of holders of residential mortgage loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. CLARKE (for herself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. CARNEY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. PASCRELL, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CUELLAR, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California):

H.R. 4179. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish an appeal and redress process for individuals wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself and Mr. MICHAUD):

H.R. 4180. A bill to allow United States citizens to bring civil actions against persons who fail to perform an act or duty under the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. FLAKE:

H.R. 4181. A bill to reform Social Security retirement and Medicare by establishing a Personal Social Security Savings Program to create a safer, healthier, more secure, and more prosperous retirement for all Americans and to reduce the burden on young Americans; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and Labor, the Budget, Energy and Commerce, 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 Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California (for herself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 4182. A bill to suspend the running of statutes of limitation for criminal prosecutions of individuals holding the offices of President and Vice President while they hold those offices; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California (for herself, Mr. DENT, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Ms. CLARKE):

H.R. 4183. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, 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. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4184. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey 4 parcels of land from the Bureau of Land Management to the city of Twin Falls, Idaho; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. SOLIS (for herself, Mr. BACA, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BILBRAY, Mrs. BONO, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. COSTA, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GALLEGLY, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. HERGER, Ms. LEE, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WATSON, and Ms. WOOLSEY):

H.R. 4185. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 11151 Valley Boulevard in El Monte, California, as the ''Marisol Heredia Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. STUPAK:

H.R. 4186. A bill to repeal the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. STUPAK:

H.R. 4187. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for an additional judgeship for the western district of Michigan; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 4188. A bill to amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to permit a prevailing party in an action or proceeding brought to enforce the Act to be awarded expert witness fees and certain other expenses; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. WHITFIELD (for himself and Mrs. SCHMIDT):

H.R. 4189. A bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to provide for the re-enrichment of certain uranium tailings, and the sale of the product of such re-enrichment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ABERCROMBIE:

H.J. Res. 64. A joint resolution clarifying that the use of force against Iran is not authorized by the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002, any resolution previously adopted, or any other provision of law; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H. Con. Res. 258. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself and Mr. DELAHUNT):

H. Res. 823. A resolution condemning the imposition of emergency rule in Pakistan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. POE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. WATERS, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. SPRATT, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. WATSON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. BACA, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WATT, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. MCCRERY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SIRES, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. ORTIZ, and Mr. SHAYS):

H. Res. 826. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the hanging of nooses is a horrible act when used for the purpose of intimidation and which under certain circumstances can be a criminal act that should be thoroughly investigated by Federal law enforcement authorities and that any criminal violations should be vigorously prosecuted; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. JONES of Ohio (for herself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. REGULA):

H. Res. 827. A resolution honoring and recognizing the achievements of Carl Stokes, the first African-American mayor of a major American city, in the 40th year since his election as Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 46: Mr. BARROW.
H.R. 138: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 178: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 211: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 269: Mr. DOOLITTLE.
H.R. 373: Mr. STEARNS.
H.R. 374: Mr. STEARNS.
H.R. 405: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 481: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. GINGREY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. GOHMERT, Ms. FOXX, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BILBRAY, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. FEENEY, and Mr. LINDER.
H.R. 543: Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 549: Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. BONO, Mr. HONDA, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 550: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. MORAN of Kansas.
H.R. 627: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 661: Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia.
H.R. 741: Mr. ALTMIRE.
H.R. 758: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 760: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 772: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 821: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. SOLIS, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 849: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 1043: Mr. GOODE.
H.R. 1072: Mrs. CAPITO.
H.R. 1105: Mr. UPTON.
H.R. 1127: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.
H.R. 1169: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 1275: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 1283: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 1289: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 1350: Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 1366: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 1497: Mr. WU.
H.R. 1509: Mr. PORTER.
H.R. 1553: Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 1576: Mr. HAYES.
H.R. 1691: Mr. WU.
H.R. 1711: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 1738: Mr. ALTMIRE.
H.R. 1843: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 1845: Mr. TERRY and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 1930: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 1937: Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 1975: Mr. POMEROY.
H.R. 1992: Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. REYES, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 2015: Ms. SCHWARTZ and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 2052: Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 2063: Mr. PUTNAM.
H.R. 2067: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 2070: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 2073: Mr. FORTUÑO.
H.R. 2108: Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 2158: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 2166: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2205: Mr. GOODE.
H.R. 2241: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 2287: Mrs. BONO and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 2290: Mr. ALEXANDER.
H.R. 2303: Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. BERRY.
H.R. 2395: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 2449: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2464: Ms. HARMAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. POMEROY, and Mr. INSLEE.
H.R. 2523: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 2548: Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 2549: Mr. POMEROY.
H.R. 2702: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2744: Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WU, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 2878: Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. HARMAN, and Mr. BOUCHER.
H.R. 2885: Mrs. BIGGERT.
H.R. 2894: Mr. HONDA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. KELLER, Mr. WYNN, and Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee.
H.R. 2914: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 2933: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.
H.R. 2990: Mr. INSLEE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. FALLIN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3098: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 3099: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 3115: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3223: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 3234: Mr. SOUDER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 3251: Mr. WALSH of New York.
H.R. 3257: Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 3348: Mr. DUNCAN.
H.R. 3360: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 3380: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS and Mr. ALTMIRE.
H.R. 3381: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 3402: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 3453: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 3457: Mr. PORTER and Mr. LINDER.
H.R. 3533: Mr. MELANCON, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mr. EDWARDS.
H.R. 3544: Mr. BOSWELL and Mr. ALTMIRE.
H.R. 3547: Ms. HARMAN and Ms. BEAN.
H.R. 3582: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3609: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 3616: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3629: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mrs. EMERSON.
H.R. 3636: Mr. WU, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. WAXMAN.
H.R. 3637: Mr. WYNN and Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 3645: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 3646: Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. SHULER.
H.R. 3660: Mr. SHAYS and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 3663: Mr. KILDEE, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3674: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 3679: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 3689: Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3691: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3700: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. ALTMIRE, and Mr. BERRY.
H.R. 3780: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 3812: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H.R. 3825: Mr. COHEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 3829: Mr. SESTAK, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 3833: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3852: Mr. HOBSON and Mr. BAIRD.
H.R. 3882: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. FARR, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. SHULER.
H.R. 3888: Mr. WICKER.
H.R. 3955: Mr. HONDA, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 3960: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3981: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. REYES, and Mr. FARR.
H.R. 4014: Mr. MELANCON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 4015: Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 4016: Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 4063: Mr. JEFFERSON and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4088: Mr. BAKER, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, and Mr. MATHESON.
H.R. 4104: Mr. JINDAL.
H.R. 4107: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 4114: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. LANTOS, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4121: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4139: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
H.R. 4141: Mr. KING of New York, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. FOXX, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. WAMP.
H.R. 4160: Mr. MCKEON, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, and Mr. PLATTS.
H.J. Res. 54: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. WALSH of New York.
H. Con. Res. 163: Mr. WICKER.
H. Con. Res. 195: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H. Con. Res. 235: Mr. FORBES and Mr. STEARNS.
H. Con. Res. 239: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. MYRICK, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. WESTMORELAND, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H. Con. Res. 240: Mr. SAXTON, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. HAYES, and Mr. DUNCAN.
H. Con. Res. 244: Mr. PETRI, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. AKIN, and Mr. SPACE.
H. Con. Res. 247: Ms. WATERS, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. WATSON, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H. Con. Res. 250: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. SHADEGG, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. WAMP.
H. Con. Res. 254: Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HELLER, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. CONAWAY, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. WICKER, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CARTER, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. PUTNAM, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. TERRY, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WOLF, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. FOXX, Mr. SOUDER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. PEARCE.
H. Con. Res. 255: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. TERRY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. MACK, Mr. PENCE, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H. Res. 71: Mr. HARE.
H. Res 111: Mr. LAMPSON and Mr. HELLER.
H. Res 338: Mr. STEARNS.
H. Res 353: Mr. REGULA.
H. Res. 356: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Mrs. DRAKE.
H. Res 537: Mr. COURTNEY.
H. Res 695: Mr. FORBES.
H. Res 756: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. PENCE, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. WALBERG, Ms. FOXX, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. PITTS, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. Fortuño, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. JORDAN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. HENSARLING, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. AKIN, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. SALI, Mr. WAMP, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, and Mr. KUHL of New York.
H. Res. 769: Mr. CALVERT.
H. Res. 783: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. FORBES, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.
H. Res. 795: Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H. Res. 815: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. KELLER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. DICKS, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. WYNN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. HOLT.
H. Res. 819: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. LANTOS, and Mr. BERRY.
H. Res. 821: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
H. Res. 822: Ms. ESHOO.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative Frank of Massachusetts or a designee to H.R. 3915 the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2007, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2007 No. 176

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

O God, lover of humanity, give us today Your pardon and peace. Pardon the sins of our lips; the untrue, uncleaned, and unkind words we have spoken. Pardon the sins of our minds; the ignoring of truth, the refusal to face facts, the dishonest thinking that destroys integrity. Pardon the sins of our hearts; the pride that makes us esteem ourselves as better than others, the wrong desires, and the false loves that draw us from You. Forgive us, O God.

Place Your peace within us that we may no longer be torn by anxiety and indecision. As the Members of this body receive Your peace, help them to live in unity with each other. May the certainty that You love them take all fear away. Lord, uphold them with Your grace, both now and always. 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 14, 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.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2334, S. 2340, S. 2346, S. 2348, and H.R. 3996

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there are five bills at the desk due for their second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the titles of the bills, en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2334) to withhold 10 percent of the Federal funding apportioned for highway construction and maintenance from States that issue driver's licenses to individuals without verifying the legal status of such individuals.

A bill (S. 2340) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 2346) to temporarily increase the portfolio caps applicable to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, to provide the necessary financing to curb foreclosures by facilitating the refinancing of at-risk subprime borrowers into safe, affordable loans, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 2348) to ensure control over the United States border and to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws.

A bill (H.R. 3996) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with regard to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with the time divided and controlled between the two parties—the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final portion.

Following this, the Senate will resume consideration of the farm bill. At 2 p.m. today, Secretary Rice and Secretary Gates will brief Members about the current situations in the Middle East. Both of them will be here in S–407 at 2 p.m.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. President, the farm bill is an important piece of legislation for this country. That is why we do it every 5 years. It is an immense bill and includes many different things dealing with the agriculture of this country. It is similar in its importance to the highway bill that we do every 5 years. The farm bill is one that affects virtually every State.

We hear a lot on this Senate Floor and around the country, as we should, about the fact that we import about 65 percent of all the oil we use in this country, but it is not that way with agricultural products. We do so much in exporting food. It is one of the businesses in America that has a positive balance in trade.

I was happy yesterday morning when I was told by the minority we were going to be able to get a list of amendments and work through this bill. It is true we got a list of amendments, but it is as unreasonable as anything could be unreasonable—270 amendments, and a large number of them nonrelevant. Democrats, after having received these,

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came up with some amendments, but most of ours are, as well, nonrelevant amendments, meaning we wanted to match the Republicans. We are able to go forward with a handful of amendments, by that I mean five or six amendments, but that is all we need.

To show how unrealistic their list is, one only needs to look at the list. Every Senator has a right to propose amendments. Historically, however, with the farm bill, the average number of nonrelevant amendments per bill? One, in recent years. My research indicates something a little different than I mentioned yesterday. In the last three bills, no amendments, nonrelevant; two amendments; one amendment. So an average of one nonrelevant amendment per bill.

Here we have amendments they want to offer on this bill dealing with immigration, again, even though we debated for weeks on immigration. This bill is not an immigration bill. And, of course, the old faithful death tax. People come and say, well, farmers have problems, they are losing their family farms. In California, Senator FEINSTEIN heard about that, and so she asked the farm bureau to give her a list of those who had lost their farms because of the estate tax. None. Zero. This is an urban myth or maybe even a rural myth. But, of course, a number of Senators wanted to try that again—Republican Senators.

The issue of the day is the driver's license. A significant number of Senators want to offer amendments dealing with driver's licenses. And fishing loans, the Rio Grande River—I don't know what that is about—the Gulf of Mexico, the death tax, and the AMT. We are going to do AMT before we leave here. We don't need to do it on the farm bill. Fire sprinkler systems, National Finance Center, the *Exxon Valdez* litigation, land transfer, AMT tax. I can't give you the exact number, but there are at least six or seven amendments on the AMT tax. Is AMT important? Of course, it is. We are going to do AMT before this year ends. Everyone knows that.

In short, the Republicans aren't serious about doing the farm bill. This farm bill is headed down for one reason: the Republicans. They obviously don't want a farm bill. If we went along with this list, it would make it impossible to conduct a fair and reasonable debate—impossible.

So what I am going to do this afternoon is file cloture on the Dorgan-Grassley amendment, a bipartisan amendment, the one that is pending, and then on the bill. That will make a determination. All these organizations that say this farm bill is important—and I have had many of them write letters and contact me and say this is so important, we need to do this, the last farm bill is not as good as this one, it is a great farm bill—we will find out if the Republicans are going to kill this bill. It appears they are going to. They are not serious about passing a farm bill this year. If they come up with a list of amendments we can deal with, I am happy to do that. But I am not going to do this. It is not good for the Senate and it is not good for the country.

I repeat: The average number of nonrelevant amendments on farm bills: One per bill. We have here enough nonrelevant amendments to fill a little notebook. So that is where we are. It is unfortunate. The committee has worked very hard. They passed the bill out of the committee by voice vote. All Senators obviously agreed this was a good bill. SAXBY CHAMBLISS, the ranking member, and TOM HARKIN, the chairman of the committee, think it is a good bill—Democrat and Republican.

We are in the situation where Republicans are saying: Well, I want to offer my amendment on fire systems, the *Exxon Valdez* litigation, the AMT, and, of course, the old faithful, immigration. So that is where we are. It is unfortunate that is where we are, but this bill is headed down.

I indicated what I am going to do. Unless the Republicans come up with something more realistic, this bill is going to have cloture filed on Dorgan-Grassley, cloture on the bill, and that is where we will be on the bill this afternoon sometime.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the comments I am about to make could well have been made by my friend on the other side of the aisle as recently as last year, when his party was in the minority.

Of course, we all know we will indeed pass the farm bill. The only issue is: When and how. We actually made good progress yesterday on both sides, defining the realm of possible amendments that might be filed to the bill. The amendments list on our side is actually about 120, and the Democratic list is 140—approximately 265 amendments on the list.

Before my good friend on the other side protests too much about this number, let me remind Senators that 246 amendments were filed to the 2002 farm bill, 339 amendments were filed to the 1996 farm bill, averaging about 300 amendments per bill. In fact, when Republicans were attempting to move the 1996 farm bill through the Senate, the current committee chairman, Senator HARKIN himself, filed 35 amendments. So if all 100 Senators emulated the Senator from Iowa, 3,500 amendments would be the normal for farm bill consideration.

Thus, the current list of 265 amendments is not insurmountable, and, actually, not at all unusual at the beginning of the process of passing a farm bill. This is a complex bill that only gets reauthorized every 5 years. This time it is 1,600 pages long and includes the first farm bill tax title since 1933, adding an extra degree of difficulty.

However, Republicans are ready and willing to begin working in earnest to address these amendments. What always happens is that most of the amendments go away and we gradually work down the list. But this is a massive bill. The notion—if I can lift it here—that we are going to basically call up a bill of this magnitude, file cloture, and basically have no amendments strikes me as, shall I say, odd at least. What we always do is try to work out an orderly way to go forward. The issue of getting a fixed amendment list, which we were prepared to enter into last night, is the way it usually begins.

I am a little perplexed as to whether the majority actually wants this bill to pass and is trying to simply blame the minority for trying to bring it down. We all know, and I am sure anybody who has followed the Senate at all knows, we are going to pass a farm bill, no question about that. The farm bill is not going to be killed. The issue is whether we are going to have any kind of reasonable process for going forward, and I think getting an amendment list is the first step. I was hoping we could do that, but, apparently, that is not the case, and I regret that we are where we are.

But let me reassure everyone, I don't think there is anybody in the country who knows we aren't going to pass a farm bill, and nobody is going to kill the farm bill. But we are going to insist on a reasonable procedure for going forward.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is no ability to pass a farm bill under the present situation. If people think the farm bill is going to be just passed because the distinguished Republican leader says one is going to pass, they are mistaken. We have a lot to do. We have 3 weeks after we come back after Thanksgiving and that is it for this year. Next year is going to be a very difficult year.

We have to figure out some way, next year, to work our way through the Presidential election and all the other elections that are taking place around the country. There is no guarantee—and that is an understatement—we will have a farm bill.

The one question no one answers is, What do we do with nonrelevant amendments? The history is one per bill. Here we have immigration, AMT six different times, we have fire safety, *Exxon Valdez* litigation, and on and on with nonrelevant amendments.

This is not the beginning of the process. The process started 10 days ago, and we have been stalled for 10 days—

10 days with nothing being done. We can talk about maybe the Democrats don't want it done. We have been here willing and able to work through these amendments, but Republicans have been unwilling to work with us in any meaningful way.

I would also say, a reasonable process? I am willing to work through a reasonable process, but we cannot put the Senate through having multiple votes on immigration issues or on nonrelated tax issues. We need to work on a farm bill. I repeat, if the Republicans want to come up with some type of a reasonable way to go forward, fine. Otherwise, they can vote to kill this bill, and they will vote to do it.

We will vote on the bipartisan Dorgan-Grassley amendment on cloture, which, in the past, has received overwhelming support in the Senate; it has been done. The amendment has been offered before. And a vote on cloture on the bill. If the bill goes down, there may be an opportunity we will bring it back again, but I do not know when. It certainly is not going to be in January. We have a lot of other people who are interested in doing things in January.

The Republicans have had their chance to be reasonable on the farm bill. I have tried my best to be patient, to be reasonable, to be thoughtful on a way to proceed on this bill. What did we get last night? I have said: Right now, Democrats—we can come up with five amendments, all relevant. That leaves them with the nonrelevant amendments. We will give them the average—or if they want two, we will consider that. But we are not going to deal with 247 amendments. We want five; we don't want nonrelevant amendments as has been done in the past. I don't know how we could be more reasonable than that—five.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We could have done way more than five amendments over the past week if the majority leader had not filled up the tree and prevented amendments from being offered. The last time the tree was filled on a farm bill was two decades ago, on October 31, 1985. In 1985, the majority leader filled the tree after a week of floor consideration; not after the very first day, but after a week—a week.

Here, amendments were prevented by a parliamentary device of the majority leader, which he is certainly entitled to use, to prevent an amendment process from going forward. Now we have this 1,600-page bill with no amendments allowed, and the majority leader says we ought to invoke cloture on the bill and pass it.

Look, we know the farm bill is going to pass. With all due respect to my good friend the majority leader, I know he is bluffing. He is going to pass a farm bill. I am reasonably confident the farm bill is going to pass after the minority gets an opportunity to offer some amendments.

I am also totally confident that the fact that the amendment list has a lot of amendments on it at the beginning does not mean they are all going to be offered or all going to be voted on. That is just the way the legislative process starts on a very large, complicated bill that we only pass once every 5 years.

I suppose we are at a stalemate. Obviously, we will continue to talk, and hopefully we can work out some way to go forward. But I am very doubtful that the minority is going to be interested in going forward in a situation where they basically have no opportunities to affect a 1,600-page bill that we only pass every 5 years.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if this were a jury, they wouldn't be out very long and they would return a verdict on behalf of the majority. To think someone would be gullible enough to believe the Republicans have not had an opportunity to offer amendments is simply without basis in fact. We have said all we have to do is get rid of the Dorgan amendment. There is plenty of opportunity to offer any amendment they want to offer in relation to this bill—anything they want to offer that is relevant and germane.

This is all a game, a game that is being played for reasons to destroy this farm bill, and they are doing a pretty good job. A week ago last Monday we started on this legislation, and we have accomplished nothing because the Republicans have refused to do so on the basis that they have been unable to offer amendments, which is untrue.

This is a situation in which we find ourselves. I think Democrats and Republicans are satisfied that the right thing is being done, where they don't have to march down here again on an unrelated matter and vote on immigration. We spent a month on immigration matters. Everyone knows AMT is going to be resolved. It has passed the House; we are going to do it here. This is a game that is being played.

I repeat, if this were a jury—and it is not, and I understand that; at least the jury is not going to be in until next November—we would find a quick return of a verdict because what we have agreed to do is what has been done in many instances on every farm bill. We do not deal with nonrelevant amendments, and we are not going to on this one unless there is some agreement reached, as I have indicated.

I repeat, this afternoon we are going to go ahead and file cloture on this amendment that has been pending for 10 days and file cloture on the bill. If the Republicans don't want a farm bill, they have an opportunity to vote not to proceed on the legislation.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on the issue of nonrelevant amendments in the last several decades, the majority leader has indicated the farm bill has not had nonrelevant amendments. According to my information, the Democrats have filed seemingly nonrelevant amendments during consideration of the last several farm bills on such things as the Social Security trust fund—offered on a farm bill; bankruptcy—offered on a farm bill; and convicted fugitives in Cuba—offered on a farm bill. So I hope no one seriously believed that nonrelevant amendments have not been offered by the other side on farm bills over the last couple of decades.

This is the kind of sparring that frequently goes on at the beginning of a big, complicated bill. We all know how it will end. It will end, in the end, with a reasonable number of amendments on both sides being voted on and the passage of the farm bill. The timing of that, obviously, will be up to the majority leader, who does have a difficult challenge. Floor time is always at a premium in the Senate. We understand that. But at some point, we will pass the farm bill, in the near future, after we have negotiated a process that is fair to both sides.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader still refuses to answer the question before this body. The question is very direct. Why nonrelevant amendments? People can file them; we just have never voted on them in farm bills. It is very clear we have not voted on them.

We had a bill in 2001–2002, one in 1996, and one in 1990. In 1990, there were two nonrelevant amendments that were considered, that is it; in 1996, no nonrelevant amendments; in 2001–2002, two nonrelevant amendments—as I have indicated, an average of one in the last three bills.

We cannot be in a position here where the first amendment offered is one that is going to deal with immigration again, border fences, how long the fence is. How many times do we have to vote on how long the fence should be between the United States and Mexico, without even addressing the fence in northern America? As I indicated, the new immigration legislation of choice to bash people is now the driver's license—that is here. I don't think we need to get into that. What we need to get into is amendments that deal with this farm bill.

Some may say this is sparring. I do not agree with that. I think we are about the business of this country. We have a lot to do. The issue before this body now is this farm bill. I am very disappointed that it appears quite likely there will be no farm bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this has been an interesting colloquy, but the parliamentary situation we are in is that unless the majority leader gives his consent, no amendments on my side will be allowed. That is an unacceptable way to go forward on a 1,600-page bill that we pass every 5 years. We will continue to talk. We all know there

will be a farm bill. The only issue is when and how, and that is something we will have to negotiate here in the Senate, as we always do.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last word, maybe; otherwise, I get the last word later.

Mr. President, the Republicans offer an amendment. I offered the first amendment on behalf of DORGAN and GRASSLEY. It is a bipartisan amendment. If they have an amendment they want to offer, let them offer it. I will be happy to stand out of the way. But they are offering all these excuses why they can't do it, and that is too bad.

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, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes, with the time equally divided or controlled by the two leaders or their designees and with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Who yields time?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOOD AND ENERGY SECURITY ACT

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today and come to the floor to encourage my colleagues to move expeditiously to pass the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007.

Sometimes we get caught in our bubble in Washington and we forget, we forget there is a whole world outside in this great land of ours: working families, folks who are working hard each and every day to provide for their families, to ensure their safety, to take care of their children, to be a part of their community, and to help their neighbors.

On October 25 our Senate Agriculture Committee passed this legislation unanimously, not one single dissenting vote. And that is because there were a lot of Members who understood the importance of this bill. They came together and worked to come up with a bill in which everyone had a vested interest.

It passed unanimously for good reason. It does a tremendous amount not only for our farm families but for antihunger advocates, for environmentalists, those working to spur economic development in rural areas, and it takes tremendous strides to rid our Nation of its dependence on foreign oil.

All of those are positive, progressive things that happen in this bill, brought together, again, by a group in the Senate Agriculture Committee who wanted to make progress, who wanted to put together a bill everybody could be proud of, that everybody could help move forward.

I know this policy effort is not on the top of everyone's priority list in this body like it is on mine. It is on the top of my mine, and it is a huge priority for me for multiple reasons. One, I am a farmer's daughter. I understand. I understand what farm families are doing out there. I understand, when they get up at the crack of dawn, before the Sun comes up, they get out and work hard, to do something that gives them a tremendous sense of pride. They produce a safe and abundant and affordable supply of food and fiber for this country.

I also know it is a huge priority for me because of my State, and the fact that my State has an economy that is based on agriculture. They have a great sense of pride in not only being able to provide that safe and abundant and affordable food supply in the most efficient way possible for this great land, but they do so worldwide as well.

At a minimum, everyone here should recognize and appreciate what this bill accomplishes, even if you take for granted that the grocery store shelves are full when you go in that grocery store, even if you take for granted that you pay less than anybody in the developed world per capita for your food source, and even if you take for granted the fact that it is produced in the most environmentally respectful way, and also that it is produced in a way that is safe, through all kinds of regulations, all kinds of research that provides us the sound backing that our food source is safe.

It is safe for our children, safe for our elderly, safe for our families. That is huge. At a time when we are seeing foods coming in through our borders, through our ports that are unsafe from countries that do not put on those restrictions and regulations, for countries that do not have the efficiency on their farms that we do, it is absolutely critical that we bring ourselves together and focus on this bill.

In this bill there is a $5.28 billion increase—an increase—to our nutrition programs. These are programs that provide assistance and a nutritious meal at breakfast and lunch for children, nutritious meals for the elderly across this country, nutritious summer feeding programs, nutritious fruits and vegetables and snacks for school children. That is a huge step in the right direction.

Something we can all get behind is over a $4 billion increase to conservation. You know it is unbelievable to see that kind of an increase to reinforce those who love and use the land, that they can do so with the incentives to make sure they are using the optimum of technology and research to conserve that land that means so much to them and to future generations.

That is a third straight record for the farm bill in terms of increases in what we are seeing in this underlying bill. There is $500 million for rural development in our small communities where we are seeing a desperate need for broadband and access to the information highway where we are looking for investment from entrepreneurs and small businesses so that we can keep strong our communities in rural America, and we do not see this flight into the cities, making sure those communities can be strong for the schools and for churches and for children and the working families who live in those rural communities, who have their heritage, their heart is there in that community, so that they can stay there, so that we as a nation make those investments.

The energy incentives in this bill, when it is coupled with the Finance Committee incentives, shows a true commitment to moving renewable fuels into the marketplace. You know, it does not make a bit of difference if we continue to produce all of these renewable fuels if we do not get them into the marketplace, if we do not get them into the hands of consumers. And it also does not make any difference if we do not start to think outside the box, looking for newer and more innovative processes and research to provide renewable fuels that come from feedstock that might be leftovers.

We know we can make cellulosic ethanol from cotton sticks and rice hulls and rice straw, but we have to get that to the consumer. We have to get that process going. There are great opportunities in this bill for that.

In short, this bill is a win for every region of our great Nation. And everyone, even if your plow is a pencil, even if you have not spent time walking rice levees or scouting cotton or chopping down coffee bean plants in a bean field like I have, even if your plow is a pencil and the closest farm is 1,000 miles away from you, it should be so obvious to everyone that the farm bill provides exactly what this title suggests: it provides this Nation's security, it provides us with security of knowing that we will have the domestic production of a food supply for our people and for our Nation, that we will help feed the world with that safe and affordable and abundant supply of food and fiber.

Unfortunately, it is clear by the criticisms of the farm bill by the editorial boards and major newspapers that many of our hard-working farm families are not getting the respect they deserve for what it is they provide. It is my hope the Senate will not also take for granted the security of safe food and fiber at a time when so much of what is entering this country

is either not inspected, nor safe, or sent back.

We had a hearing in the Finance Committee. We were told about port shopping, that products coming in commodities, coming into our country come to one of our ports, get inspected, get rejected, and then they start shopping around for a port that does not have an inspector. And, yes, we have ports without inspectors.

So not only are we accepting substandard food, but we are minimizing our ability to produce our own with the control and the oversight that ensures us that what we produce domestically is safe.

This piece of legislation is about national security, just as foreign policy is in many other regions of the world. Why is it we think that when we go to these trade negotiations, usually the last thing that is negotiated is agricultural products? It is because those countries understand. Those countries have been hungry. They have been subjected to foods that are unsafe or grown in a manner they don't appreciate. But they also know they can control making sure that there is enough there, if they can control and keep out our products. Many of the commodities I grow do find themselves on the international scene as commodities left out of trade agreements. That is because they are critical. They are a staple in the global community for sustenance of life.

Whether a country provides subsidies at levels much higher than those included in this bill or protects their farmers by a prohibitive tariff structure, every country in some form or fashion ensures a domestic food supply. If we continue in the direction we are going, where we are seeing for the first time in the history of our country the possibility of a trade deficit in agricultural products, what is that going to mean to us as a nation? It is going to mean we are then going to be more dependent on other countries for food that is critical for children and families all across this land.

In the United States, the farm bill is the policy that ensures safe food and fiber. We have worked hard in the Agriculture Committee to come up with a bill that was both bipartisan and biregional, agreed upon by everybody. Everybody got something positive out of a bill that was respectful to the diversity of this country, to the diversity of how we grow our crops. Lord, it was interesting for me to talk with my colleagues from way up on the Canadian border who had snow in August. We had 12 straight days of over 100-degree weather in Arkansas. We are a diverse nation and we are blessed to be that way. It is all the more reason we have the responsibility in this body to be respectful of that diversity and what it is that each of us has to bring to the table from our States. The Agriculture Committee did that.

It also respected the needs of those who are less fortunate in the nutrition title. It respected the idea that Americans want to ensure conservation and good stewardship of the land. We did that. We looked at the need for renewable energy, and we have made a huge investment, both in the farm bill in authorizing policy and also in the Finance Committee package that accompanies it, making sure that incentives are there for communities and for ag producers and all of those in rural America that not only can we continue the research but get into production of renewable fuels and, most importantly, that we can get them to the consumer. It doesn't matter how much we produce; if we are not using it, it is not benefiting the environment and not lessening our dependence on foreign oil. In the long term, it is not going to benefit growers who are looking for that secondary market.

We should all recognize and appreciate the bounty this bill provides and what it does for the hard-working men and women in farm families across this country who support each and every one of us every day in what it is they do for us for that security. I urge my colleagues to get serious about passing this bill and providing the certainty our farm families deserve, knowing that Government stands with them. Today, this time right now in our State of Arkansas, it is time to plant the winter wheat crop. Without knowing what the policy is going to be for next year or the year after that or the year after that, it is pretty hard to go to that banker and ask for that tremendous loan for that investment one has to make in producing that safe and abundant, affordable food supply, without knowing where one's Government stands.

I appeal to my colleagues and ask them to join us on the floor to talk about how important this bill is and, more importantly, to come together and figure out a way we can make this happen before we go home to celebrate Thanksgiving and the incredible bounty this country provides. Let us make sure those who provide for us have an understanding of where their Government stands on their behalf.

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. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. I yield myself 10 minutes of our allotted 30 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, amid the news we have received this last month on a variety of fronts—some good, some bad—is some very positive news from our economy. October marked the 50th straight month of positive job creation in the United States, a new record since the Government began keeping such records in 1939. Unfortunately, Congress has set a record of its own last week, when it finally sent the first of 12 appropriations bills that should have been finished before October 1, when the new fiscal year began, to the President for his signature. Not since 1987, 20 years ago, has Congress taken this long to send a single appropriations bill to the President this late in the fiscal year. I ask this question: What family, what small business, who in the United States could run their fiscal house this way, other than the Congress? Only the Congress has the power to basically suspend the powers of disbelief and pass something called a continuing resolution so that spending remains on auto pilot at last year's levels, rather than meet the needs of this current year by passing appropriations bills. Instead of working hard together, as I genuinely believe most Members of this body want, we see instead a calculated game being played out.

I want to focus specifically on our Veterans and Military Construction bill which should have been passed as a stone-alone bill and should have been signed by the President before Veterans Day this last Monday but was not. Rather than working to see that the funding for our veterans and for quality-of-life funding for military families, which is absolutely essential for a volunteer military force such as ours, we see this bill has consciously been held behind, even though it passed some 2 months ago, presumably to serve as a vehicle for a large spending bill that will be offered in December.

This veterans funding bill is perhaps the most telling and troubling sign of the games this process has degenerated into. It strikes me—and I believe I am not alone—that there is a serious discrepancy between what Congress says to our veterans and what Congress does for our veterans. Knowing how important veterans funding is to the President and to the country as a whole and to the Members of this body, some of my colleagues have decided instead to use this bill as a vehicle to expand Washington spending and, unfortunately, engage in partisan games. Rather than funding the veterans bill by itself with important funding and benefit enhancements that will serve America's veterans and military families, the majority leader has decided, initially at least, to try to merge this bill with another bill he knew the President was going to veto. As a matter of fact, he did yesterday, the Labor-HHS bill, because it would cost American taxpayers $11 billion more than the President asked for and included a number of, shall we call them, ''interesting earmarks'' or special projects designated by Members of the Senate.

Fortunately, we were able, through a point of order urged by my senior Senator, Mrs. HUTCHISON, under Senate rules, to separate the Veterans and Military Construction bill from an overloaded Labor, Health and Human Services bill.

I ask my colleagues to consider what the American people are supposed to think when they see examples such as this. The labor bill the President vetoed included a special interest earmark for a San Francisco museum called the Exploratorium. I have never heard of the Exploratorium before, but let me explain a little about this particular earmark that was included in the vetoed bill. This is to fund, at taxpayer expense, a museum that has more than 500,000 visitors each year and an annual budget of almost $30 million. Yet the American taxpayer has been asked unknowingly to spend money on Exploratorium—payments of more than $11 per visitor over the last 6 years. What is perplexing to me is why the majority would knit together funding for this Exploratorium, for example, along with about 2,000 other earmarks or special interest appropriations, with money for veterans health care. Why should veterans be required to shoulder the burden not only for this earmark, which I think we could fairly debate the appropriateness of, but over $1 billion set aside for earmarks in a completely unrelated matter and unrelated bill? This is exactly what the majority leader tried to do last week, along with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

At the end of the day, we were able to stop this strategy and prevent our veterans from becoming yet another political football in the appropriations process. Unfortunately, we still haven't seemed to learn the lessons from this unfortunate gamesmanship, because we still have not yet passed the Veterans and Military Construction appropriations bill, even though it has been sitting there, waiting to go to the President for about the last 2 months. Just as we were able to free our veterans from this pork-laden trap, the majority leader indicated that the veterans bill would not actually ever get independent funding. On November 7, he said:

> Some Republicans are seeking to separate the two bills, to force a vote just on the VA bill and vote just on the Labor-Health and Human Services bill. If we do that, here is what happens. This bill will go back to the House with only the Labor-Health and Human Services bill. That is all the President will get. He will not get the veterans bill.

In other words, the majority leader on November 7 said that if we were successful in splitting these two bills apart, the President would get the porkbarrel spending bill that pluses up spending for these 2,000 earmarked special projects and is $11 billion over the President's requested amount, and the majority leader would make sure that the Veterans and Military Construction appropriations bill didn't go to the President. I don't know how this kind of action can be characterized other than a shameful way to treat our veterans and to deal with the quality-of-life issues included in the military construction portion of this appropriations bill.

It is past time to fund the Federal Government at appropriate levels and to give our veterans and troops currently in harm's way the funding they need, as well as those who have proudly worn the uniform of the U.S. military whom we honored just this last Veterans Day, last Monday. It is long past time we put aside the gamesmanship that, unfortunately, seems to characterize so much of what happens here in Washington when it comes to politics.

I think we ought to try to figure some way to work together to reverse the lowest approval rating in recent time which the American public currently has with regard to the U.S. Senate, to help put a stop to these games and liberate our Nation's finances from the grip of partisan politics, I would suggest, and to make sure we do not end up in a game of chicken where the American people are told if we do not pass a bloated Omnibus appropriations bill there will be a shutdown of the Government.

I believe we ought to go ahead and pass, by way of insurance, the Government Shutdown Prevention Act. This legislation will guarantee that the Government continues to work for the American people until Congress passes responsible appropriations bills. We need to do this sooner rather than later. It does not look as if we are going to get it done this week before we break for the Thanksgiving recess, but we sure ought to get it done when we come back on December 3.

Passing the Government Shutdown Prevention Act will make sure the American people need not be frightened into thinking the Federal Government will not continue to operate and fund essential programs while we continue to debate what the appropriate level of appropriations bills should be.

Mr. President, I yield myself 2 more minutes, to be followed by the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, my colleagues from the majority want to spend $23 billion above what the President has requested in his budget for discretionary spending. Now, that is $23 billion in discretionary spending over and above entitlement spending, which has been operating again on autopilot at the growth rate of about 8 percent per year. They have claimed $23 billion is not all that much money. But I would suggest that only in Washington is $23 billion to be considered pocket change. The American people are smarter than that. They know somebody has to pay for that money. It does not magically appear. What it means is the Federal Government is going to reach into their pockets and extract it from their hard-earned wages in order to fund these vast expansions of Government programs.

We need to make sure that we are better stewards of the taxpayers' dollars and that we regain the lost confidence the American people had in this institution. We need to take care of problems, for example, such as the growing alternative minimum tax, which threatens to grow from 6 million taxpayers this year to 23 million taxpayers next year—a typical so-called tax-the-rich program, which, just as they always do, tends to grow to creep into the middle class. We need to make sure the middle class does not suffer a huge tax increase by dealing with the alternative minimum tax.

Again, instead of being in lockdown, as we are on the farm bill because the majority leader will not allow any amendments to be offered except for ones he cherry-picks, we ought to be solving these problems, pass a Veterans and Military Construction bill, get it to the President, and not have a game of chicken with $23 billion in excess spending, which we know the President is going to veto. Instead we should engage in a meaningful dialog to try to come up with a negotiated amount. We should eliminate this middle-class tax increase which is going to grow from affecting 6 million people to 23 million people unless we do something about it before the end of the year.

Mr. President, I know the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire is here with us and ready to take the floor, so I yield to him.

I ask that the Senator from South Carolina, who I know is coming down after the Senator from New Hampshire, be reserved 8 minutes of the time we have remaining.

Mr. President, could I ask how much time we have remaining on this side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Seventeen minutes is remaining.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be split evenly between the Senator from New Hampshire and the Senator from South Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas.

First, Mr. President, I join the Senator from Texas in asking that the majority leader and the Democratic membership free the Veterans bill and the Military Construction bill, which is ready to be sent to the President, stop holding it hostage for the purpose of holding it up with special interest projects which have nothing to do with the military or with veterans, and instead send that bill down to the President so he can sign it so our veterans can know they are getting the support they need after their great service to our Nation.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise to talk a little bit about the status of the farm bill because I was stunned, obviously, today to find that the majority leader—after for 2 weeks, almost, refusing to allow any amendments to the farm bill—has now decided to file cloture on the farm bill and claim this is the way things are done in the Senate. That is a statement which is pretty hard to accept with a straight face: the concept that the majority leader would set up a process in the Senate which, essentially, made him the gatekeeper of all amendments to a major authorization and appropriations bill—appropriations in the sense it has mandatory spending in it—so that any Member of the Senate who wanted to offer an amendment would have to go through the majority leader before the amendment would be allowed to come to the floor. Well, that is the way they do things in the House of Representatives, obviously, with what is known as the Rules Committee. But the Senate does not do that. The Senate has never done that.

I have heard innumerable, wonderful speeches from the senior Senator from West Virginia, the keeper, basically, of the flame of the integrity of the Senate, Mr. BYRD, on the importance of the amendment process in the Senate. I happen to subscribe to that, as I thought every Member of the Senate subscribed to that, that the greatness of the Senate is that if we put a piece of legislation on the floor, which is a significant piece of public policy, we debate it, we hear ideas on it, then we vote on those different ideas, and then we vote on passage. We do not lock down a bill and not allow any amendments to occur on that bill except those that are accepted on the majority side and by the majority leader and then say to the minority: Well, because you would not accept our process of locking down the amendment process, we are going to file cloture to shut you out completely.

That truly is an autocratic level which this Senate has never seen. Let me tell you something, it puts us on a slippery slope. It is very possible—in fact, I hope likely—that the other side of the aisle may not be in the majority forever around here and maybe not even through the next election. Certainly, if they continue to produce such a dysfunctional legislative calendar, as they have over the last year, I would think the American people would get a little frustrated and ask for a change. But they have now opened the door to running the Senate as an autocratic system, as a dictatorial system where the rights of 99 Members of the Senate are made completely subservient to 1 Member, which is the majority leader, because he has the right of recognition, he fills up the tree, and then when he does not like the amendments, he files cloture.

Let's talk about some of the amendments he does not want us to hear on this bill relative to the farm bill. He does not want an amendment offered which would say to farm families, especially to mothers in farm families: You will have access to OB/GYNs. That is one of the amendments I intended to offer. It would simply say that OB/GYNs who practice in farm and rural communities would be immune from excessive liability and lawsuits from trial lawyers.

We know for a fact we have lost most of our OB/GYNs in rural America. These baby doctors cannot practice in rural America because there are not enough clients for them to generate enough revenue to pay the cost of their malpractice insurance, which is generated by these lawsuits from trial lawyers. Well, the other side of the aisle is a kept group for the trial lawyers, so they do not want anything that could happen around here that might limit the income of trial lawyers, including allowing baby doctors to deliver babies in rural America to farm families. So they are not going to allow me to offer that amendment. What an outrage.

They do not want an amendment which would give firefighters in this country the right to bargain in order to reach agreement on contracts. Now, I do not think fires just burn in cities. Farmers have fires. In fact, if you look at what is happening in the West with wildfires, there are a lot of issues of fires for farmers in this country, especially silo fires. I know. I come from an area where there are occasional silo fires. They need firefighters. But the other side of the aisle does not want to hear about an amendment that deals with firefighters' rights. No. They want to lock that amendment out of the process.

They want to lock out of the process an amendment which would address the issue of people who are caught up in this terrible mortgage crisis we have. There are a lot of farmers, I suspect, and a lot of Americans generally who did not know how these ARMs worked when they went into these deals, and they are now finding they are being refinanced at a level where they cannot keep their homes because their interest rates are jumping up into the double-digit levels. When those homes are foreclosed on, they get a double whammy of getting hit by the IRS with what is known as a recognized gain, even though they did not have any income because their home got foreclosed on. This is a really difficult thing to do to someone, whether you are a farmer or just an average American, to first have their home foreclosed on and then to hit them with an IRS bill for having their home foreclosed on. I was going to suggest we take that issue up on the farm bill because it happens to relate to a lot of farmers who are being foreclosed on.

I was going to suggest we take up an amendment which might look at some of these new commodities that were put into this bill, such as the asparagus program and the camellia program and the chickpea program, but we do not want to hear about that. No, we do not want to address those issues.

We do not want to address the issue of the fact that this bill has in it $10 billion—$10 billion—of gamesmanship on moving dates so they can make this bill look more affordable and less costly. They don't want to have an amendment on that which might make the bill honest on its face. They don't want to hear that amendment. They don't want to hear this amendment, which is sort of ironic.

They have put in this bill what is called walking-around money—walking-around money—for the farm States in this country, actually for five farm States, called a $5 billion disaster loan fund. The way we have always handled disaster loans for the farm community—and they have them, and they are legitimate—is we have simply passed an emergency bill around here to cover the disaster when the disaster occurs. But what this bill does is set up a new fund which will be a floor, essentially, which says there is $5 billion in this kitty sitting over here for which if there is a disaster, you take this money too. What is the practical implication of that? Every wind storm that occurs in North Dakota that blows over a mailbox is going to be declared a disaster so they can get some of this money. It is putting money on the table that is just going to be used up.

We know we are going to fund disasters when they occur. Why would we prefund disasters in a way that is going to make it absolutely guaranteed that a disaster will occur, even if there is not a disaster? Well, we don't want to have an amendment which says: Let's take that disaster money and move it over to IDEA, special education. There is an account that needs some more money. There is an account which would give relief to a lot of families in this country, a lot of small towns in this country, farm communities and other communities that have a huge burden of IDEA in special education. Let's take that $5 billion out of that emergency account and, rather than having walking-around money for the five States that usually get this emergency money, use it for IDEA, which will benefit all the States in this country.

They don't want to hear those amendments.

It is incredible that on a bill of this size—one of the biggest bills we deal with as a Congress, one of the most important pieces of public policy we deal with—the other side of the aisle and the majority leader have specifically set up a procedure where amendments will not be tolerated—simply won't be tolerated. Totally inappropriate. I think basically what the other side of the aisle wants to do is kill this bill.

Now, from my perspective, this is not a good bill, and I am going to be voting against it. But I know it is going to pass if it is given a legitimate shot at

passage because there are a lot of people around here who have these different commodities, and they all vote for each other, and, as a result, they build up enough votes to pass this bill. That is the way the farm bill always works. But that is no reason why we should not have a chance to debate it, to address some of these issues, such as baby doctors in rural communities and farm communities, such as the need for firefighters to have adequate bargaining rights, such as the need for people who are getting foreclosed on not getting hit with an IRS bill, such as the need to have proper accounting on this bill for what they are actually spending, such as the need for not setting up a $5 billion walking-around money fund, such as the need for the new commodities programs for asparagus, chickpeas, and camellia. We should have amendments to address all these issues. That is what the process of the Senate is all about. But it is being denied here. The result of that denial is that those of us who happen to believe the Senate should function as a place where things are amended and discussed and aired and heard are going to have to resist this bill. So the majority seems to want to kill this bill, which is unfortunate, because in the end, this bill should at least get a fair hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. GREGG. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina has 7½ minutes.

KEEPING PROMISES

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I think we came into this year very hopeful in a lot of ways. The Republicans lost the majority, and in some ways I think that is a good thing. We lost our discipline on spending, and for many years our Democratic colleagues were more than happy to help us and even try to one-up us during the period we were in the majority.

Our last act as the majority, though, was a good one. We were able to stop last year's omnibus bill and force Congress to move ahead under a continuing resolution that only had about 2,000 earmarks—wasteful earmarks. This year, the majority unfortunately has expanded that back to about 6,000, which is disappointing because we entered the year with a lot of promises from the new majority, a lot of hopes about things that would change. Our Democratic colleagues ran on cleaning up the culture of corruption and getting rid of a lot of wasteful earmarks.

I, for one, wanted to help. In fact, one of the first things I did this year was introduce NANCY PELOSI's, Speaker PELOSI's, earmark transparency bill in the Senate. Unfortunately, the new majority decided it wasn't right the way they did it and filled it full of loopholes, and we have been fighting all year to try to continue to disclose a lot of this wasteful spending.

Now, as I said, as we end the year, instead of the 2,000 earmarks we were at last year, we are going to 6,000 plus. We are also way over budget. The amount we have over budget this year will translate over the next 10 years to about $300 billion in additional spending. That is a lot of money for anyone to even conceive of, but just so Americans will know, that amount would allow us to continue the tax relief we have had for the last several years for another 10 years without spending any additional money as a government. That tax relief affects every American. Instead, because we haven't acted, because we haven't kept our promises, next year millions of Americans, middle-class Americans will experience a new tax that they have never experienced before, and a lot of them don't know it is coming.

The disappointment, I guess, as we end this year is there are so many needs as a nation that we haven't acted on. Instead, we have spent the year with 40 resolutions on Iraq. We have tried to expand Government health care, holding children hostage to moving to more Government-controlled health care. The 40 Iraq resolutions were all done holding our troops hostage and the funding for our troops and the weapons and the armament they need to succeed. We spent the year on things such as trying to eliminate the secret ballot for workers when folks are trying to unionize them. Workers have always had the freedom to vote secretly and not be coerced or intimidated, but we have held workers hostage this year.

We have all of these new wasteful earmarks. Americans have heard about them, whether it is a hippie museum or monuments to different Members of Congress, billion-dollar parks at the expense of our veterans funds. We have balled that all up as we go into the end of the year $300 billion over budget for the next 10 years with wasteful earmarks, including monuments to ourselves. I think we have done something even worse than the wasteful spending because we have tied to this wasteful spending ball at the end of the year the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society. We have tied the children to it. We have said they need more health care. We have tied our troops to it, and we are holding them hostage. Instead of giving them the money they need over the next several months, we are tying them up and holding them hostage.

Our veterans, we filled the Veterans bill with wasteful earmarks, and we are holding our veterans hostage. We have basically made human shields out of the most vulnerable Americans, and we are challenging Members of the Senate and Members of the House: Vote for this bill that is billions over budget, that contains billions of wasteful earmarks. You either vote for this bill or you are voting against children and veterans and seniors and voting against our troops. This is no way to run the most important Government in the world.

So we end the year with a lot of broken promises. We have not helped Americans buy health insurance; in fact, we have made it harder. We haven't cut spending; we have raised it. We have increased the number of earmarks from last year. All we have done is talk. While our troops are succeeding in Iraq, we are trying to cut their funding. Instead of broken promises, we need to focus on the promises we need to keep.

We have promised Americans since the beginning of our Constitution that we are going to protect them. That is our main purpose. We need to keep our promises to seniors because we have taken their money all their lives and promised them Social Security and Medicare will be there. We need to keep those promises. We need to keep the promise of making freedom work for everyone and not to use the problems in our society as an excuse to replace freedom with more Government, which is what we are in the process of doing at every turn in Washington.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak, and I hope we can end the year in a more bipartisan fashion and work on reducing the amount of spending, the wasteful earmarks, and try to focus our efforts on the real priorities of this country that affect real Americans and not to hold our people hostage to this wasteful spending. We have just another month or so to finish our business, and I hope we finish it with some honor and dignity in a way that the American people would regain some trust in this Senate and in this Congress.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

GETTING RESULTS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I come to the floor because it is amazing to listen to my friends on the other side of the aisle lament what they view are things not getting done when, in fact, we are getting things done. The truth is, we have been operating this year with an extraordinary slowness on the other side of the aisle because, first of all, they have participated in 52 filibusters since the beginning of the year—52 filibusters, maybe 53 by the end of the week, every week now. This is unprecedented. It never happened before. It never happened before; to see the minority in the Senate obstruct,

obstruct, obstruct with 52 different filibusters, trying to stop us from getting the people's business done.

I find it so interesting and amazing when my colleagues lament that not more of the appropriations process is done. As the Presiding Officer knows, our colleagues, the previous majority, didn't do a budget at all last year—at all. We are moving through the process. Despite the continual slowdowns, the efforts to stop us from proceeding, we are moving ahead. But last year, our colleagues, who lament so passionately and who come to the floor every day, didn't even pass a budget. We came in in January to a new majority and had to clean up the mess, literally. There was no budget. We had to pass a budget just to get us through the end of the year, to be able to keep services for the American people going, and we did that. We did that.

Also, during that process we put in place a few things along the way that we clearly put at the top of the list in terms of appropriations: Additional money for our veterans, clearly a priority for us; a Pell grant for our low-income students trying to go to college to have the American dream. We are now at a point where we have the budget, the appropriations process that we are working on for next year. We have seen nothing but efforts to slow that down, to veto it.

Yesterday the President vetoed the part of the budget that focuses on health care, education for our people, health research into new cures for cancer. It focuses on diabetes and Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, all of the areas where we hope to make breakthroughs to be able to save lives. The President vetoed that.

The President says the slight increase for restoring cuts that the President and the Republicans have made in the last several years, in our efforts to restore those funds to get the priorities right and put us back on track for middle-class families, was too much. Eleven billion dollars invested in America is too much. Twelve billion dollars a month on a war—putting our men and women in the middle of harm's way in a civil war every day—is OK, and it is not paid for. The most important thing is we are losing lives, but it is outrageous that we are seeing $12 billion a month being spent.

The President vetoed an investment in America yesterday that was less than 1 month in Iraq—an investment in our families, in our seniors, in our children, and in the future in terms of education and opportunity and research. He vetoed a bill that was, in fact, an effort to invest in America.

I have to say, despite 52 filibusters, we are, as Democrats, working with colleagues, obviously. We don't get anything done unless it is on a bipartisan basis. We know that, and we do it every day. But the truth is, our majority is getting results for middle-class Americans every day. I am proud we have placed veterans at the top of our budget. We, for the first time, have listened. We, the new majority, have listened to the veterans of this country, the veterans organizations. We took their budget called the Independent Budget—the veterans budget—and made it our own so we would make sure our veterans were fully funded. We have addressed the concerns about Walter Reed and what happens when our veterans come home and get caught between the military health system and the VA system.

Mr. President, I believe you are about to give me a high sign on the time. I ask unanimous consent for an additional 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized for an additional 10 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am very proud of the fact that one of the first things we did this year in addition to supporting our veterans was to pass the first minimum wage increase in 10 years for working Americans. An awful lot of those are moms with two children, three children, working one job, two jobs, three jobs, trying to hold things together for their family, working hard every day. I am proud we have passed that. I am proud we have also focused on middle-class Americans and the American dream of college and the opportunity to be able to get the skills that young people and people going back to school can receive in order to be able to work hard and be successful in our new global economy. We have passed the largest student financial aid program since the GI bill. I am very proud we have done that. We are getting results for middle-class Americans every day.

On a bipartisan basis, we have also passed the America COMPETES Act, which redirects critical resources into math and science and technology for education as well as for research. I am very proud of the fact that despite the need to pass the 9/11 Commission recommendations, we have done that. Again, one of the early efforts by the new Democratic majority was to pass the 9/11 Commission recommendations to focus on critical needs, such as making radios work, so the police officers and firefighters in America can actually talk to each other and not be put in the same situation as they were on 9/11 where they were running into buildings they should have been running out of because they did not have the communications equipment that worked. We have focused on real security. We have focused, through the appropriations that we have passed, on our troops and their families, and I am very proud of that. We have also focused on important and long overdue and neglected water resources projects.

And it is wonderful to see that not only was it passed on a bipartisan basis, but when the President vetoed the bill, we joined together to say yes to protecting our waters, when the President said no. So we are getting things done. We are getting things done every single day.

We are putting the priorities of the American people first. In our budget, we have said veterans are at the top of the list, education funding opportunity is at the top of the list, and we also place children's health insurance at the top of the list. In this area, we have worked together in a wonderful bipartisan way. People are to be congratulated on both sides of the aisle for working together on children's health insurance.

The President again said no. He has vetoed the bill. We are working hard, and we have the votes in the Senate to override the veto. We are working hard to get House Republican colleagues to join us so we can invest and cover 10 million children with health insurance.

This is another example of where we have been pushing forward, changing the direction of this Congress, focusing on middle-class Americans, getting things done—trying to get things done over the objection of the President. Again, I have to go back to the whole question of the funding of the war: $12 billion a month on this war—not paid for. To cover 10 million children in America with health insurance, it is $7 billion a year, and it is in our budget. We have fully paid for that.

What kind of priorities has the President set, when he will veto children's health insurance and yet continue to ask for more and more dollars for this war? Everything we do around here is values and priorities, based on what we think is important, what we think the people who have sent us here think is important. The majority of Americans are saying this country is going in the wrong direction, that while people find themselves worried about whether they will have a job or whether it is going to go overseas or whether they will lose pay, lose income, while their health insurance premium goes up—if they even have health insurance—their gas prices go up, and college tuition is going up. They may find themselves in the situation where they cannot sell their homes due to the mortgage crisis or in a situation of foreclosure or in a sales situation where they are losing dollars.

Middle-class Americans look around them and see a world, under this administration, for the last 6 years, of failed policies and priorities—a world that doesn't work for Americans, losing opportunities rather than gaining them, working harder and harder but seeing the American dream slip away for themselves and their families.

We, as the new majority of the Senate, understand this, we get it. We are laser focused on what makes a difference to the American people every day. We are focused, and we will be coming forward with efforts to help with the mortgage crisis. I have legislation we will be bringing forward to make sure that when you lose your home to foreclosure or a short sale, you don't get a tax bill on top of that,

which will happen now if your financial institution gives you any kind of a break on refinancing. You end up, with the value of the difference, paying taxes on it. We are going to make sure that doesn't happen. We are laser focused on getting the children's health insurance bill done, focusing on the right kind of trade policy that is fair for Americans—American workers and businesses. We are focused on strengthening our country, opportunity, valuing work, focusing on the things people care about every single day. When we get up in the morning and we are focused on what we want for our children and grandchildren, in order to be able to have a wonderful life, those are the things we have been bringing forward every single day. We will continue to do that.

We are getting things done for middle-class America. That is our focus. We are getting things done. But I have to say, in conclusion, that this has not been easy. We have had 52 filibusters—which is unheard of in the Senate—in less than a year—52 filibusters that require us to get 60 votes to stop, including, I might add, on the war. We have a majority of Members of this body who want to end this strategy on the war, who have been willing to say we want to put a deadline on what is happening there and refocus on what will truly keep us safe. We have a majority of Members—an overwhelming majority—who supported Senator WEBB's effort on troop readiness, to say to our troops who are being deployed, redeployed, and redeployed, we should follow the traditional policies of the military; if you have 12 or 15 months in combat in theater, you should get the same at home for rest, retraining, and the opportunity to see your family.

We have the majority of Members who have voted to change this policy in Iraq, get us out of a civil war, bring our troops home, to have troop readiness policies that make sense; but we have had 52 filibusters, which is too many, stopping us from changing this war.

This can go to 53, 54—we know it will keep going through the next year. But so will our focus. We are not going to stop. We are focused on getting things done. We are getting results for middle-class Americans, and we are going to continue to do that every single day.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS SUICIDES

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes this morning to talk about a subject that has tragically received far too little attention, and that is the number of veterans who take their lives because our Nation has failed them.

In a breakthrough report last night, CBS News revealed that far more veterans commit suicide than has previously been reported by the Defense Department and the VA. CBS, in fact, found that in 2005, at least 6,256 veterans took their lives. That is a rate that is twice that of other Americans.

CBS also found that veterans who are aged 20 to 24—those most likely to have served in the war on terror—are taking their lives at a rate that is estimated to be between two and four times higher than nonveterans in the same age group.

CBS should be commended for pushing past this administration's stonewalling and digging to get those numbers. The administration told the network that even the VA hadn't counted the nationwide numbers.

Those findings are sad, they are horrifying, and they should be preventable. Frankly, they are a reflection of something that many of my colleagues and I have said over and over. They reflect an administration that has failed to plan, failed to own up to its responsibilities, and failed even to complete statistics on the impact of this war on our veterans. From inadequate funding to a lack of mental health professionals to a failure to help our servicemembers make the transition from battlefield back to the homefront, this administration has dropped the ball.

The Defense Department and the VA, in particular, must own up to the true cost of this war and do a better job to ensure that our heroes are not lost when they come home.

We in Congress are taking steps to try to understand and care for the mental health wounds our troops are experiencing, but we clearly have to do more. If those numbers CBS is reporting do not wake up America, I fear nothing will. It is time for all of us to wake up to the reality and the consequences of this war. It is time to wake up our neighbors and our communities. It is time to wake up our employers and our schools and ask if we are doing enough for our veterans. It is time to wake up the White House and demand better care for our veterans, those men and women who have sacrificed for all of us.

As I stand here and speak today, a generation of servicemembers is falling through the cracks because of our failure to provide for them, and that is shameful.

Five years ago, when the President asked us to go to war in Iraq, he talked to us about weapons of mass destruction, he talked about al-Qaida, he talked about the mission to fight the war on terror, but he never talked about policing a civil war. He never talked about the stress of living months without a break and constantly waiting for the next attack. He has never talked about, in my opinion, taking care of those men and women who have served us honorably when they finally come home.

In the past, our servicemembers were always given a rest, time to relax, time to regroup for battle. But we are today waging this war with an all-volunteer military. Some men and women are now serving their second, third, fourth, and now even fifth tour of duty. They are stretched to the breaking point. Too many of them are sustaining traumatic brain injuries. Too many are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. A third of our servicemembers are coming home with mental health conditions, and when they finally do come home, they struggle with the memories of battle. In their nightmares, they see their friends being blown apart. Some of them are turning to drugs and alcohol to numb themselves from the pain they are in.

The sad truth is that all too often the system we have set up to provide care for them does not help them, and we do not find out how much pain they are in until, obviously, it is too late.

I have taken the time to talk with these servicemembers. I have taken the time to talk with their families. I have heard their stories, and I wish to share a few with my colleagues today that illustrate, I believe, why it is so critical that we take action. These are young men and women. They are in their early twenties. They are young men and women who have served our country. They are someone's son, brother, sister, wife, best friend. Losing them is shameful.

Let me tell my colleagues about a young veteran named Justin Bailey. Justin joined the Marine Corps when he was 18, a few months after he graduated from high school. He was about to separate from the Marines in 2003 when his service was involuntarily extended because of the war in Iraq.

Justin went to Iraq. He was injured, and he returned home in pain and suffering from PTSD. He underwent several surgeries, and over a 2-year time period was prescribed a slew of medications, including hydrocone, xanax, and methadone, and he became addicted.

Justin slipped through the cracks. Despite seeking help for his addiction, he was allowed to self-medicate. Despite warnings from the FDA, he was prescribed drugs that were inconsistent with the treatment of PTSD. Justin tried to find help, but after 6 weeks in a VA program for addicts with PTSD, he never once saw a psychiatrist.

Justin's parents had assumed that he would get proper supervision in the VA program, but he didn't. This past January, Justin took too many pills and he died of an overdose.

The next young man I wish to tell my colleagues about is Joshua Omvig. Josh, I am told, was an eager soldier who dreamed of being a police officer. He insisted on graduating from high school early so he could join the military and begin his career. He was sent

to Iraq. But after one visit home his parents could see he was shaken. Ordinary things, they said, made him nervous, and he was having nightmares that made him shout out in his sleep.

When he completed his tour of duty, he was transitioned back into civilian life after only a couple of weeks. His parents saw he was not the same. They said he didn't say much about Iraq, but he did talk about hearing voices and seeing faces and he was very jittery.

His parents wanted him to get care, but he refused to see a doctor for fear it would hurt his career. Despite his parents' efforts to help him, Josh could not get over the trauma he experienced in Iraq. It got worse and his world slowly unraveled. Josh took his life at the age of 22.

Josh's and Justin's stories came to light because their families came here and asked Congress for help. As a result, we passed the Joshua Omvig Veteran Suicide Prevention Act this year because his family pushed and pushed for legislation that would require the military and the VA to better understand and treat psychological trauma for our servicemembers.

Are these extreme examples? Well, maybe, but they are not isolated examples, and the reality is many others are slipping unnoticed through the cracks today.

It would be one thing if we had no idea what the mental health strains are for our veterans, but that is not the case. We have seen servicemembers come home with mental wounds in every military conflict in which we have ever been involved.

When I was a young college student in the late sixties, I volunteered at the Seattle VA. I was assigned to the psychiatric ward. I worked with Vietnam veterans who were my age at the time coming home from Vietnam. I saw what was in their eyes. For some, it was a blank stare. For many, it was anger. For a lot, it was talking and talking and talking about what they had been through.

There was no word called post-traumatic stress syndrome when I worked at the VA with those Vietnam veterans. But we know now the strains of war and what it causes, and we should be doing so much more for the thousands and thousands of young men and women who are coming home today and feeling lost and alone in their homes and communities because no one has reached out to help them.

Our understanding of the impact that warfare has on the minds of servicemembers has evolved since I worked at the VA as a young student many years ago. One thing we know is that the mental wound suffered by men and women in uniform can be as devastating as their physical injuries. So it is long past time that the military knock down the stigma associated with mental health care. It is long past time that the military provide the care our veterans desperately need and deserve and back it up with adequate funding. We must acknowledge that this is a cost of war we cannot ignore.

What can we do to prevent more stories such as Josh and Justin? We have to better understand the trauma our troops have experienced. The Joshua Omvig Act we passed takes steps to do that, but it is so clear we have more to do. We need more mental health care clinics, and we need more providers. We need the VA to be proactive. We need them to reach out to these veterans who are not enrolled in the VA system and who are at risk for suicide. And we in Congress have to provide the money to fully fund their care.

The Senate has passed a bill that will increase funding for veterans by almost $4 billion over what the President asked. I hope we can get those improvements to our veterans as quickly as possible. We have to finally provide a seamless transition for our servicemembers when they come home, and that starts with making sure that veterans can get their disability benefits without having to fight through the system. It is unconscionable to me that our heroes return home from the battlefield today only to have to fight a bureaucracy to get the benefits they were promised.

Veterans Day was a few days ago. Many of us went home and took part in ceremonies to thank our servicemembers for securing our safety and our freedom—well-deserved. In my own speech in Kitsap County, at home in Washington State, I said I believe that Veterans Day should not be just a day for ceremony. It should be a day to consider whether there is something more we can do for our veterans. And what are the implications for not doing enough? As the ''CBS News'' report found, too often the implications are that many veterans are stretched to the breaking point. That is a tragedy. We have to wake up to the reality that we have already lost too many.

Ours is a great Nation. No matter how any of us feel about this current conflict, we know our troops are serving us honorably. But we owe them so much more than we have given them so far. We can do better. We must do better. I ask anyone who is listening to me this morning, anyone who watched the CBS report and saw those families talk about the tragedy of losing a son or a daughter to suicide after they had come home from this war, to reach out and say: Am I doing enough? Do I know of a family who is suffering? Do I know of someone at my child's school whose parent has come home? Do I know an employee who has come home from Iraq? Have I reached out myself and said: I am here for you if you need me?

All of us can do more. Congress needs to act and do more as well. We are a great nation. We should do much better.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2419, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Harkin amendment No. 3500, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid (for Dorgan-Grassley) amendment No. 3508 (to amendment No. 3500), to strengthen payment limitations and direct the savings to increased funding for certain programs.

Reid amendment No. 3509 (to amendment No. 3508), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3510 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 3500), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3511 (to Amendment No. 3510), to change the enactment date.

Motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Reid amendment No. 3512.

Reid amendment No. 3512 (to the instructions of the motion to commit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with instructions), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3513 (to the instructions of the motion to recommit), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3514 (to amendment No. 3513), to change the enactment date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I see my friend, Senator CHAMBLISS, is on the floor. I think we are both very frustrated. I don't think, I know we are both very frustrated that we are stymied on this farm bill. We are not moving anywhere. But in hopes that maybe we can get something moving, I am going to propound some unanimous consent requests to see if we can't break out and move ahead.

So I inquire of my colleague, Senator CHAMBLISS, as to whether we can agree to a time limitation for debate with respect to the pending Dorgan-Grassley amendment. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that there be 60 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the Dorgan amendment No. 3508, with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendment; that no second-degree amendment be in order prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, unfortunately, based upon the status of the amendments at this point in time and based upon the comments by the majority leader this morning, at this point in time I am going to have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that we proceed to the Lugar-Lautenberg amendment regarding farm program reform; that there be 2 hours of debate with respect to the amendment prior to a vote; that no amendments be in order to the amendment prior to the vote; that the time be equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of the time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, again, as much as I would love to accommodate the chairman of the committee, based upon the status at this time and the comments of the majority leader this morning, I will have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in light of that objection, I would inquire as to whether we can enter into an agreement on the Roberts amendment No. 3548; that there be 90 minutes for debate prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendment, with no second-degree amendment in order prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, again, based upon the process that we are now involved in and the comments of the majority leader this morning relative to the farm bill, I will have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, let's see if there can be agreement to consider the Stevens amendment No. 3569; again that there be 60 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with no amendment in order to the amendment prior to the vote, and the time be equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, once again, based upon the process we are now engaged in and the comments of the majority leader this morning, I will have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to the Allard amendment No. 3572; that there be 60 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form, with no second-degree amendment in order prior to the vote; that upon the use or yielding back of the time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Reserving the right to object, I would say there may be some common ground.

I ask unanimous consent that the unanimous consent request of the chairman be modified and that the pending amendments and motion to recommit be withdrawn and the only amendments in order be the bipartisan list of first-degree amendments I have sent to the desk and that all first-degree amendments be subject to relevant second-degree amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. HARKIN. I do not modify my request.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Then, Mr. President, I will have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am certain the Senator will have another unanimous consent request of his own very shortly, as he just enunciated. I just proposed five requests for votes in relation to amendments that are relevant to the farm bill. As we just heard, there are objections to each one of those.

We are ready to move ahead. We have been here now a week, over a week, on this farm bill, and we are stuck, dead in the water. Again, my friend, Senator CHAMBLISS, said he wanted to send to the desk a list of amendments that have been looked at. Not all of them have been filed, as I understand, but they have been talked about. As I understand it, there are 255 amendments. That is ridiculous. Of course, we are not going to have 255 amendments. But at least we could work. We are here; we could be working now. We could debate the Dorgan amendment and vote on it today. There are five requests I just offered right now, five amendments we could dispose of this afternoon. The other side objected to each one of those.

Again, I am extremely frustrated, as the chairman of the committee. We got a bill through. We worked very hard on it. Senator CHAMBLISS worked very hard on it. Yet we are stuck. We got it through committee. There was not one dissenting vote in the committee, not one. It is a good bill.

As Senator LINCOLN said—I heard her speech this morning—it is bipartisan, it is multiregional. There are a lot of compromises in it, as is true in any bill. But we got it through without a dissenting vote. Yet we cannot even work on it on the Senate floor? We cannot even work on it. Forget about passing it, we can't even work on it.

I just propounded five requests to have debate and votes on amendments, relevant amendments to this farm bill, and every time it was objected to.

I don't know. I just want to make it clear that we on this side are ready to do business. We have been for a week. We could have been debating relevant amendments. We could have almost—we could have been done with this bill by now.

I want to point out a little bit of history. On the last farm bill, when I was privileged to chair the committee at that time in the Senate, in 2002, we had 10 days of consideration in December and 6 days in February. That was it. Mr. President, 53 amendments were considered, not 255.

In 1996, we had 4 days of consideration, 24 amendments to the bill; in 1990, 7 days of consideration, and we proceeded to vote on it. This is very frustrating. We are here. We are ready to do business. We are ready to debate and vote. Yet the leadership on the other side says no. The leadership says no.

I wanted to make it clear, fundamentally, basically clear to all Senators and anyone watching: We on this side have been ready, are ready, are willing to debate and vote on these amendments. It has been objected to on the other side.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this is almost unbelievably disappointing. This is the second week we are on the farm bill. We have people in the Senate who believe, apparently, they are trying to imitate a set of human brake pads and stop everything. We haven't even started. How can you stop it? I don't understand this at all. If family farmers farmed like Congress legislated, there would be no food.

When it comes spring you have to plant the seeds. You have to do it. It is not an option. When it comes harvest time, you have to take it off the field. When the cows are ready to milk, you have to milk. We have a few people in Congress who believe you don't have to do anything. All you have to do, as I said, is imitate a set of human brake pads and just stop everything. I guess maybe that is a successful strategy for some, if you do not believe anything ought to get done.

The chairman of this committee, Senator HARKIN, and the ranking member, Senator CHAMBLISS, worked hard on this. I understand Senator CHAMBLISS has been objecting as a result of the minority leader's position. I understand that. But my colleague from Iowa just propounded a series of unanimous consent requests. He said let's just start. This isn't rocket science. How do you get this bill done? First, you start the bill.

As I understand it, my colleague proposed a couple of amendments from each side, Democratic amendments, Republican amendments. Just start,

have some time agreements, have a debate, have a vote.

If there are some who do not want a farm bill to be passed in this Congress, I understand. They have a right to vote against and speak against the farm bill. But why on Earth should they hold this bill hostage to their whims? We take for granted, every single day in this country, what family farmers do. They get up out there in the country, living under a yard light, get up, often very early, and do chores. They work hard. They take a lot of risks. They have big dreams. They live on hope. They must live on hope. They hope there is going to be a better crop, a better year. They hope they are going to be able to make a decent living. We take all of that for granted.

What we try to do in the Congress is to write a farm bill that says family farmers are important—yes, for economic reasons but also for cultural reasons, to have a network of families out there producing America's food. Family farmers are important, and we understand families can't survive some tough times, so we create a safety net, a bridge over price depressions. And we say: We want to help you. That is what the farm bill is about.

There are other pieces of it, nutrition and other issues, but the centerpiece of a safety net for family farmers is very important. I guess I don't remember a time when we had a farm bill on the Senate floor that has been held up. I voted against some farm bills I didn't like. But, you know, I didn't like the so-called Freedom to Farm bill, which I thought was a disaster, so I voted against it, but I didn't come down to the floor to try to prevent it from moving. I just said this is something I will not support, so I voted against it.

In this case, and in the previous case with the farm bill we operate under currently, I support it. I really want this to move forward. I do not understand. I do not understand at all. We could compare, perhaps, the Senate to a glacier, but the difference is a glacier actually moves from time to time. This Senate, on this bill, is going nowhere because of a couple of people who decided we are going to stop it.

The majority leader has brought this bill to the floor of the Senate, allowed 2 weeks for it. Both colleagues, Senator HARKIN and Senator CHAMBLISS, have worked hard. My colleague, Senator CONRAD, has been out here working hard to see if can we get a list of amendments we can begin working through. Apparently, we now know there are something like 250 amendments that have been noticed. Obviously, we are not going to have 250 amendments on this bill. We don't have time for that. Some of these amendments, a good many of them, have nothing at all to do with this subject at all—going back into immigration and a whole series of tax issues that have nothing to do with farming, agriculture, family farms.

So the question is, Can we find a way to reduce that number of amendments and then just start?

The first amendment Senator GRASSLEY and I have offered is an amendment that would, I think, improve the bill. But we have not been able to even begin the first 5 minutes of debate on that amendment. There are many others.

My colleague offers a proposal: Let's at least start on two Republican and two Democratic amendments. The first step of any journey is the most important step. Let's just begin. Here it is, a week and a half after the bill comes to the floor of the Senate, and this Senate is at parade rest. I do not understand it.

One of my great concerns at the moment is that the time has been set aside to try to get this farm bill done. Senator HARKIN and Senator CHAMBLISS wrote a farm bill that came out of the Agriculture Committee, as I understand, unanimously. You would believe, then, that represents bipartisan agreement on the central portion of a farm bill. Can we improve it a little bit? I think so. There are some amendments back and forth that perhaps will improve some portions of it. But the fact is, they wrote a bipartisan bill that had very strong support, in fact, unanimous support in the committee.

How on Earth do we get to a point where a bill that comes out of the committee unanimously, a bill that is as important as this one is to every region of the country, sits on the floor of the Senate at parade rest, and we cannot even get to debate on the first amendment? I do not understand that at all. That makes no sense to me.

The fact is, time is running out. I worry if we do not get this bill done this week—work late tonight, late tomorrow night, into Friday, get this bill done—I worry that this bill is not going to get done in any timely fashion. What an awful message for us to send to family farmers. The message in this bill is, we think they matter. We think they are an important part of this country's economic strength. Family farmers have always been the economic All-Stars.

But it is beyond me to understand what is going on here. We have amendments. My amendment is pending, but we can't even begin the first minute of debate. I don't understand it at all.

I have said before on the floor of the Senate that family farmers in this country produce a lot more than crops and food. They produce communities. They are the blood vessels that create the strength for these small towns. I grew up in one of those towns. We raised some cattle and some horses. The fact is, family farmers are very important to the economic strength and to the culture of this country. They do not expect much. They don't ask for much. They are an independent bunch of people. They are people who try to raise a family and raise a crop, way out in the country, in many cases. They are not asking for anything very much except that this country has believed for a long while that all of the uncertainties, all of the risks that accrue to family farming in many cases just wipe them out unless you have some kind of safety net. That is why we have created a safety net.

They plant a seed, hope it grows, hope it rains enough, hope it doesn't rain too much, hope it doesn't hail, hope the insects don't come, hope there isn't any crop disease. Then they hope they have a chance to harvest it in the fall and then hope when they harvest it and truck it to the elevator, it is going to have a decent price. All of that risk, all alone.

So we create a safety net to say we are going to try, if we can, to provide some strength to that hope because we want family farms to continue to exist in the future because we think it strengthens our country. That is why we write a farm bill. All of us come from different points on the compass, but we all believe basically the same thing: family farming matters for this country.

How on Earth have we gotten to the point where, on a Wednesday, a week after we start the debate on the farm bill, we have not been able to consider even one amendment?

Now we risk not getting the farm bill done. How we have gotten to this point, I don't have the foggiest understanding, but it is not healthy and not good.

I hope we can persuade the minority leader and others to let us proceed. Just start. We are not asking for the Moon. Just start discussion, debate, and vote on amendments, and let's see how quickly we can move through these to try to get a bill done before the end of this week.

Let me finish, as I started, by saying I know a lot of people have worked for a long time on this bill. There are a lot of people on both sides of the political aisle who want this bill to get done. I am among them. But there are some who have decided we ought not move forward, and they have decided the only way they would allow us to move forward is to allow all kinds of amendments that go back and recreate the debates on immigration, and you name it. The fact is, all that means is we will not get this bill done, never get this bill done. So let's go back to the tradition.

The tradition has been, with respect to farm bills, we have had farm bills on the floor of the Senate in which we debate and vote on amendments. We do not, in most cases, see amendments that have nothing to do with agriculture load down this bill and decide we are going to try to stop it from moving. I hope we can get back to that tradition. That is the tradition I think farmers would expect of us.

Let me again say, as I started, if families out there in the country farmed like we legislate—or at least like a few

people in this Chamber want to legislate—there would be no food because they would never plant the grain. It wouldn't matter, timing doesn't matter, they wouldn't harvest the grain, timing doesn't matter; they wouldn't milk the cows because they wouldn't care whether the cows are fresh or sore.

This Congress can do a whole lot better than this, and my hope is, in the coming couple of hours, we can reach agreement and begin debate on the amendments. Let's follow this trail until the amendments are done, and I think that farm bill will get a resounding vote on the floor of the Senate. I think the farm bill will get two-thirds or perhaps three-fourths in favor of it.

I yield the floor. I know we have two other Members on the Senate floor. The Senator from Colorado had indicated he wanted to speak, but I know the Senator from Georgia is on the Senate floor as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his comments. He is exactly right. There are a lot of us in this body who wish to see this farm bill move. I actually came back a day early last week thinking the farm bill would be up the next day.

I was prepared, as ranking member, to move ahead with the farm bill. When I got here, I found out we all of a sudden were going to be caught in a process that is unique to the Senate, and that is a process where the majority leader has the right—and I understand he has the right; I understand that we did that when we were in the majority—to fill the tree, and he did so. And when he does so, it kind of brings things to a halt. That is the purpose in doing that, in trying to control what amendments may be filed. I thought after a week's time, yesterday, rather than us debating amendments, moving through, which in all likelihood we conceivably could have been through this bill by now—but instead of being able to call up amendments, debating them and voting on them over the past week, we have been stuck in this process now that requires a unanimous consent by both sides before we can move forward with the process of dealing with amendments.

Yesterday I had some hope, because Senator HARKIN and I agreed that what we thought we ought to do would be to come up with a list of amendments that are relevant, and as always is the case on any major piece of legislation, some were irrelevant amendments. I would hope we could agree on a number. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do that. As of yesterday we had about 140 Democratic amendments that were filed, and about 120 Republican amendments that were filed.

Most of them are relevant to the farm bill, but some of them are not. But it is always the case that we deal with some nonrelevant amendments.

But instead of allowing Senator HARKIN and me to move through the process of taking the amendments—the first one we had agreed to take was Senator DORGAN and Senator GRASSLEY's amendment. Instead of allowing us to move ahead and debate that amendment, and possibly have already voted on it, if we had taken it up this morning with the time agreement we had tentatively agreed to, a decision was made that we are not going to be allowed to do that, and nothing is going to happen until there is a definite agreement by both sides on not just the number of amendments but what nonrelevant amendments will be considered.

It will happen. I know this is not the first time this situation has happened in this body with a farm bill. I would remind those who were here in 2002, at that time there were 246 amendments filed; almost exactly the same number of amendments were filed to the farm bill while the Democrats were in charge in 2002. There were at least two, and there may have been three, cloture votes. I am not sure because I was not here then. But there were two or three cloture votes asked for and made on the farm bill before cloture was invoked. Those cloture votes originally were made in December of 2001. When cloture was finally invoked in February of 2002, the farm bill sailed through in a matter of a few days. So we are basically in exactly the same position we were in 2002.

But here is the problem. 2002 was an entirely different atmosphere in American agriculture. Farmers and ranchers need to be discussing next month with their bankers and their insurers and landowners from whom they lease property, or farmers whom they lease property to; they need to be talking to their equipment dealers about how much they are going to plant of what respective crops; how much insurance they are going to need; how much in the way of financing they are going to need; how much in the way of new equipment or repairs or replaced equipment they are going to need, so that come next March, in the whole Southeast, not just in my State, but in March we start planting crops. Early corn goes in in March or the first part of April. In 2002, I was a Member of the House, and I was a member of the conference committee on the farm bill that was delayed until final passage occurring sometime in March. Obviously when farmers do not know what to anticipate from the standpoint of farm policy, do not know what type of programs they are going to have available to them, it is difficult for them to make any decision regarding how much money they are going to have to finance their crops, how much insurance they are going to need, or how many acres of what crops to plant.

So here we are stuck in a process. I am not saying one side or the other is more to blame than the other. I think it is more the rules of the Senate that have got us locked into this situation. I am ready to go. I was ready to go last Tuesday morning or actually last Monday afternoon. But, unfortunately, we are in a situation now where we cannot move ahead.

I did have to object to Senator HARKIN's request. There is nothing I would rather do than move on the Grassley-Dorgan amendment, although I am strongly opposed to it. I am going to advocate a ''no'' vote on it. But I think we ought to move and get this process going and start winnowing down these 260 or so, whatever the number of amendments is we have filed, or that we have been notified that either are filed or are going to be filed.

We can do that. It was done in 2002. We can do it now, and we are ultimately going to have to do it. Whether we do it now or whether we do it in January, whether we do it in February, we are going to do it. It is a bullet we are going to have to bite.

I regret very much having to object to Senator HARKIN's request. But, by the same token, he had to not agree to amend his unanimous consent request to comply with what I asked for, which would allow us to move ahead right now with amendments.

Those folks who are out in ag country are depending on the Congress, the Presiding Officer being one of those members who sits on the Ag Committee who has a significant interest in agriculture. My friend Senator SALAZAR, a member of the committee, comes from a strong agricultural State. Folks are depending on all of us as policymakers to get our work done, and yet here we are stuck by the rules of the Senate.

As I said in the press yesterday, I would simply say again, if we do not get this bill done this week, we do not have the opportunity to work with our colleagues in the House over the next 2 weeks while we are gone to get ready for a conference in December, it is going to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get a farm bill passed by both bodies, on the desk of the President before the end of the year.

That does not handicap us, but it surely handicaps those folks we represent; that is, the great men and women who are the farmers and ranchers of America. So I am hopeful that over the next several hours—I do not how long it may take, but I hope in the short term we are able to reach some agreement. Particularly it boils down to the nonrelevant amendments. If the other side would be lenient with us in trying to let us get those amendments up, debate them, get them voted on, we can move this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I came here this morning, now afternoon, to talk about the importance of this farm bill and for us to get off the dime and get us moving forward on the farm bill. I am going to make a statement on that in a few minutes.

My friend from Utah has asked if he can go ahead of me to speak on another subject for about 10 minutes. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Utah be recognized for 10 minutes to speak on a subject that he will address; then, following the Senator from Utah, that I be recognized for up to 20 minutes; following my statement that Senator DURBIN be recognized for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Utah.

FISA MODERNIZATION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, following the unauthorized public disclosure in 2005 of what has become known as the Terrorism Surveillance Program, numerous lawsuits were filed against electronic communication service providers for their alleged participation. Currently, more than 40 lawsuits are pending, which collectively seek hundreds of billions of dollars in damages. Let me repeat that figure, hundreds of billions of dollars.

For myriad reasons which I am going to discuss, these service providers alleged to have participated deserve a round of applause and a helping hand, not a slap in the face and a kick to the gut.

The amount of misinformation concerning this issue is staggering. Given that this dialogue involves highly classified details, there are many things that simply can't be discussed. However, the committee report for the recently passed FISA modernization bill, S. 2248, from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is public, and contains very pertinent information.

The report mentions that as with other intelligence matters, the identities of persons or entities that provide assistance to the U.S. Government are protected as vital sources and methods of intelligence. Details of any such assistance can not be discussed. However, the committee report does mention that beginning soon after September 11, the executive branch provided written requests or directives to U.S. electronic communication service providers to obtain their assistance with communications intelligence activities that had been authorized by the President.

During consideration of FISA modernization legislation, the Intelligence Committee examined classified documents relating to this issue.

The committee, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan tally, voted to include retroactive immunity for service providers that were alleged to have cooperated with the intelligence community in the implementation of the President's surveillance program. Senators from both sides of the aisle, after careful consideration, came to this conclusion. Make no mistake, this was the right conclusion.

It was the right conclusion for the Intelligence Committee, and it should be the right conclusion for the Judiciary Committee, when it considers this bill tomorrow.

Given the astounding amount of misinformation in the public domain concerning the Terrorism Surveillance Program, it is not surprising that these lawsuits are filled with false information and baseless allegations.

Some have asked a valid question, if the companies did not break the law, why do they need immunity? Quite simply, the Government's assertion of the state secrets privilege prevents these companies from defending themselves.

This assertion by the Government is absolutely essential, as the possible disclosure of classified materials from ongoing court proceedings is a grave threat to national security. Given the necessity for the state secrets privilege, the drawback is that the companies being sued are forbidden from making their case.

In fact, the companies cannot even confirm or deny any involvement in the program whatsoever. They have no ability to defend themselves.

Ordinarily, these companies would be able to address allegations and make their case. However, the classified nature of the topic means that companies are not free to do so. They can't even have discussions with shareholders or business partners. But we need to remember, lawful silence does not equate to guilt.

Another point not mentioned nearly enough is that the Government cannot obtain the intelligence it needs without the assistance of telecommunication companies. This means that our collection capabilities are dependent on the support and collaboration of private businesses.

If retroactive immunity is not provided, these private businesses will certainly be extremely hesitant to provide any future assistance to our intelligence community. This could have a crippling effect on the security of millions of people in our society; thus, it's simply an unacceptable outcome for the safety and security of our Nation.

Any hesitation from companies to provide assistance with future Government requests could be disastrous. This could affect not only our intelligence community but domestic law enforcement efforts. The next time a child is kidnapped, and law enforcement needs help with communications, would that situation allow any hesitation from the service provider? If your son or daughter was missing, would you stand for any lack of cooperation from companies? Do we want endless teams of private company lawyers second, third, fourth, and fifth guessing lawful orders to compel their assistance?

This is not the only problem with not including retroactive immunity. As the duration of these lawsuits increases, so does the chance that highly classified sources and methods of our intelligence community will be unnecessarily and unlawfully disclosed. Our enemies are acutely aware of these proceedings, and are certainly attempting to gather information previously unknown to them. The potential disclosure of classified information also puts the personnel and facilities of electronic communication service providers at risk.

Given all of the tremendous harm and damage that will occur by not passing a form of limited liability, I am amazed at the number of individuals who fail to grasp the seriousness of the issue before us.

To those who purport to oppose immunity in any form, I would hope that they take the time to actually read the bill. For those unable to tear themselves away from their favorite partisan blog, I am going to quickly tell you what the immunity provision says, and what it does not say. Remember, this bill passed 13-2 in the Intelligence Committee.

A civil action may be dismissed only if a certification is made to the court certifying that either (1) the electronic service provider did not provide the alleged assistance, or (2) the assistance was provided after the 9/11 attacks, and was described in a written request indicating that the activity was authorized by the President and determined to be lawful.

Furthermore, this certification has to be reviewed by the court before a civil action can be dismissed.

It does not provide for immunity for Government officials. It does not provide for immunity for criminal acts. Instead, it is a narrowly tailored provision that strikes a proper balance. This point can't be overlooked; the immunity provision in the current bill has absolutely zero effect on the numerous lawsuits pending against Federal Government agencies. These cases will go on, with their questionable constitutional challenges, with no impact from this bill.

Some Senators have suggested that indemnification or substitution would be possible solutions. Let me be perfectly clear, neither one is appropriate or acceptable in this situation. The Intelligence Committee considered both of these ideas, and rejected them for good reason. Indemnification, where the Federal Government would be responsible for any damages awarded against the providers, is not advisable since the providers would still be parties to the lawsuits, and thus the suits would continue with the consequences of disclosure and discovery. Not only does this further the likelihood of disclosure of classified material, but the companies will face serious damage to their business reputations, relationships with foreign countries, and stock prices. This is extremely unfair, if handled improperly.

Substitution, where the Government would litigate in place of the service providers, is not a viable solution since all of the same concerns just mentioned still apply. Even though the providers will not be parties to the litigation, discovery will still apply.

Don't we realize that having the Government fund unnecessary litigation is a tremendous waste of taxpayer dollars? The Government does not magically create dollars, it taxes hard-working Americans. When it comes to funding, who do we think the Government is?

To say that the Government should pay is to say that our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters should have money forcefully taken from their paychecks to fund frivolous lawsuits. This is Alice in Wonderland, and down the rabbit hole we go.

Finally, for those who love to expound the catch phrase ''warrantless wiretapping'' to assert some theory of illegality, I encourage you to carefully read the fourth amendment.

Contrary to any other assertion, the fourth amendment does not always require a warrant and is based on the reasonableness of searches. While the phrase is meant to scare people, ''warrantless wiretapping'' in this instance is perfectly legal and constitutional.

Immunity is an appropriate remedy. It is just. It is necessary. It is imperative for the continued success of our intelligence gathering.

While reasonable minds can disagree about political topics, this issue requires disciplined logic, not political hyperbole. I hope that people keep the following facts in mind when considering this topic.

The program did not involve interception of domestic to domestic phone calls.

The President and the highest levels of the executive branch determined the program to be lawful and conveyed this fact repeatedly in writing to service providers.

The electronic service providers' participation was vital to the security of our country.

Lives have been saved by this program.

The companies were called on to support a lawful program that was vital to the security of our country. Do the companies require thanks or appreciation? No, but they certainly do not deserve illegitimate and false criticisms that affect their financial well being.

A grateful public should certainly appreciate the critical assistance the companies alone can provide for the public's defense. These companies are quite possibly facing irreversible harm to their business reputation and cannot defend themselves due to state secrets.

This debate has far too many Monday morning quarterbacks, applying their revisionist history to best represent their political mantra. I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support the limited immunity provided for in S. 2248. Any company that has done its part to provide for the protection of American families deserves protection in return. If not, the next time we reach out for a helping hand, we will be the ones who receive a slap to the face. And really, who could blame them?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, on November 5, almost 10 days ago, I came to the floor to say there it was a proud day in my time as a Senator because we were moving forward with consideration of the 2007 farm bill. Almost 10 days have passed and we are stuck. In being stuck, we are doing a disservice to the people of America, to the people of rural America. It behooves us to move forward with the kind of process that put together the 2002 farm bill and farm bills before that, where there was a procedure set out that there was an agreed-upon set of relevant amendments that were discussed and debated on the farm bill and then a farm bill was passed. To do otherwise is, frankly, letting down the farmers and ranchers. From my point of view, that is something which we ought not to do. It is something we have a moral obligation to avoid and where both Republicans and Democrats coming together can figure out a way forward to make sure we are addressing the realities and challenges of rural America, the realities and challenges of our farmers and ranchers, and the issues related to nutrition and all of the rest of the components of this very good farm bill which has been written by the Agriculture Committee, a committee which is composed of Republicans and Democrats, of which the Presiding Officer played a significant role in putting this farm bill together. It is important we move forward.

Let me talk about why I believe it is important to move forward. I decided to run for this position in the Senate several years ago in large part because there aren't enough people in Washington and on the floor of the Senate who cared much about what happens to rural America. There are very few people here, frankly, who have lived through the hard times and celebrated the joys of being a farmer or a rancher. It is important the voices of farmers and ranchers, who have dirt under their fingernails, whose hands are unmistakably calloused by the hard work they do, be heard in this Chamber. We do a tremendous dishonor to those hard-working Americans when there are the procedural and political games that are being played here today.

The majority leader came forward and said what we ought to do is go to the farm bill. It is a good farm bill. We ought to decide that there is maybe a subset of amendments, 10, 15, 20, whatever it is, and get on with the farm bill. Yet 10 days later, we are not making very much progress. Why aren't we making progress? Is it possible that some people on the other side simply do not want a farm bill, that they would rather see this work, which has been a labor for several years by many people, be killed? Is that their agenda, to kill the farm bill?

To all the farmers and ranchers who are listening across America today, to all those organizations which have been a part of this effort over the last several years, to all those people who care about nutrition in schools, to all those who care about making sure the hungriest are being fed, the faith community and others, I ask them to make their voices heard in Washington today so we are able to move forward to get a farm bill done and to get it done before we go back for Thanksgiving. I believe if those voices are heard here, that in fact will happen.

For me, much of my life has been spent on a farm and on a ranch. I know what the joys of farming and ranching are. I know what the joy is after you have prepared a field and you go out to the field after you have applied the fertilizer and you have watered the soil and you start seeing the shoots of wheat or barley or the young plants of alfalfa spring up like magic from the soil. I know the joy of what it is like to go out in the middle of the night and to watch a baby calf being born and then, within 4 or 5 hours, to watch the baby calf begin to stand on its legs, suck on the milk, and then be out prancing around within 12 hours. It is almost a spiritual experience when you think about the beauty of nature that you get to experience firsthand as a rancher and as a farmer.

I know the joys of being there for harvest time. I know the joy of being on a combine and watching the golden color of the grain collected in the combine and dumping it out through the chutes into the trucks that take it into the bins for storage. I know the joy of putting up stacks of hay, 20,000 bales of the greenest hay that is possible. It makes you proud when your haystack is finally completed. I know all the joys that come with farming from what you get to see on the land itself.

I also know the joy that comes from the effort where a family works together, where you have, in many cases around America, family farmers and ranchers who have been on the same land for generations, as is the case with my family, where they have been on the same farm for five generations. I know the joy and special meaning of those lands, where you know the reality of every fencepost because it was my great-grandfather who put that fencepost up. I know where the ditches were built in our case on our ranch on May 15 of 1857, when they were finally adjudicated and given a water right for that ditch. We know the reality of our land and our water.

There needs to be voices in the Senate, Democrats, such as the Presiding Officer from Pennsylvania, and Republicans as well who come up and say: We are not going to let rural America down. We are not going to let this farm bill die. We are not going to let those who have some political agenda kill this farm bill, to turn their back on rural America and do what they are trying to do. It is unconscionable that they would be engaging on that agenda.

Like I know the joys of farming, I also know the hardships that come as a rancher and a farmer. I know the concerns you can have when you have cut a crop of hay and you see the clouds coming up at 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, knowing that maybe before you get to a point where you are going to bale the hay, you are going to have a crop that will be ruined. I also know the fear of watching those clouds rise over the horizon, when you can know from the color of the cloud itself that a hailstorm is on the way and you wonder whether that storm is going to hit your crop or it is going to hit a neighbor's crop, whether devastation is going to be caused by that storm.

I also know the pain of being in a position where ranchers, farmers go to the bank and they say to the banker: I need some assistance because I can't afford to pay back my operating line because either the prices are too low this year or because we have had some kind of disaster that has affected our ability to pay you back.

I know farmers and ranchers personally who have lost their farms, who have lost their ranches, and there is nothing that is anymore painful than going to those auctions and watching those farmers and ranchers who have built their life and their entire dream around their farm or their ranch and the equipment they have and being there in a position where they are having to sell what, essentially, is the soul of their life, their farm or their ranch.

So what we do here today—what we are doing here on this farm bill—in incredibly important for rural America. It is incredibly important for farmers and ranchers. It is incredibly important for those of us who want to feed this Nation. Yet, somehow, as I see the debate taking place here, at last count there were some 255 amendments to this farm bill. Well, why are there 255 amendments to this farm bill, when we have been working on this legislation for a number of different years?

The distinguished ranking member of the committee, Senator CHAMBLISS, started to hold hearings on the farm bill several years ago. He held them all over the country—from Iowa to Georgia to other places. Then Senator HARKIN, the chairman of the committee, held hearings in my State of Colorado on the farm bill, held hearings all over the country—each of us working to produce the very best farm bill we possibly could.

In my own State of Colorado, I worked with the great agricultural organizations—from the Colorado Cattlemen's Association to the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union to a whole host of others—to make sure we were putting together the very best farm bill for America.

It is a farm bill that, in my view, is one which would give us a great opportunity to revitalize rural America, to make sure that when we look back at the dawn of this century we did not allow rural America to be sunsetted but that instead we reinvigorated rural America in a way that has not ever happened before.

We have some great opportunities to do that because this farm bill is not just about farms; it is about fuel, it is about our energy security, it is about the future of our country in so many different ways. Yet we are being stalled here. We are not being allowed to move forward to consider this legislation and the substance of this legislation.

Let me say from my point of view, when I look at the future of agriculture, the future of ranching, and the future of rural America, what I see. First, I see great promise, and then I see great hope. I see great promise and great hope if we can do for rural development that which needs to be done.

We know today that per capita income in rural America is a lot less than it is in urban America. We know today that the infrastructure issues that are faced in the small towns of rural America exceed the capacity of those communities to be able to deal with those infrastructure needs by multiple times. We know that in many towns in every one of the 50 States, and represented here, you can go through those towns and you can see what has happened as rural America has been more and more forgotten year after year.

As to the town of Antonito, located within 5 miles of part of our ranch, you can drive in that town today and can see the devastation of a great part of rural America. At one point in time there were four or five gas stations in the town of Antonito. Today, there is one gas station. At one point in time in this town of Antonito, which has a population of less than 1,000, there used be a number of different grocery stores to go and buy your food. I remember ShopRite because that is where I used to go and buy lunch sometimes when I was working out on the farm. ShopRite has closed. So have other stores. There is only one small store that survives today. You see the boarded-up streets of that town where probably 50 percent of all of the buildings today are vacant.

You see a whole host of other problems in rural America. What we have tried to do with this farm bill is to address those issues. If we are successful—as we should be—if we are successful—as we must be, as we are required to do if we are going to do our job—then we are going to open a new chapter of opportunity for America and for rural America.

That chapter of opportunity has several very important features to it. First, it will make sure we have food security for the United States of America. We do not want to become dependent on foreign sources for our food in the same say we have for oil. For me, for the time I have been in public service—and before—I have had a sign on my desk that says: "No farms, no food." So no matter where you are, the 300 million people of America every day should remind themselves of that reality: "No farms, no food." This is about the food security of our Nation.

Secondly, the vision that we have with this farm bill we have worked on so hard for so many years is that we will contribute significantly to making sure we get rid of our addiction to foreign oil and that we grow our way to energy independence. The energy aspects of title IX of this farm bill are the most robust in the history of the United States of America. What you will see with this legislation, as it is implemented, is a rural America helping us grow our way to energy independence.

Senator GRASSLEY and I cosponsored legislation, a resolution which passed both this body as well as the House of Representatives, that says we can grow 25 percent of our energy from renewable energy resources. That is the ambitious vision that is included in this legislation. The energy components of the farm bill are incredibly important to the national security of the United States, to the environmental security of our world, as well as to the economic opportunities for America.

So I am hopeful we will open this chapter of energy opportunity with the passage of this farm bill, and that we will get it done as soon as possible.

Finally, when we think about the great conservationists of our country, there are no better people to take care of their land and their water than those who depend on it for a living. If you are a farmer or you are a rancher, you know you have to take care of your land and your water because that is your way of life. If something happens to your land and to your water, your way of life is taken away from you. So the conservation programs which are such a major part of this legislation are a keystone to the future of how we take care of our planet.

This legislation, under the leadership of Senator HARKIN, is the best legislation that has ever come forward on a farm bill with respect to the many conservation programs that include the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, and a whole host of other programs that are going to be important to make sure we have the best conservation agenda possible for our Nation.

In conclusion, I would make a plea to my colleagues, and that is that we work together to narrow down the number of amendments that need to be considered, and that we set about a process that will bring about a conclusion to this farm bill, so that then we can go to conference and we can get a farm bill that is a good farm bill for America, delivered to the President.

I also say to my colleagues—and there are some—who want this bill killed, don't do it. Don't kill this bill. It is too important for this country. Across America, people ought to be beating the drums in every State, in every county, in every village, on every farm and every ranch. They ought to be beating the drums and using their

telephones calling the Members of this Senate, telling us we ought not to leave here until the job is done. And the job will be done when we get this farm bill adopted by this Senate, which I predict if this bill, in its current fashion, were to be brought to a vote today, it would pass with about 70 to 75 votes.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Colorado. He comes to the Senate with an amazing background. I have sat and talked to him from time to time about his family. Senator SALAZAR's family came to the United States 400 or 500 years ago. They were some of the earliest settlers of our country, in the southwestern part of the United States. The founding of the city of Santa Fe, NM, his family was directly involved in; the naming of mountain ranges and rivers. They were there long before my ancestors ever had the good fortune to come to these shores.

I have also heard the stories of his youth, how he grew up on a ranch in Colorado with some very difficult circumstances, without the creature comforts many of us in the cities were used to. It is clearly in his blood and in his heart. When he speaks about this farm bill, he is not talking about some academic conversation but, rather, about the reason he came to the Senate, to make sure families such as his would have a voice in so many different areas but particularly when it came to this bill.

This monster of a bill, 1,600 pages, is a bill we take up every 5 years. It is the farm bill. But it includes so much more, as Senator SALAZAR has told us. It is not just about keeping our farms productive and our ranches profitable, but it is about rural America, small town America, the America of the Senator's youth, and the America I was fortunate enough to represent as a Congressman in downstate Illinois for so long.

His statement on the subject is not just another political speech. I know it came from the heart. I thank him for reminding us about the importance of this bill to small town America, to farmers and ranchers across America, and why these very practical, commonsense, hardheaded folks would find it hard to understand what is happening on the Senate floor over the last week and a half.

You see, for 10 days we have virtually tied up and stopped the Senate in the consideration of this farm bill. It should have been passed a long time ago. When you take a look back at previous farm bills, in 1990 there were 7 days of consideration of the farm bill. Mr. President, 122 amendments were dealt with. There were only 2 that were not relevant to a farm bill—only 2—and 122 were.

In 1996, 4 days were spent on the farm bill, and 24 amendments were considered to the bill. None of them were about anything other than farming and agriculture.

In 2001 and 2002, there were about 16 days of consideration on the farm bill, with 53 amendments. Only one was offered that did not have anything to do with the farm bill, which was offered by Senator KYL of Arizona on the estate tax. There was one side-by-side amendment offered by Senator CONRAD. That was it.

Well, it is a different story today. Senator SALAZAR has told us. This morning, Senator REID, the majority leader, the Democratic leader, gave me a list of the Republican amendments they want to call on this farm bill. We have been tied in knots now for almost 10 days in the Senate because the Republicans refuse to come up with a list of amendments we could consider.

They finally came up with this list. When you take a look at the amendments on this list, you can understand what their game plan is. After all the time we spent in preparing this bill, it is very clear they do not want this bill to be called. They do not want us to debate it. They want to talk about everything under the Sun except a farm bill.

Here are a couple examples of things they think should be talked about: Senator MURKOWSKI of Alaska thinks the farm bill is a good time to talk about *Exxon Valdez* litigation. Senator KYL of Arizona believes this is the tax bill, so he wants to talk about the alternative minimum tax. In fact, he has filed at least one amendment, maybe more, on the subject. Senator LOTT, the Republican whip, thinks this is a good tax bill, too. Let's get into a debate about the alternative minimum tax, an issue which clearly we will debate and will decide before the end of the year.

Senator COBURN believes we should talk about the estate tax. Senator MCCONNELL also wants to talk about the estate tax. He also wants to talk about the alternative minimum tax. Senator STEVENS of Alaska wants to talk about protecting kids from online predators. I am all for that. I am trying to figure out what the connection is with the farm bill, though.

Senator GREGG is one of the most prolific when it comes to producing amendments which have little or nothing to do with the farm bill. He wants us to get into a debate on the mortgage crisis in America. It truly is a crisis. He thinks the farm bill is the place to do it. He wants to talk about immigration, too, while we are on the farm bill—not ag workers and immigrants brought in for that purpose—but the issue of driver's licenses for the undocumented. He also thinks it is important for us to get into an issue of collective bargaining for firefighters. I happen to be a cosponsor of that bill. I never would have dreamed that amendment should be offered on a farm bill. Senator GREGG of New Hampshire—I don't know how many farmers there are in his State. I don't know what they grow; I am sure they are very good people—has decided their interests have to be set aside. He has other things he wants to talk about.

He also has the notion in which he thinks, in addition to immigration, mortgages, firefighters' right to collective bargaining, we should in the farm bill say women who live in rural areas of America will be denied the right to sue doctors guilty of malpractice. Women in rural areas will have a limited legal right to sue doctors guilty of malpractice. Well, I am sure the rural women of America are grateful Senator GREGG wants to make sure they are a special class, unable to use their constitutional legal rights in court if they are injured or a member of their family is killed as a result of medical malpractice. He thinks that belongs on the farm bill. He also has one about the Gulf of Mexico. I will have to dig into that. He has gone far afield. I think he turned his legislative staff loose and said: Got any ideas? Let's put an amendment on the farm bill.

Senator DOLE wants to get into taxes. It goes on and on; page after page of amendments.

Well, clearly, we can't consider those amendments if we are serious about passing a farm bill. So what Senator REID and Senator HARKIN, the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, did was say to the Republican side: Let's get serious. Let's get down to business. Let's cooperate. Let's bring up the amendments that relate to the farm bill, and let's do it on a bipartisan basis.

So this morning Senator HARKIN said: How about starting with the amendment of the Senator from North Dakota, Senator DORGAN, cosponsored by Senator GRASSLEY, a Republican of Iowa. Let's have limited time for debate, and then let's vote on it. Well, Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS of Georgia, the ranking Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, objected. He didn't want to bring up a bipartisan amendment to be debated for 60 minutes and vote on it.

Then Senator HARKIN said: Well, let's pick another bipartisan amendment, the Lugar-Lautenberg amendment regarding farm program reform, 2 hours of debate and a vote. Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS, the Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, objected.

Senator HARKIN, undaunted, then suggested that Senator PAT ROBERTS of Kansas, a man who has an extensive background in the House and Senate on ag programs, be given 90 minutes on his amendment, and then a vote. Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS, the Republican ranking member on the Senate Agriculture Committee, objected to even calling up his colleague's amendment for a vote. Do you see a pattern emerging? It isn't so much about amendments and votes; it is a matter of stopping the bill.

Senator HARKIN, indefatigable, then suggested that Senator STEVENS of Alaska—another Republican—be allowed to call up his amendment with 60

minutes of debate and a vote. Senator CHAMBLISS, still stuck on the agenda of stopping this bill, objected.

Then Senator HARKIN, showing the magnanimity of a great corn husker from Iowa, suggested we proceed to the amendment by Senator ALLARD, a Republican from Colorado, 60 minutes of debate and a vote. Senator CHAMBLISS, unmoved by the generosity of Senator HARKIN, objected. Five requests, every one of them but one an amendment either sponsored by a Republican or cosponsored by a Republican, and the Republicans objected.

Well, you don't need to be a C–SPAN addict to figure out what is going on. The Republicans don't want us to finish the farm bill. After months and months of hearings, after an elaborate process, after negotiations and compromises on both sides, after a lot of hard work, 1,600 pages of policy are rejected by the Republicans. I am not surprised. This is the party that failed for 6 years—6 straight years—to pass the Water Resources Development Act, a critical bill for farmers in my State. This bill will provide the funds to upgrade the locks and dams so important for ag commerce. It wasn't a major priority for the Republican Congress. For 6 years, they ignored it, failed to pass it. We finally passed it this year, and last week, in a historic Senate vote, overrode the President's veto the 107th time it has occurred on the floor of the Senate. The Republicans, left to their own devices, couldn't pass the bill. When we finally passed it on a bipartisan basis, their President vetoed it, and they joined us in overriding the veto.

Now comes the farm bill, which doesn't come around that often—it has been about 5 years—and they want to stop this one too. They want to stop it by killing it with amendments. Senator HARKIN has gone out of his way to give them votes and debate on critical amendments that do relate to the farm bill, but that is not their strategy and that is not their goal. Their goal is to kill the farm bill. I am not sure why.

In my State, I would hazard a guess that there are more Republicans who are farmers than Democrats. It doesn't make much difference from my point of view as a Senator; I am going to help farmers in general, and their political identity is secondary. But why would they turn their backs on so many farmers across America when we have a chance to pass this farm bill? Why wouldn't they agree to a reasonable number of amendments that stick with the farm bill and what it is all about? Well, because, frankly, they don't want us to achieve the goal of passing the farm bill. It isn't new to many of us. We have seen it happen over and over again.

We have something in the Senate called a filibuster, and a filibuster goes back in history at least 90 years. We said at that time, any Senator can stop any bill from being debated and considered. About 90 years ago, we amended that and said: Well, I will tell you, if 67 Senators step forward and say we want to go to the bill anyway, they can overrule that one Senator who said no—67. That was back 90 years ago. About 40 years ago, that was changed to 60 Senators. So you have a filibuster, which is an attempt to stop the debate, stop the progress of the bill, and if 60 Senators will step forward and say we disagree, then you move forward with the amendment, you move forward with the bill. That is the filibuster in the simplest terms.

In the history of the Senate, the most prolific use of the filibuster to delay votes and kill bills produced 58—58—filibusters over 2 years—58 over 2 years. Well, our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle are about to break through that record dramatically. Senator STABENOW has created this chart. It shows to date 52 Republican filibusters on motions for cloture—52 this year. We still have another year and 2 months to go. The Republicans have tried to stop legislation on this floor with a filibuster and a motion for cloture 52 times. So this is certainly going to be the Republican Senate on steroids when it comes to filibusters. They are going to bust through the old record, and they are going to stop everything they can, including a bipartisan farm bill.

They accomplished so little when they were in charge and in control that they want to make sure we accomplish as little as possible. That is unfortunate. It is unfortunate because the American people want us to cooperate. They want us to compromise. They want us to try to come up with legislation that solves America's problems, not squabble and fight and exalt our differences.

Luckily, there have been a few things—in fact, a significant number of things—that have been enacted by this Congress, despite 52 filibusters. I think back on passing the increase in the minimum wage, and I think it was the first time in 10 years we finally passed an increase in the Federal minimum wage. We passed historic legislation to provide student loans for students from families with limited means, reducing the cost of those loans and forgiving some of those loans. We passed that. We also managed to pass the Children's Health Insurance Program, a program that would extend coverage to another 4 million uninsured children in America—children who weren't the poorest, because those kids are taken care of in our caring Nation; and not the luckiest, because their parents don't have health insurance—but those caught right in the middle. Mom and dad go to work, no benefits, and we had a program that said let's help them. Let's provide private health insurance for those kids. Well, the President stopped that, vetoed it, and the Republicans refused to override that veto. We passed it, not once but twice, despite the odds against us in passing important legislation.

I think about stem cell research, too—the first President in history to have a Federal prohibition against medical research when it involves stem cells. We passed it with a bipartisan vote to override this prohibition. The President vetoed it.

So time and again, whether it is help for education or health care, we have been up against it: The failure of the Republicans to cooperate and pass the legislation, or the President's veto that they are afraid to override. That, I think, is the story of the Republican strategy of this session. It puzzles me. Do they think this is a winning strategy in America, a party so bereft of ideas and policies that all they can do is stop us?

This bill is not a Democratic bill, this farm bill. I think Senator CHAMBLISS, if he were on the floor today, would readily concede he played a big role in writing this bill. Senator ROBERTS of Kansas played a major role in writing this bill. Two Republican Senators who were involved in this legislation. Yet when it comes to trying to pass it, unfortunately, Senator CHAMBLISS objected five times in our attempts to bring this bill forward and move it forward.

They don't want this Senate to achieve anything, whether it is a farm bill or whatever it happens to be. But we are not going to quit. We are not going to be discouraged. We can only hope that those who follow this debate will respond. If you live in rural America, small town America, a farm family, a ranching family; if you know the importance of rural electric; if you know what it means to have soil and water conservation programs to protect the area you live in; if you think that bringing broadband Internet to all of America, including small towns and rural areas is important; if you think our Food Stamp Program to make sure the poorest in our country have something to eat is important; if you are worried about school lunch programs and whether they have good quality so our kids get nutritious food; if you happen to believe that the WIC Program, which is a program which helps low-income mothers and their babies is important; if you believe that making certain our farm sector in America can survive difficult times—a bad year—whether it is a drought or a flood, a tornado; if you think it is important we have programs to protect that part of America; if you believe we need to have alternative sources of fuel and not be at the mercy of OPEC and the Middle East sheiks and we should be producing ethanol and other forms of fuel that can help us move toward energy independence; if you think any of those things are important, I encourage you to contact your Senator and tell them to get moving.

Ten days on the farm bill with nothing happening is unacceptable. It is the Senate at its worst. It is the minority with their program at its worst.

We need to have bipartisan cooperation. Senator HARKIN tried repeatedly.

We will keep trying. But if the object of the Republicans is to run out the clock, to have us break and go home for Thanksgiving with no farm bill passed, I assume they can achieve that. Boy, talk about bragging rights, going home to your State and saying: We stopped the farm bill. You know, every 5 years, it comes around. We stopped it cold, even though it is a bipartisan bill. That is what they will be able to brag about.

Senator GREGG has told me he has lots of amendments. He is thinking of even more. He is ingenious when it comes to different subjects, and I am sure his staff is busy right now thinking of other amendments they can add to this bill that have nothing to do with the farm bill, and he is going to want to ask that we vote on every single one of them. We could all do that. I guess there would be some personal satisfaction, but at the end of the day, very little legislation and very little to show for our efforts. This list, this three-page list of Republican amendments, is an indication of bad faith. If they are serious about a farm bill—and we should be—let's agree to a reasonable number of germane, relevant amendments that have something to do with the farm bill. Let's not make this a bill for all seasons; let's make this a bill for America's agricultural sector that counts on us.

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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess today from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. 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. BROWN. Mr. President, we have for many weeks now been debating in this Chamber the 2007 farm bill. In my State of Ohio, passage of this legislation is essential to ensuring the well-being of middle-class and low-income families throughout our State. The bill is an agriculture bill, it is a hunger bill, it is an energy bill, it is a conservation bill. Melding these priorities is not easy. Melding these priorities into a bill that helps farmers, that advances our Nation's energy goals, that increases the focus on conservation, and that bolsters nutrition programs is a profound accomplishment.

As we debate the complex components of this legislation, I applaud Chairman TOM HARKIN, a Senator from Iowa, for his leadership. We must never lose sight that this bill is about families. Families in Ohio and across the Nation are depending on us to pass this legislation in a timely manner.

This spring, I traveled throughout Ohio and heard directly from farmers about what they need in this year's farm bill. They need the same thing any other entrepreneur needs—a fair shake. They need a safety net that makes sense given the revenue fluctuations they experience. They need for Washington rhetoric about conservation and alternative energy to translate into commonsense programs and meaningful incentives.

This bill will help family farmers in Ohio and in New Jersey, the State of the Presiding Officer, and across our country by strengthening and diversifying the farm safety net. Current farm programs protect farmers from chronically low prices. However, these programs do little to help farmers when prices are high but yields are low, resulting in a revenue shortfall. By targeting overall revenue rather than simply price, farmers can receive better protection against swings in prices and natural disasters.

Currently, crop prices are high but volatile. Farmers' input costs are rising, as well as their overall risks. Farmers should be given the opportunity to choose an alternative safety net if it better allows them to manage their own farm's risk in today's uncertain and evolving farm environment.

The average crop revenue program, brought to this bill by Senator DURBIN, Chairman HARKIN, and me, gives farmers a choice. The average crop revenue program will matter to help those farmers with a safety net. For the first time ever, farmers will be able to enroll in a program—it is their choice; they don't have to—they can enroll in a program that insures against revenue instability which for many farmers makes more sense than a price-focused safety net, which is the old farm program.

As I traveled around Ohio, I met with Mark Schweibert, a corn farmer in Henry County in northwest Ohio who will likely take advantage of average crop revenue. He will be supplying corn to one of the first ethanol plants in Ohio. I met that same week with Ralph Dull, a hog farmer from Montgomery County, who uses wind turbines to provide on-farm energy.

This farm bill makes a commitment to move beyond antiquated energy sources and to prepare American agriculture to lead the world in renewable energy production. With the right resources, the right incentives, farmers can help decrease our dependence on foreign oil and produce cleaner, sustainable, renewable energy. In a State such as Ohio, with a talented labor force and a proud manufacturing history, that just doesn't mean stronger farms, more prosperous farms; it means a better Ohio and a stronger economy.

This bill will provide more than $4 billion in additional funding for conservation programs to help farmers protect our water quality, expand our wildlife habitat, and preserve endangered farmland. And this bill does something else equally important: It fights hunger.

Earlier this year, when the Agriculture Committee began this process, we heard from Rhonda Stewart of Hamilton, OH. Rhonda Stewart, a single mother, came with her young son. She told us a story. She told us that she works a full-time job, has no health care, and makes about, I believe, $9 an hour. She teaches Sunday school, She is involved with the Cub Scouts for her son, and she is president of the PTA at her son's school. She plays by the rules. She works hard. She said that at the beginning of the month, as she is a food stamp beneficiary, she makes pork chops for her son once or twice that first week. Later on in the month, maybe she takes him to a fast food restaurant. Almost invariably at the end of the month, she says she sits down at the kitchen table and her son is eating dinner and she does not.

Her son says: Mom, what is wrong? Are you not hungry?

She says: I am not feeling well tonight.

For Rhonda Stewart, who teaches Sunday school, is involved with the Cub Scouts, is president of the PTA, works hard, pays her taxes, raises a son, is a food stamp beneficiary of $1 per person per meal, and $6 a day roughly for Rhonda Stewart does not go far enough. What we do in this Chamber can help Rhonda Stewart, her family, and millions of families such as hers. The farm bill increases food stamp benefits and indexes those benefits to inflation. When the purchasing power of food stamps erodes, so does our Nation's progress against hunger. We are the wealthiest country in the world. We are a caring, compassionate people. Families in our country, especially families who work hard, such as Rhonda Stewart and her family, should not go hungry.

I am pleased with the overall bill. There are some things we can do to improve it. The public is perfectly willing to help family farmers when they need it, as we should. However, taxpayers will not support massive payments to farms that have substantial net incomes or huge payments to farmers who are not really farmers, who have huge off-farm income and really just happen to own farmland.

I will be offering an amendment to return some of the excess subsidies in the Crop Insurance Program to the American taxpayers and to provide funding for the McGovern-Dole program.

We have heard, of course, tales of woe from the crop insurance industry over

the past few weeks as they furiously lobby against this amendment. But the facts tell a different story. Instead of letting the crop insurance industry exceed even their already record returns, I think we will get far better returns with modest investments at home and abroad. The McGovern-Dole program—which would be funded with part of the revenues from the crop insurance amendment—provides funding for school lunches in developing nations. The potential benefits are immense for our national security. We responded decades ago to a hostile Communist threat in Europe with the Marshall Plan. Our best response to a hostile threat overseas is to provide help in nutrition and education for people who desperately need it.

Passage of the 2007 farm bill is not just a responsible thing to do for this body, it is the right thing to do for our families, for our farmers, and for our Nation.

I yield the floor. 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. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I personally thank you for your courtesy in taking over the Presiding Officer duties so that I may make these comments. I appreciate your courtesy.

IRAQ

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, 3 weeks ago, I began a series of speeches on the price America is paying for the failed war in Iraq, and I wish to continue today. The number of American service men and women killed in action has risen to 3,855, and with every death of a husband or wife, a son or daughter, a mom or dad, the suffering of a family soars to that place where numbers do not matter, to that place where pain is beyond infinite.

I have spoken about what the war has cost us financially. Since the war began more than 4 long years ago, we have spent over $455 billion. Over the long run, it will cost almost $2 trillion. Again, those are not just numbers, those were cargo scanners that could have been installed at our ports, safer bridges that could have been built, life-saving cancer research that could have been done, children who could have been educated, lives that could have been saved—a world of possibilities that passed by us all. I have tried to help us all imagine what we are giving up by failing to awaken ourselves from the living nightmare that is the war in Iraq.

Today, I wish to talk about the people who have given so much, people who will be paying for this war for the rest of their lives—our veterans and their families.

On Sunday, we celebrated Veterans Day. I wish to talk about how much we could do for those who have served with the amount of money we have used to send them into harm's way.

Mr. President, 28,451 troops have come back from Iraq with horrible wounds. Some wounds are physical. Some have had their legs or arms blown off by bombs. Some are blind from shrapnel in their eyes.

And some wounds are mental. Denying that war can wound a brain along with the rest of the body is denying so many veterans' nightmares, flashbacks, shocks or changes in personality so radical—so radical—that loved ones can no longer recognize the person they once knew.

Today, Army researchers are releasing a study showing that the full psychological impact of the war tends to hit soldiers even harder 6 months after they have returned from the war. So the ranks of those suffering are about to grow by many thousands.

Beyond the human cost of these injuries, the financial costs to our society are tremendous. A report released by Physicians for Social Responsibility puts the cost of medical care and disability benefits for veterans returning from Iraq at over $660 billion. So in a very direct sense, the war has been more than twice as financially expensive as we might think just looking at the combat costs.

The human and financial costs don't end with just health care. Here is a shocking statistic, Mr. President: Veterans make up one in four homeless people in this country. That means almost 200,000 veterans don't have a home to go back to tonight. Experts say the rates of homelessness are spiraling up faster than they did after the war in Vietnam.

Mr. President, that is a moral outrage. These people put their lives on the line for our country, no questions asked. It is a shame our men and women in uniform would be sent to patrol the streets of Baghdad only to have to come back and sleep on the streets of their own hometowns.

That is why Democrats in Congress are working to give veterans the support they deserve. The Senate recently passed a bill that contains the largest increase in funding for our veterans in history. We are reinvigorating our Veterans Affairs Department with a record $87 billion, which is several billion dollars more than President Bush said he was willing to spend on our veterans, with $37 billion for veterans health care. Billions of dollars are headed to expand medical services and beef up the administrative side so vets spend less time waiting to get their benefits.

Now, compare this to the costs of combat. Let's compare the investment in the men and women who serve in the uniform of the United States to the costs of combat. We could pay for the entire Veterans Health Administration budget—the entire Veterans Health Administration budget, all $37 billion—with what we spend in less than 4 months of combat in Iraq. Take care of every veteran, in terms of the veterans health care system. We could pay for that entire budget, $37 billion, with what we spend in less than 4 months of combat in Iraq. And some say it is too much? Where are their priorities?

Just as important as making sure vets have excellent health care is making sure they have an opportunity to get an excellent education. I am proud to be a cosponsor of a bill offered by Senator WEBB that would be the biggest boost to veterans education since World War II. Preparing thousands of veterans to enter the civilian workforce with a first-rate education would cost about $5.4 billion next year—$5.4 billion—for, in essence, a new GI education bill. In other words, it would cost what it takes to fund combat in Iraq for roughly 2 weeks to make sure thousands of veterans can enter the civilian workforce when they come back.

Here is one of our challenges. Many of our vets come back and find the jobs they once had are no longer there. They find themselves, after serving their Nation, unemployed. The type of first-rate education we could give them would clearly create an opportunity to ensure they would have greater skills, greater employability, and that would take roughly 2 weeks of funding for the war in Iraq.

Democrats in Congress are also working to end the pandemic of homelessness. I joined with Senator OBAMA to support a bill called Homes for Heroes. The bill would establish permanent housing and services for low-income veterans and their families. It would make more rental assistance available to help providers of veteran housing and services, and focus more attention on vets who are homeless. Of course, the more soldiers who go off to war, the more necessary this bill becomes.

The portion of the bill that helps community and nonprofit organizations offer housing to low-income veterans would require about $225 million to fund. We grind up enough money to house thousands of veterans in 16 hours in Iraq—not even a day. The costs of combat compared to the opportunity to providing a year of expanded housing for homeless veterans would cost the same as 16 hours of the amount we spend in Iraq. Some say too much. Where are your values? What are your priorities? How is it that you choose?

Of course, the price we pay in dollars can never compare to the price our wounded warriors and their families pay in lost limbs, in haunted dreams, and in lives changed forever. That is a price not one more soldier should be asked to pay for a pointless war. In the meantime, we need to act fast to get returning vets the help they need. Veterans got their wounds following their

Government's orders. Those wounds can only heal if the Government reorders its priorities.

Democrats wanted to send the bill increasing funding for veterans to the President before Veterans Day, but President Bush is trying to use veterans funding as an excuse to veto other programs on which America depends. The President has also said funding a new GI bill for veterans' education is too expensive. Too expensive. Never have calls for fiscal responsibility been so morally irresponsible.

First and foremost, we can never forget the price tag our veterans have ultimately paid with their service, and the price tag for veterans services wouldn't be so high if this administration didn't recklessly send them into harm's way to begin with. The President seems to think we can't afford to spend on both veterans health and children's health. He seems to think we can't afford to treat the wounds our soldiers suffer and fund cancer research to save civilians from that brutal killer. He seems to think we can't afford to ensure the safety of our returning soldiers and make sure all Americans find safety in the workplace. But he did seem to think we could afford to chase Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan—as we should have—and then invade Iraq, even though both situations today are major challenges. He did seem to think we could fight a $2 trillion war in Iraq and give a massive tax cut to millionaires and billionaires, even though the economy hovers near recession and most American families are no better off now than they were at the beginning of this administration. He did seem to think he could sign every bill—every bill—the Republican-controlled Congress sent him, running up a debt to the tune of $3 trillion, borrowing money from foreign countries to pay for a war that makes no sense, ignoring pressing national priorities, underfunding care for veterans, leaving our ports vulnerable, leaving our educational systems underfunded, leaving the massive crisis in global climate change completely ignored, leaving children in this country without health care—because we have wanted to expand the number of uninsured children who have no health care coverage to those who would have health care coverage under our bill—leaving 47 million Americans with no health insurance whatsoever, and he thought that he could get away with all of it.

Well, Mr. President, now is the time for us to stand up and say: Sometimes you can't have it both ways. When it comes to children's health, when it comes to education and homeland security and veterans care, we had better be getting all the support we need.

On Sunday, our Nation devoted a day to those who devoted themselves to the Nation for military service. We took that day to celebrate how lucky we are—how lucky we are—and how unbelievably blessed we are as a nation to have such brave men and women rise again and again to offer their service when they hear the call. I hope we took that day to offer not just words but deeds of thanks.

A grateful nation not only goes to a Veterans Day observance or marches in a Memorial Day parade, as we should, but a grateful nation shows their gratitude by how we treat veterans in terms of getting them the health care they need, how we treat them in terms of taking care of their disabilities, and how we take care of the survivors of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. That is the true measure of a grateful nation.

We took that day to remember the duty we have to them because of the devotion they have shown to us. Veterans Day is about a fundamental principle. When soldiers are shipped off to war, if we can look them in the eye and tell them there is a good reason we are waving goodbye, we better be able to look them in the eye when they come back and tell them we mean it when we say: Welcome home.

With 171,000 troops still in Iraq, I hope America's message on Sunday was: We look forward to the soonest possible year when you will celebrate Veterans Day here with all of us. We welcome you back, and we honor you by how we take care of you in your health care, for those who have disabilities, and how we have taken care of the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. That will be the true measure of whether we are a grateful nation.

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.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am here to speak on the farm bill once again. I have done this before, but I wish to urge my colleagues across the aisle to move on this farm bill. I think it is incredibly important for my State of Minnesota and for our country that we move forward.

Minnesota is one of the largest agricultural States in the Nation. As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, where we worked hard to reach a bipartisan compromise under the leadership of Chairman HARKIN and Ranking Member CHAMBLISS, as well as Senator CONRAD and Senator BAUCUS—they worked hard on this—I believe we need to move forward. The bipartisan farm bill before us will invest in our farms and our rural communities so they will be a strong, growing, and innovative part of the 21st Century.

I have seen firsthand in my State, where I visited all 87 counties 2 years in a row, what the 2002 farm bill meant for rural America. It revitalized our communities. It gave our farmers the chance to take a risk and expand their production. We are on the cusp of starting to move forward toward energy independence. We are on the cusp of not depending on these oil cartels in the Mideast and instead investing in the farmers and the workers of the Midwest. I do not believe we should turn away from that. I believe it is time to move forward.

America's farm safety net was created during the Great Depression as an essential reform to help support rural communities and protect struggling family farmers from the financial shocks of volatile prices and equally volatile weather. Almost 75 years later, the reasons for maintaining that safety net still exist.

As I said, the 2002 farm bill spurred rural development by allowing farmers across Minnesota and across this country to expand production. Because of the gains in productivity and the expansion of the last farm bill, the 2002 farm bill came in, under a 10-year period, $17 billion under budget.

As we continue to debate the 2007 farm bill—and I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will allow us to debate this farm bill—it is important not to underestimate the value of a strong farm bill. That is why, as a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I support this bill.

I do believe, as I know the Presiding Officer does, there should be more reform. I support the Dorgan-Grassley amendment to put some limits on subsidies. I also believe we should have some limits on eligibility—I suggest $750,000 for a full-time farmer, $250,000 income for a part-time farmer. I don't think there are the significant limits we need in the current farm bill. But, that said, we are not even going to be able to get to talk about those important reforms if we do not allow this bill to move forward. I think that is what our leadership is trying to do every day with this farm bill.

One of the issues that most interests me about this bill is the increased focus on cellulosic-based ethanol. That is a part our office worked on. Actually, the bill we drafted is a part of this bill. The idea is to build on our corn-based ethanol and soybean-based biodiesel to a new generation of cellulosic ethanol. It is better for the environment. It puts carbon back in the soil and is higher in energy content. We are not going to get there unless we have the incentives in place.

I know there are people who complain about ethanol, but I tell you I think of it as the computer industry in the 1970s, when the computers were in these huge rooms and they got more and more efficient and changed our country. It is the same with fuel. Right now we are at the infancy of an industry, ethanol and biomass and other kinds of farm-based fuel. We are at the beginning. If we let the oil companies have their way and tell us it is stopping them from building their refineries and allow them to get in the way

and not allow us to retail the fuel as we should—there are outrageous stories of them not allowing the prices to be posted or the pumps to be put in. There are only 1,200 ethanol pumps in this country and 320 of them are in my State, but who is counting. If we are going to move forward with biomass and with our own energy, we have to allow this industry to develop.

When I talk to farmers across our State, what they like most about the 2002 farm bill is the safety net and the way it worked. It worked well for the first time in a long time. What we did with this farm bill was basically allow that safety net to stay in place and also rebalance the commodity programs to be more equitable for some northern crops such as wheat, oats, barley, soybeans, and canola.

I met with our wheat and barley growers a few hours ago. They are one of the many groups that care a lot about this. Again, they revitalized a lot of the areas of our State that had been troubled because of the fact that we have a thriving rural economy.

Another top priority for Minnesota farmers was creating a permanent program for disaster assistance. I thank Senator BAUCUS and the Finance Committee for their work in this area. Farmers are tired of coming back to Congress every year with a tin cup. We have been hit by drought, flooding, and everything in between. They had to wait for 3 years for Congress to pass the ad hoc disaster relief bill, and the permanent program of disaster relief will give farmers the security they need in moving forward.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are from farm States to think about the importance of this disaster program for their States.

The farm bill is not, as we know, just about the commodity programs and the safety net. It is also about energy. It is also, as I mentioned, about biofuels. I mentioned the cellulosic piece of it that is so important. It also includes bipartisan legislation Senator CRAPO and I introduced to double the mandatory funding for the Biodiesel Education Program. Spreading the word about biodiesel to drivers and gas stations is very important if we are going to help that industry. Again, I urge every Senator who wants less dependence on foreign oil to look at the energy portion of this farm bill.

One of the things that has plagued our rural communities in the last decade or so is the inability for younger people to get involved in farming. The committee accepted my amendment to improve the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program. There are real opportunities today to start out in farming, especially in growing areas such as organic farming and energy production. But beginning farmers also face big obstacles, including limited access to credit and technical assistance and the high price of land.

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Programs in this farm bill provide mentoring and outreach for new farmers and training in business planning and credit building—the skills they need to succeed and to stay on the land. If you are concerned because you have seen fewer and fewer young people going into farming in your State, I urge you to move this bill forward.

As I said, there are a lot of good things for Minnesota and for our country in this farm bill. There is, however, one area that needs reform and that is that we need to stop urban millionaires from pocketing farm subsidies intended for hard-working farmers. Here are the facts in our State. Minnesota is the sixth largest agricultural-producing State in the Nation and, I would add, as we approach Thanksgiving, the No. 1 turkey producer in our country. I was able to judge a race recently between a Minnesota turkey and a Texas turkey at the King Turkey Days in Worthington, MN, and I would like to report that the Minnesota turkey won the race. The Texas turkey got too cold and had to be carried over the finish line.

Minnesota, as I said, is the sixth largest agricultural-producing State in the Nation. Nationally, 60 farms have collected more than $1 million each under the 2002 farm bill. None of them are in our State. The average income for Minnesota farms, after expenses, is $54,000, but under the current system, a part-time farmer can have an income as high as $2.5 million from outside sources and still qualify for Federal benefits.

I very strongly support this farm bill, but I also believe we need some reform in this area because it makes no sense to hand out payments to multimillionaires when this money should be targeted to family farmers and conservation and nutrition and other programs under the farm bill. Right now, nearly 600 residents of New York City, 559 residents of Washington, DC, and even 21 residents of Beverly Hills 90210 received Federal farm checks in the past 3 years. Some collected hundreds of thousands of dollars.

We have the opportunity to fix this in this farm bill because the administration has not been doing its job in enforcing the rules, so I say let's use this farm bill to do it. Already in this farm bill in both the House and the Senate we have gotten rid of the ''three entity'' rule, of which there is much abuse. The House bill does contain some income eligibility limits. I believe it is $1 million for a full-time farmer, $500,000 for the part-time farmer. We, in this farm bill, have an ability to go further, as I suggested, with an amendment for $750,000 for full time and $250,000 part time. The Dorgan-Grassley amendment, which passed this Chamber in the past, would keep subsidy levels at $250,000. You put that in this farm bill. If we don't have this farm bill, if our colleagues will not allow the Senate to proceed, if we are not allowed to make this reform which the administration has not enforced on its own—I believe this is a great opportunity for us.

For the reasons I laid out there for the energy title, which is forward thinking, for the conservation title, which is more funding and much more aggressive look at conservation, for the nutrition title, where we are finally promoting our fruits and vegetables and are doing new things to promote more healthy kids—these are all things that are different about this farm bill. If we rest on our laurels and don't do anything new, we are not going to be able to move in the direction we want for the energy revolution in this country.

When my daughter did a project for sixth grade on biofuels last year, she actually drew a map of the State of Minnesota.

She had two little dots that said ''Minneapolis'' and ''St. Paul,'' then she had a big circle that said ''Pine City, the home of farmer Tom Peterson.'' That is whom she had talked to about biofuels.

I tell you this story because the future for our economy in Minnesota and across the country, when you look at energy, the rural part of our country is going to have a big piece of this. It is necessary for that development.

If we do not pass this farm bill, we are not going to get there. I urge my colleagues, for that and many other reasons, to move forward with the 2007 farm bill.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 1429

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 3:30 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, Head Start Authorization; that it be considered under the following limitations; that there be 60 minutes of debate with respect to the conference report, with the time equally divided and controlled between the chair and ranking member of the HELP Committee, or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the conference report without further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 3:30 p.m.

Thereupon, at 2:01 p.m., the Senate recessed until 3:30 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. SANDERS).

IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1429) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of Friday, November 9, 2007.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will be 60 minutes of debate equally divided.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague, the Senator from Wyoming, Mr. ENZI, for his strong advocacy and extremely effective work on this legislation. I also thank the staff of the HELP committee for their work on this important piece of legislation. This is an important moment in the Senate because this reauthorization of Head Start focuses on the most vulnerable members of society, the children, and it delivers a message of hope for these children and their families.

HELP Committee members are extremely involved and active in all the matters that come before our committee, but never more than on issues of education and early childhood development. We have before us legislation that reflects a coming together of both parties and both chambers of Congress to address the needs of children in our society. Reflected in this legislation are the interest of some of those who aren't with us physically, colleagues who are involved in the Presidential campaign. Senator DODD, who has been a longtime leader in the Senate on children and children's interests, has had important suggestions and recommendations. BARACK OBAMA has followed this process very closely and has been in frequent communication with us. Senator CLINTON has been very much involved in crafting this legislation, as well as a number of other pieces of legislation we approved in the committee earlier today.

We welcome an overwhelming vote this afternoon. There was an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote in the House of Representatives, 381 to 36. I am hopeful we will have a similar expression of support in the Senate.

We have an hour. I know I have several colleagues who want to talk. I will yield myself 12 minutes. I don't know how much I have used so far.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 3½ minutes. Is that another 12 on top of the 3½?

Mr. KENNEDY. No, a total of 12. If the Chair will let me know when I have a minute and a half, I would appreciate that.

Planning for Head Start began in the early 1960s, before we knew all that we know today about how to best intervene and support the lives of young children living in poverty. At that time, as Attorney General, my brother Robert Kennedy decided to tackle the problem of juvenile delinquency. Research pointed to poverty as the root of the Nation's social and economic challenges. It was agreed that a strategy based on early education could be a significant part of the answer.

In August 1964, President Johnson and Congress launched the war on poverty by passing the Economic Opportunity Act. The Nation's poor numbered 10 million, with nearly half under the age of 12.

In the fall of that year, my brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver, convened a panel of experts in child development, education, public health, and social work to lay a foundation for the Head Start program. He envisioned a bold national commitment to prepare our neediest children for kindergarten and first grade. He conferred with experts like Dr. Edward Zigler, who is still a vigorous, forceful advocate for children, and they agreed that a comprehensive approach was needed. Preschool was the centerpiece of the plan, but a major emphasis was placed on health care and parent involvement, too.

The following year, Head Start came into being as an 8-week summer program. With the help of thousands of volunteers, it served 560,000 children through preschool classes, medical and dental care, and health services. Over the years, it would reach over 24 million.

Today the face of poverty and of America's neediest families has changed. The American workplace has changed, and our education system is being challenged to keep up with the global economy. Head Start has always adapted, finding new ways to respond to the demands on low-income, working families. But its mission has remained the same—to help our most vulnerable children succeed in school and in life.

When parents are asked what they most want to accomplish in life, their answer undoubtedly includes a desire to open the doors of opportunity for their children. They want a fair chance for their children to grow up in a healthy and safe environment, to graduate from high school and go on to college, and to achieve the American dream.

That dream should be available to every child in America. But far too often, families are still struggling to put food on the table, buy clothes for their children, pay the rent, or see a doctor. Poverty is again on the rise. Today, one out of every five children in America grows up poor.

Poverty has many dimensions. It is a labor issue, because pay is so low and workers are exploited. It is a civil rights issue, because so many African American and Latino families are often the ones left behind. It is a health care issue, because the health care that families in poverty receive is so substandard. Most of all, it is a children's issue, because the children of the poor have done nothing wrong. But they still pay the price.

It is our responsibility as a Nation to help those in need. The Federal bedrock of that commitment is Head Start. It has always been an important symbol of our responsibility to others. At its core are the values that shaped our democracy: Equity, opportunity, community empowerment, and economic progress.

Head Start is based on the premise that education is the key to the future and to breaking down the destructive forces of poverty.

It provides the starting point for a child's day, with a healthy meal each morning and a promise to parents that while they are at work and balancing two jobs, their children will see a doctor and dentist, and receive immunizations.

It provides children with the building blocks they need to enter school ready to learn. It teaches the social and emotional skills needed by children to pay attention in the classroom and get along well with others. It expands their vocabulary, gets them excited about reading, and teaches them to count.

It welcomes parents into its programs, gives them opportunities to make decisions about their child's learning and development, and sometimes helps families find a roof for over their head.

Over the years, with each new educational and developmental advance in research, we have learned more about how Head Start can be improved. And with that learning, modifications have been made to enable the program to be even more effective.

In 1972, the Child Development Associate program was established, to provide a standard of quality for Head Start teachers and aides.

In 1974, the reauthorization of Head Start established the comprehensive Program Performance Standards to guide Head Start centers in providing essential educational, health, and social services, and achieving parental involvement. The reauthorization also paved the way for a network of training and technical assistance activities to help Head Start agencies enhance the quality of their programs.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the Indian and Migrant Head Start programs were formed, and family service centers were established to combat illiteracy, substance abuse, and unemployment in Head Start communities. At that time, Head Start also began its important focus on improving transitions for preschool children to public schools.

In 1994, we created Early Head Start to serve low-income infants and toddlers in the first 3 years of their development. That legislation also led to the development of improved performance measures to assess outcomes in Head Start and new guidelines for monitoring Head Start programs.

The current reauthorization applies the lessons learned from the past with the new knowledge of child development and early education to enable Head Start to be even more successful in the years ahead.

There is no question that Head Start is effective. Our own federally mandated study of Head Start found that it expands children's vocabularies, and makes the greatest difference for those with the greatest needs. Head Start improves children's writing skills, and helps children grow in their social skills and behavior.

By the time Head Start children complete their kindergarten year, their skills and developmental abilities are near the national average, with scores of 99 in early literacy, 98 in early writing, 95 in early math, and 95 in vocabulary.

We are talking about the most disadvantaged children in America. They are often well behind in terms of their ability to enter school ready to start. Look at the results at the end of kindergarten. Head Start children catch up to their peers, to the national norm. It brings the children up so, hopefully, we will be, as a country and society, more equitable, more fair.

This reauthorization maintains high standards and comprehensive services in Head Start. It upgrades educational components of the program, and ensures that it delivers the skills and support that children need to succeed in kindergarten and the early grades. It promotes greater partnerships between Head Start programs and local schools, and ensures that services continue to be framed by the highly effective Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. It also provides a needed bridge for parents to their local schools, to promote greater coordination and ease the transition of children from preschool to kindergarten.

We also terminate the flawed National Reporting System, and ensure that new educational standards and measures used in Head Start will be informed by the National Academy of Sciences. Two years ago, the Government Accountability Office confirmed many of our long-standing concerns with this assessment, concluding that the test is not valid to make determinations about programs and students. The study also confirmed that the test was inconsistent with nationally-recognized testing standards, and unclear in its purpose.

This reauthorization ensures that any assessments used in Head Start will be valid and reliable, fair to children from all backgrounds, and measure the whole child. Head Start children and their families deserve nothing less.

Head Start teachers and staff are the heart and future of the program. They help children learn to identify letters and arrange the pieces of puzzles. They teach them to brush their teeth, wash their hands, make friends, and follow rules.

This reauthorization sets important and unprecedented goals for enhancing the skills and qualifications of Head Start teachers and staff. In this reauthorization, we are striving to help all teachers earn their associate's degree over the next 6 years, help half of all teachers in Head Start earn their bachelor's degree, and help all assistant teachers work toward completing a CDA or another early education credential.

These are ambitious goals. But we know that learning and development of young children require good teachers and that there is a strong link between educational qualifications and the quality of programs.

The quality of a program doesn't just depend on the educational background of its teachers, which is why we are also calling for professional development and a career advancement plan for every Head Start employee including family service workers, assistant teachers, and curriculum coordinators. We have established new partnerships to increase staff in Head Start who are prepared to serve the diverse children enrolled in the programs.

Most of all, we have worked to ensure that Head Start agencies have a dedicated stream of funds to provide needed training for teachers. The reauthorization dedicates $2 million this year to local training and improvement efforts, much of which will be used to improve and strengthen the Head Start workforce. We commit to confronting the persistent challenge of compensating Head Start teachers as the professionals that they are. Head Start teachers earn half the salary of kindergarten teachers, and turnover is about 11 percent per year.

This conference report commits 40 percent of new funds in Head Start to program quality and teacher salaries, to do more to attract and retain caring and committed leaders. It ensures that each Head Start Center will receive an annual cost-of-living increase to keep up with the rising costs of operation and overhead.

We grant additional flexibility in this reauthorization for Head Start to serve thousands of additional low-income children in need, by including families just above the Federal poverty level. It is essential for Head Start to prioritize its services to the neediest families in their communities. But this new flexibility enables those living near poverty and earning less than what they need to get by to receive assistance too. It is the right thing to do, and it is what Head Start is all about.

The reauthorization also makes a long-overdue commitment to expanding Head Start programs in Indian country, and programs for migrant and seasonal farmworkers. By reserving up to $20 million annually to expand services in these programs, we can hopefully reach an additional 5,500 migrant children and an additional 5,100 Native American children living in poverty. New provisions are also included to enhance services for homeless children, children who are English language learners, and children with disabilities in order to ensure that these populations receive the care and attention they deserve.

Accountability is a cornerstone of excellence and should start early. Head Start should be accountable for its commitment to provide safe and healthy learning environments, to support each child's individual pattern of development and learning, to build community partnerships in services to children, and to involve parents in their child's growth.

This reauthorization makes significant progress in increasing accountability and investing in excellence in Head Start. It continues the comprehensive monitoring that has become a hallmark of Head Start, and ensures that reviews are fair and balanced in order to account for challenges and strengths in programs. It also establishes a new system for the designation of Head Start grants, to be phased in over the next several years.

We know that the vast majority of Head Start programs provide outstanding services—fewer than 20 percent of programs are found to be deficient each year. But where serious deficiencies exist, we must see that substantial problems do not languish at the expense of children. If a local program is unable to meet Head Start's high standards of quality, timely action should be taken. This new system will facilitate accountability and funding decisions, and do so in a manner that is transparent, fair, and responsive to the local needs of families and children.

We have established greater accountability for enrollment in programs and delineated a clear system of governance in Head Start.

The reauthorization also takes important steps to expand Early Head Start. Since its inception, results have proven that Early Head Start is one of the most effective programs of the Department of Health and Human Services. In this legislation, we improve the training and assistance network serving Early Head Start and guarantee a dedicated expert in each State to work with programs to meet the needs of infants and toddlers. We also expand the screening available to infants exposed to trauma, violence, or other circumstances detrimental to their development. We commit to expanding Early Head Start to serve an additional 8,000 low-income infants and toddlers over the next 5 years.

As in elementary and secondary education, reform in early childhood education requires resources. Today, half of all children eligible for Head Start have no access to it. Early Head Start however, serves only 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers—we leave behind a shameful 97 percent.

When Sargent Shriver discussed the war on poverty, he said ''You have to put immense resources into winning a

war.'' He was right, and he wasn't talking about wars like Iraq. He was talking about the war on poverty. This conference report increases authorizations for Head Start to $7.3 billion in fiscal year 2008, $7.6 billion in fiscal year 2009, and $7.9 billion in fiscal year 2010. On a bipartisan basis, the conferees have signaled a commitment to invest more in our youngest children, and to assist Head Start in responding to the changing and evolving needs of the communities it serves.

Research shows that the first 5 years of life make an immense difference for a child. Those who attend high-quality early education programs are more likely to do well when they reach elementary school, are less likely to be held back a grade, and are more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college.

Our Federal investment in early childhood education clearly pays off—for every dollar invested in high-quality early education, there is a 16 dollar return later in life.

All children—regardless of their background—deserve to learn and develop. We need to strengthen early childhood for young children, in order to help them succeed later in school and in life.

A comprehensive curriculum and a stable and well-qualified workforce are cornerstones of a good early education. I am especially pleased that this reauthorization of Head Start includes a blueprint to strengthen the array of early childhood programs and services for young children.

The bill establishes an Early Childhood Advisory Council to examine needs of early childhood programs, develop a plan to improve professional development, upgrade standards, enhance collaboration among programs, and improve data collection.

More than 40 States have early learning standards in place or under development. States such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Illinois have developed the systems needed to improve program quality and expand access to programs in the early years. We need to build on that progress. States that are ready to take on the challenge of implementing needed improvements in their early education programs will qualify for incentive grants to get such improvements under way.

One of our highest priorities in Congress is to expand educational opportunities for every American. In this age of globalization, every citizen deserves a chance to acquire the skills needed to compete in the modern economy. That challenge begins at birth, and accelerates in the early years of life well before children even begin kindergarten.

This reauthorization helps us reach this essential goal. It keeps Head Start on its successful path, and enables it to continue to thrive and improve.

We still haven't won the war on poverty in America. But thanks to Head Start, we are getting closer. Day by day, and one child at a time. This conference report continues that indispensable progress, and I urge my colleagues to approve it.

Mr. President, we have others who desire to speak at this time. I will have a chance with the remaining time, perhaps, to get into some of the additional items.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank Senator KENNEDY for that excellent recap of what has taken us months, in fact, years to get done.

I am pleased after many years of false starts, we have finally reached agreement on Head Start reauthorization. This conference agreement is a bipartisan, bicameral effort that focuses on improving the lives of low-income children and their families. We need to ensure that children, regardless of their circumstances, have the opportunity to get the preparation they need to enter school ready to learn and be successful.

The Head Start Program was established in 1965 as part of the war on poverty to level the playing field for low-income children. The purpose of the program was, and remains, to provide educational and other developmental services to children in very low income families. It recognizes that children do not start school with the same set of experiences or knowledge. Head Start programs provide low-income children with a solid base of experiences and knowledge that enables them to start their elementary school experience on par with their more affluent peers.

Since its creation, Head Start has been a comprehensive, early childhood development program that provides educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to low-income, preschool-aged children and their families. Head Start currently provides services to over 900,000 children and their families through a network of over 1,600 public and private agencies. This program also recognizes the important role that families play in a child's development and encourages their regular participation in the program.

I do thank Senator KENNEDY and Congressman MILLER for their commitment to working together on a bipartisan basis. That commitment has resulted in a conference report that meets the needs of children and families who participate in Head Start programs throughout our Nation. I also thank my other colleagues, particularly Senators ALEXANDER and DODD, and Congressmen MCKEON, KILDEE, and CASTLE, for their fine work and dedication to this important legislation.

The conference agreement before us today builds off legislation we developed last Congress when I was chairman of the HELP Committee. Senator KENNEDY agreed to use that legislation as the base for this year's bill to build on the bipartisan support it had received. Senator KENNEDY and I understand that to get anything done, especially in the Senate, you have to have bipartisan support.

Years ago, I established an ''80-percent rule'' to help guide my work in committee and on the Senate floor. It means that 80 percent of what Congress works on we agree to. The other 20 percent is the stuff we may never agree on. But that is what always seems to get the attention. I do think we do our best work when we focus on the 80 percent. Legislation seems to move more quickly when we work together in a bipartisan way.

I am pretty certain people in Massachusetts are cringing, and people in Wyoming are cringing and saying: Oh, no, KENNEDY and ENZI are doing it again. But that is the way things get done, and we have quite a track record of doing things that wind up pretty unanimous on both sides of the Capitol because they figure with our two backgrounds it has to be reasonable or we will not agree. That is exactly how it works out.

So this bill probably will not make headlines, and it is not the most sensational sound bite. However, this is work Congress can and must do to improve the lives of children and families across America.

Today, with the passage of the Head Start conference report, we begin to fulfill this obligation. But our work is far from done. This is just the first in a number of education and training bills we have to complete this Congress.

With the reauthorization of the Head Start Act, the first bookend is in place. I hope we can continue to work together on legislation to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, the Higher Education Act, and the Workforce Investment Act. These four bills represent the continuum of education and workforce training legislation supported by the Federal Government—with Head Start as one bookend and the Workforce Investment Act as the other.

These acts support programs from preschool, through elementary and high school, into postsecondary education and the workforce, and are critical to maintaining our global competitiveness. We cannot afford to let those programs fall victim to election year politics.

I am pleased the House Education and Labor Committee has moved forward with the markup of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. It is my hope we can continue this momentum and move into a conference on that important legislation in the very near future.

Head Start provides the building blocks children need for success later in life. The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 before us today helps ensure that children in Head Start programs will be better prepared to enter school with the skills necessary to succeed. We have always worked hard to improve and strengthen this act because we believe in the future success of all children.

I am particularly pleased with the accountability provisions in this conference report. The conference agreement includes important changes related to the evaluation and review of grantees. We have taken steps to increase the quality of Head Start, and there is now greater clarity for grantees as to what constitutes a program deficiency.

The roles of governing body and policy councils have been clarified and strengthened, while also preserving the important role of parents. It is absolutely necessary and vital that a single entity, the governing body, has fiscal and legal control of the Federal grant dollars. That said, we maintain the equally vital and necessary role of the policy councils in setting program priorities, classroom activities, and classroom personnel changes. We believe this will help ensure the continued integrity of the Head Start Program for years to come.

Parents are their children's first teachers. It is vital we continue to encourage and strengthen the role parents play in Head Start programs. This conference agreement increases the presence of parents in Head Start programs. It strengthens services for families, and it provides training and development opportunities for parents who serve on policy councils and governing boards.

Today we are taking the final legislative step toward a comprehensive and bipartisan reauthorization of the Head Start Program. As we take this step to reauthorize Head Start, it is important we review the effectiveness and need for the 57 other early childhood and preschool programs currently receiving Federal support. Many of those programs are programs in name only. Others are ineffective and fail to provide the services children need to be ready for school. We have to direct funds to programs that have been shown to be effective at preparing children for success in elementary school. Head Start is a successful program that deserves our continued support. This support should not be diluted by competing programs or the creation of new programs.

I again wish to thank all the members of both committees, in particular Senators KENNEDY, ALEXANDER, ISAKSON and DODD, and Congressmen MILLER, MCKEON, KILDEE, and CASTLE, for getting this done.

I also thank all of the staff who worked to complete this reauthorization. Many of them have been working toward this day since early January. In particular, I would like to thank the following staff for Congressman MILLER: Ruth Friedman, Lamont Ivey, Denise Forte, and Stephanie Moore; for Congressman MCKEON: Kirsten Duncan, James Bergeron, and Susan Ross; for Congressman KILDEE: Lloyd Horwich; for Congressman CASTLE: Jessica Gross; for Senator KENNEDY: Roberto Rodriguez, Carmel Martin, and David Johns—I would like to mention how well Senator KENNEDY's staff and my staff have been able to work together on all of the issues—for Senator ISAKSON: Glee Smith; for Senator ALEXANDER: David Cleary and Sarah Rittling; and for Senator DODD: Catherine Hildum, and former staffer Sharon Lewis.

For my staff, I want to be sure to thank Lindsay Hunsicker, who has done a marvelous job of working and understanding and providing some creativity in the decisions that had to be made to get here; Beth Buehlmann, who oversees all of these education issues and is making sure they are moving forward in a bipartisan way; and Ilyse Schuman, who is the legal brains behind the drafting and decisions for my team; Katherine McGuire, who heads up the team as staff director; and, of course, Kelly Hastings.

Passage of this conference report will ensure that low-income children are prepared not only for success in school but, most importantly, for later success in life.

I look forward to getting this conference report to President Bush for his signature as soon as possible.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, who has been particularly involved in making sure parents are going to be included in this program. She has been such an outspoken advocate for the homeless and foster children who so often get left out and left behind. She is a former schoolteacher herself and member of a school board. She brings extraordinary knowledge, experience, and understanding to this problem. We are very fortunate to have her on our committee, and the Senate is very fortunate to have her as well. I hope they listen to her message.

Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Washington.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Massachusetts.

I am delighted we are here today to talk about one of the most important things this Congress has done for our children, and that is the Head Start Program.

I thank the Senators from Massachusetts and Wyoming for shepherding this important bill to the floor today, where it is in its last final step before it reaches the President for his signature.

For over 40 years now, Head Start has helped children from low-income families build the confidence and skills they have to have to succeed in school. As the Senator from Massachusetts said, I am a former preschool teacher, parent, school board member, and U.S. Senator. I can tell you, I have seen from every aspect how this important program benefits our children.

Today, I am very excited we are taking a vote to renew this important program. The bill we have in front of us now strengthens Head Start by making it more efficient, more accommodating, and more sensitive to our children's social, emotional, and developmental needs. It will allow us to better serve millions of children and improve on this already successful program.

This bill will help raise the quality that Senator KENNEDY talked about of our Head Start services across the country so that we ensure all of our children, no matter where they live, receive high quality, consistent services. Also, it will help ensure that all Head Start partners from our early childhood centers to our elementary schools, our childcare centers, our health care providers, our family service centers, are all working together in a coordinated way so we can best serve our young children and their families.

This bill increases funding authorization for Head Start each year from 2008 to 2010, and that will enable even more of our kids to start school ready to learn than ever before. I hope all of our colleagues will support this important bill, and I urge the President to sign it as soon as possible so we can put these new tools to work for our kids.

As the, I believe, only former preschool teacher here in the Senate, I feel a personal obligation to stand up for all of our young children. And standing up for our children, particularly our most vulnerable children, means standing up for Head Start. Each year, nearly a million poor children across this country attend our Head Start programs. Those kids didn't choose to be poor, but fortunately, since they live in this Nation, which values our young people, many of them are enrolled in Head Start where they can get the tools and the training they need to prepare them for school.

I thank Senator KENNEDY and his staff as well as Ranking Member ENZI for working so hard on this bill.

I am particularly proud of the provisions that increase Head Start access for our homeless and for our foster children. This bill will help improve transportation and services for these children and places a priority on enrolling them. These are some of our kids who face some of the greatest barriers to learning in our society, and I am glad we are making their success in school and in life an immediate priority.

I also fought to make sure that parents of children enrolled in this program have a voice in the decision-making process on local Head Start issues. I think our parents need to be involved in these programs and to have responsibility, and I think as their kids get a jump on learning through Head Start, this program will help our parents begin to understand that they have a very important and critical role in shaping their children's education. So I am very proud we were able to work out that language and move forward in a positive direction.

To name a few other quick additions, this reauthorization improves the transition of Head Start children to school by making sure that the curriculum they get matches their State early learning standards and kindergarten skills, which is very important. It also reserves 40 percent of new Head Start funds to improve programs as well as increase salaries for staffers, and it enables Native-American and migrant Head Start programs to expand, which will increase access to early learning for those particularly vulnerable populations.

I have visited Head Start centers all across my State. I have talked with teachers, I have talked with the parents, and I have talked with advocates about ways we can improve Head Start. I am very pleased that a number of their suggestions have been put into this bill. Washington State, my home State, is a leader in early learning efforts. I think we can all be proud of this bill, and I hope all of our colleagues will support it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield 7 minutes to the former Secretary of Education.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to please let me know when I have 1 minute remaining.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will so advise.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, it is not too much to say that this vote on this piece of legislation on Head Start is about whose century this century will be. Some say it will be China's century. Some say it will be India's century. I think the jury is still out, but I do believe it can be the American century, and I believe it is up to us to make sure it is.

We have the advantages in our country. One of them, of course, is our brain power advantage. We don't have better brains than others, but since World War II, we have spent a great deal of time building our education system, our universities, our research laboratories. We worked together this year to pass the America COMPETES Act, authorizing $34 billion over the next 3 years to step that up. A second advantage we have is the e pluribus unum. We are one country. Where different countries are fractured, we are working here to help our children and our new arrivals learn English, our common language, and to learn our American history so we can stay as one country. That is an advantage we have. The third advantage we have is that we are the only country in the world that believes that anything is possible. We don't say leave just a few children behind, or 80 percent of us are created equal; we set these very high goals. Anything is possible. Most of our politics is about failing to reach the goals, dealing with the disappointment, and then trying again.

How do we make sure that the dream that anything is possible is real? Well, No. 1, we keep down taxes and we keep down regulations, and we keep markets free so people can go from the back to the front of the line. The other thing we do is to make sure that all Americans have a chance to get to the starting line ready. Some people need some help, and that is what Head Start is about.

I was very pleased to come to this floor in the earlier part of this year with Senator KENNEDY, Senator ENZI, and Senator DODD, introducing a piece of legislation that we hoped would get to the point this one has today. I thank them for the way they have worked on this for the last 3 or 4 years. It didn't matter much whether it was a Republican or a Democratic Senate; we all worked together and we are here now with this result.

A lot has changed, and there are four major advantages to this bill, in my opinion. No. 1, I call special attention to the 200 new centers of excellence that are created. These are opportunities for Governors to look, say, at Nashville or at Boston or at some place in their State and designate a center of excellence. These would be shining examples of all of the best efforts that are being made for early childhood education. The centers would get up to $200,000 a year for 5 years and would hopefully try to coordinate all early childhood education and development efforts.

When I was a child, my mother's preschool class in the garage in our backyard was the only preschool education program in town. In the 1970s, Tennessee adopted public kindergarten for the first time, a few years after Head Start. Well, today, Head Start is a $7 billion program. It has 1,700 agencies, 29,000 centers, but that is far from all the effort we are making. There are 21 billion Federal dollars for early childhood education, and many State and local dollars. They are not always spent in the most efficient manner. The President thought it would be better to give the Head Start funds to the States. I disagree with that. We have disagreed with that, but we have respected his impulse by saying in these 200 centers for the next 5 years, let's see what happens. Let's see what happens when States work with local governments and put all the Federal, State, and local money together for early childhood education in these centers for excellence.

Second, there is a system for renewal for Head Start agencies. There is not an automatic renewal after this time, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services will develop a process for that to make sure that for every cycle, the Head Start agency earns its right to continue. Third, there is clear authority to governing boards about the big dollars we are spending here and the big lives we are affecting. We heard eloquent testimony from the mayor of Shelby County, A.C. Wharton, about money that was stolen down there. So we have done a better job listening to Mayor Wharton and to others in making it clear who is in charge of the money, who is in charge of the administration, and at the same time, making sure that the parents, who are the lifeblood of the uniqueness of Head Start, are active and full participants through policy councils.

Finally, as the President also recommended, we have worked over the last 2 or 3 years in developing this bill to increase cognitive learning standards. Forty years ago, we didn't know nearly as much about how the brains of very young children work, but we know now that to be ready to learn, to be at the starting line when the time comes to go to school, children need to learn more in their earlier years. So Head Start will provide that opportunity.

It is not too much to say that this bill is about whose century this will be. We hope it will be the century of every child in the world, but we like the idea that it could be the American century, and we want to take full advantage of the assets we have. One of the assets we have is the dream that anything is possible, that you can go from the back of the line to the front. We will keep our markets free. We will try to keep our taxes down. We will get rid of unnecessary regulations so people can get ahead. But this bill is a commitment that says we will also make certain we will do our best to make sure every single child has an opportunity to get to the starting line ready to succeed.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I am proud to rise in support of the conference report for the Head Start for School Readiness Act. Since 1965, Head Start has been one of the most successful Federal programs for helping low-income children and their families. This long overdue reauthorization is good news for over a million Americans who rely on Head Start's comprehensive services.

Head Start is for the poorest children. About 75 percent of Head Start families are at or below the poverty level. For a family of four, that is just $20,600 per year. These children are often the furthest behind in learning to read and learning the alphabet. Yet Head Start makes a difference. In 1 year, these students see huge improvements in their vocabulary, increasing from the 16th percentile to the 32nd percentile, which is almost the national norm.

But Head Start does so much more. It brings children to the doctor to get immunizations and hearing checks. It helps parents get on the right track. Many parents become Head Start teachers and go back to school to get their degrees. It provides nutritious meals for children who might otherwise go hungry. I am a social worker. I have seen first hand children whose lives were changed by a simple hearing

aid or a good breakfast. Believe me: it can make all the difference.

Head Start is also a smart investment. Research shows that society accrues $9 in benefits for every $1 invested in Head Start children. Head Start graduates are more likely to have increased earnings and employment than non-Head Start participants. Head Start graduates are also less likely to be dependent on welfare or to have been charged with a crime when compared to their siblings who did not participate in the program.

Unfortunately, only 60 percent of eligible preschool children are in Head Start, and less than 5 percent of eligible infants and toddlers are in Early Head Start. In Maryland, about 25 percent of eligible children age zero to 5 years are in Head Start and Early Head Start. The Bush administration has underfunded this critical Federal program for the past 7 years. Now is the time to renew the Federal investment in Head Start.

That is why I am proud to support this bill that makes low-income children and families a priority in the Federal checkbook. It increases the authorized spending level from $6.9 billion in fiscal year 2007 to $7.3 billion in fiscal year 2008. That is nearly a $450 million increase. This increased investment will allow tens of thousands more children to participate in the program who would be otherwise turned away because of inadequate funding.

This bill also expands Head Start by increasing the eligibility income level from $20,600 to $26,800. This means that a family of four who are scrimping and saving on an annual income of only $26,800 will no longer be denied the comprehensive services Head Start provides.

The Head Start for School Readiness Act makes a serious investment in our youngest children and their families. The benefits of Head Start to the children, their families and society at large far outweighs the cost. I urge my Senate colleagues to vote in favor of this conference report. Our young children deserve nothing less.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I strongly support H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. This important bipartisan legislation, which I helped craft as a member of the Senate Education Committee and as a conferee, reauthorizes the Head Start Act for the first time since 1998 and strengthens our commitment to ensuring that the nation's neediest children receive high-quality early education supports and services.

Since 1965, Head Start has provided comprehensive early childhood development, educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to low-income preschool children and their families, and this reauthorization builds on our long-standing investment in this essential initiative.

There are two provisions that I am particularly pleased are included in this legislation, and which are important to my State of Rhode Island. First, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act builds on provisions I first authored in 2003 to provide Head Start programs with additional flexibility to serve children up to 130 percent of poverty. Current law limits program eligibility to 100 percent of poverty or below. This increase in income eligibility will enhance the opportunity for struggling, low-income families to participate in Head Start while ensuring that programs prioritize serving families under the poverty guideline and enhance outreach to ensure those most in need are served first. Raising the income eligibility limit finally puts Head Start on the same level as other means-tested programs, which essentially all serve above the poverty level to provide for greater participation and help the working poor.

Second, this legislation for the first time establishes the Parent Policy Council as a decisionmaking authority within the governing structure of Head Start programs. Strong parent involvement in their children's early education and development has been a key tenet of the Head Start program since its inception in 1965, and is one of the primary reasons for the program's continuing success.

This reauthorization also includes a provision I authored to enhance coordination between Head Start programs and school and public libraries to excite children about the world of books, assist in literacy training for Head Start teachers, and support parents and other caregivers in literacy efforts.

Additionally, I am pleased that this conference report does not permit employment discrimination based on religion despite the administration's continuing advocacy for such a change. Faith-based organizations are an integral part of Head Start. However, there is no need to change a program that has encouraged their participation by allowing such discrimination.

I want to thank Chairmen KENNEDY, DODD, and MILLER and Ranking Members ENZI, ALEXANDER, and MCKEON and their staffs, for their extraordinary work on this conference report. The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act is significant legislation for the people of Rhode Island and the nation, and I am pleased to support it. This strong reauthorization in tandem with necessary funding increases will ensure that Head Start can continue its important and critical work to lessen the effects of poverty and ensure that children are successfully prepared for school and life.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today we approved the Conference Report on the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007—H.R. 1429. I applaud the good work of all involved. I particularly want to commend Chairman KENNEDY and Senator ENZI, as well as Chairman MILLER and Representative MCKEON on the House side for their collective work on this important bill.

Head Start is a national program promoting school readiness through educational, health, nutritional, and social services. Currently, Head Start serves over 900,000 low-income children and their families in approximately 1,600 programs run by public and private agencies. As a whole-child, whole-family program, Head Start prepares children for what we hope will be a lifetime of learning.

I want to recognize and commend our Head Start programs in Utah. They do an outstanding job, and I believe this legislation will go a long way to providing additional support for them. I have appreciated their input during this long process.

I have been struck by some of the stories shared by our Head Start people in Utah. I remember hearing from one of our Head Start Directors that a number of children have never held a book before entering the program. When they are handed their first book, many don't know how to open it. Entering Head Start swings wide the doors of learning and opportunity and exposes young children to the reading and learning process.

I have also heard stories of Head Start children who were suffering from major medical problems that would not only threaten their ability to learn but their very lives. One of the great characteristics of the Head Start program includes the identification and treatment of several medical conditions, many problems can be detected and treated before they become serious learning impediments.

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 not only reauthorizes the program, it greatly improves and strengthens it. This bill will enable more low-income children to get into the Head Start program. Utah has only been able to serve just over 50 percent of its eligible children. This bill provides for the expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start in States, like Utah, serving fewer than 60 percent of eligible children.

This bill strengthens the accountability of Head Start programs and improves the overall quality of Head Start grantees, as they will be reviewed every 5 years. It clarifies and strengthens the role of the governing board in the oversight of the program. It also respects the priority role of parents and family through the collaborative role of the policy councils and operations of the Head Start programs.

Through this legislation, the Head Start workforce is strengthened, as goals have been established for education standards for Head Start teachers, curriculum specialists, and teacher assistants. It requires Head Start teachers to have in-service training every year and ensures professional development for all Head Start staff working directly with children.

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 strengthens coordination and collaboration of the program by aligning services with

State early learning standards, providing professional development opportunities for Head Start staff, and promoting partnerships with other agencies.

Because I believe that education is best done at the local and State levels with appropriate Federal support, I am pleased that under this bill, states will designate a State Advisory Council that will closely address the education and care of children from birth to school entry. I strongly support the authorization for Centers of Excellence to designate model exemplary Head Start programs in every State.

One of the concerns expressed by many of us as we started this process years ago, was the challenge of strengthening the academic portions of Head Start. Under this bill, Head Start agencies will use scientifically based measures to support learning and program evaluation. Recommendations of the National Academy of Science study on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children will be incorporated. Although the National Reporting System was intended to improve the program, it was found to be time-consuming and unwieldy for Head Start programs, and without demonstrated benefits. That reporting system has been eliminated under this bill.

In order to educate every child in our country, we must prepare them. Many pre-school children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, would have learning difficulties long before they entered elementary school. This bill will help these young, vulnerable, and teachable children develop the necessary early reading and math skills to be successful in school. It will address their health and nutritional needs, and it will provide important socialization. It also engages and empowers parents, and benefits us as a Nation.

I was proud to have worked with my colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to get this bill through the legislative process, and I was pleased to see it pass unanimously today.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the conference report to accompany the Head Start reauthorization bill. For the first time since 1998, Congress will send a bill to the President to reauthorize and strengthen the Head Start program.

A child's education begins well before he or she enters a school building for the first day of kindergarten. The children who succeed in kindergarten are the children whose parents read to them every day, who talk with them, and who engage their minds with games, art, and new experiences. These are the children who enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Unfortunately, many children enter kindergarten well behind their peers. They may have parents whose long hours interfere with the kind of time they spend with their small children. Or they may have parents who don't know how important these early developmental activities are. That is why we created Head Start in 1965, to make sure low-income children are ready to learn when they arrive in kindergarten. Head Start provides preschool-aged, low-income children and their families with school activities, health screening, healthy snacks, and structure to encourage parental involvement.

Each year, over 900,000 children are served by Head Start nationwide; 40,000 of those children live in my home State of Illinois. The legislation that we are considering today will increase authorized funding for Head Start to $7.9 billion in fiscal year 2010, allowing tens of thousands more children to participate in the program.

The legislation will also expand eligibility, allowing Head Start to serve low-income children and families up to 130 percent of Federal poverty, or $26,800 for a family of four. It will also expand the Early Head Start program, so it can reach an additional 8,000 low-income infants and toddlers. The earlier children enroll in Head Start programs, the more likely they are to succeed once they enter kindergarten.

The legislation also sets new minimum qualification standards for Head Start teachers. Within 6 years, all Head Start teachers must have an associate's degree, and half of all teachers must have a bachelor's degree. Forty percent of new funding will be reserved for program quality enhancements, including much-needed salary increases for Head Start staff.

Educational standards will be strengthened in Head Start programs to make sure children are presented with language and literacy, math, science, and other cognitive development material. These new standards will be updated and aligned with the latest research in child development. The legislation we are considering today will improve the transition for children who are leaving Head Start to enter kindergarten, through better coordination between Head Start programs and schools, shared teacher training, and alignment of curriculum.

I am especially pleased that this legislation strengthens Head Start without weakening its long-standing civil rights protections for more than 200,000 Head Start teachers and 1.3 million parent volunteers.

Since 1972, the law has prohibited agencies that receive government funding for Head Start from employment discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, political affiliation, or beliefs. These civil rights protections have been reaffirmed all six times that the Head Start program has been reauthorized since then, and I strongly support the seventh reaffirmation today.

Preserving this provision is especially important given this administration's attempts to overturn long-standing principles of nondiscrimination through Executive orders, proposed legislation, and, recently, Department of Justice opinions.

Let me be clear. I support the right of religious organizations to use religious criteria in hiring people to carry out their religious work. This exception—which is the current law—makes sense because it allows people of common faith to work together to further their religion's mission.

However, there is a fundamental difference between religious organizations using their own funds for their religious work and religious organizations using government funds for that purpose. In 1972, Congress established the current, expanded religious exception under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The same Congress established the nondiscrimination provisions in Head Start that continue with today's legislation. They understood the difference between permitting hiring based on religion for religious functions not funded by the government, and allowing discrimination based on religion in hiring people to carry out activities funded by the Federal Government.

I also want to address a memo released last month by the Department of Justice entitled ''Effect of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act on Faith-Based Applicants for Grants.'' This troubling memo concludes that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act allows faith-based organizations to receive Federal funds even when considering religion in employment. It further asserts that RFRA ''protects this right to prefer co-religionists for employees even if the statute that authorizes the funding program generally forbids consideration of religion in employment decisions by grantees.''

I strongly disagree with these conclusions in general, and especially with respect to the legislation before us today. The law and the history regarding Head Start is clear with respect to nondiscrimination in employment, and this explicit civil rights protection must be followed.

In closing, I want to affirm my strong support for the participation of religious organizations in the Head Start program. These organizations provide critical support for our Nation's children in 5 percent of Head Start centers and greatly improve our pre-schoolers' education. It is not surprising that Head Start is the second-largest source of federal funding for faith-based organizations.

This program truly is a model for how the government can successfully partner with faith-based organizations, while complying with nondiscrimination requirements.

I thank Senators KENNEDY and ENZI for their bipartisan work on this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this conference report.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, as I understand, we have 9 minutes left. Am I correct?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. KENNEDY. I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Ohio and 3 minutes to the Senator from Vermont, and I will take the last 3 minutes, and we will alternate with our Republican colleagues.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Chairman KENNEDY and Ranking Member ENZI for their leadership, as well as the staff, for their tireless work on the Head Start reauthorization bill. It is long overdue. It will help prepare thousands of low-income children for their transition into school and for their success later in life.

There is no greater investment, of course, that we can make than investing in our children. This legislation means an additional 8,000 low-income infants and toddlers younger than those who have traditionally been enrolled in Head Start will be eligible for the program. Teachers will receive more training, the critical training they need and the cost-of-living increases that they deserve. This legislation means expansion of the program to children whose families earn just above the poverty line. For tens of thousands of children in this country, this legislation gives them hope. It is a step forward, a major step forward.

Yesterday, unfortunately, the President vetoed the funding for Head Start. That is why we take a step forward today with this Head Start reauthorization, as the President took a step backward in vetoing the funding for Head Start. Budgets, we know, are about priorities. Whether it is a family budget, it speaks to your values; whether it is a Federal budget, it speaks to our values. Vetoing funding for Head Start, for medical research, and for job training as the President did yesterday, tells us something about his priorities.

I am pleased that on a bipartisan basis, by passing legislation that expands Head Start to reach more low-income children, this Senate is saying our priorities are different. I hope that together we can override the President's veto and fulfill the promise inherent in the Head Start Program.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their good work on this Head Start reauthorization. We should move forward.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Almost 14 minutes.

Mr. ENZI. I yield 7 minutes to the Senator from Georgia, who has always played a tremendous role in this piece of work with his staff person Glee Smith, and he brings with him a world of knowledge from Georgia where he served as the chief school official there. They set some precedent-setting things at all levels of education while he was doing that, and he did it in conjunction with former Senator Zell Miller, who was Governor at that time. I yield 7 minutes to the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to thank Ranking Member ENZI for his kind remarks and his tremendous dedication and commitment to bringing this conference report to the floor. I particularly want to thank Senator KENNEDY from Massachusetts, who is a consummate legislator by anybody's definition and a very committed individual in the development of our youth and the betterment of education.

As Senator ENZI said, about a decade ago I served as chairman of the State Board of Education in the administration of my predecessor in this seat who was then Governor Zell Miller. Those were the years that the breakthrough brain research came forward and illustrated conclusively that there is a direct correlation between early childhood development and the potential development of a person as an adult. We worked very hard together in Georgia to improve the plight of all Georgians and did everything we could to develop new programs. One of them that we developed was none other than the 4-year-old prekindergarten program which now is available to every child in Georgia. It is a program that builds on the fact that the earlier you can begin instruction, the earlier you can improve the environment and the atmosphere in which a child is exposed, the better that child is going to do.

It is critical for us, if we want to turn around the trend in terms of dropouts in this country, to see to it that we enhance and enrich the lives of every single student who is going to go to our public schools.

Mr. President, it is conclusive that the environment in which a child lives in their early years—that to which they are exposed, their nutrition, the total environment—is directly a correlation to their ability to learn. The Head Start Program is designed to get to those children most in need for quality support, for uplift, for a greater self-esteem, and for a leg up, a chance to get to go to a 4-year-old prekindergarten program or to a kindergarten program ready to learn.

USA Today ran an article about a week ago talking about America's dropout factories, and it enumerated schools in almost every State, with dropout rates of 40, 50, 60 percent. If you looked at the facts around those articles and those schools, you would find a common denominator: Those schools' children came from the least of backgrounds, with the least support, and from the poorest of environments. We have an obligation to ourselves and, as Senator ALEXANDER said, America's future to see to it that every American child arrives at kindergarten or first grade ready to learn. The advancement of programs such as Head Start will make that happen.

I commend Senators ALEXANDER, ENZI, and KENNEDY, Congressmen MILLER and MCKEON, and all those who worked on this important legislation. I urge every Member to cast a favorable vote in favor of a better atmosphere for our young children to grow up in, better exposure to those things that help them go to school ready to learn, and turn around the paradigm on dropouts in the United States.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to add my voice to the others and thank Senator KENNEDY and Senator ENZI for their leadership on this issue and for the cooperative, bipartisan relationship we see on that committee, which makes it perhaps the most productive committee in the Senate.

As others have said, this is a very important day forward for the children of our country. Right now, I am thinking about the Head Start workers in Vermont who do such an extraordinary job in reaching out and providing for low-income kids throughout our State, and I know the same is true throughout this country. They are dedicated people, they are underpaid and overworked, but they do it for the love of the children. I very much appreciate all they are doing.

Mr. President, while this is, in fact, an important day forward, it is significant to point out again that this is an authorization bill, not an appropriations bill. We had the disappointment just the other day of the President vetoing the Labor-HHS bill, which includes Head Start. My hope is that in the very near future we are going to have a strong Labor bill, with adequate funding for Head Start, but more significantly—and this is an issue I will talk about until the cows come home—we have to change our national priorities with regard to how we treat the children of this country.

Every Member of Congress, every American should be deeply ashamed and embarrassed that in this great country, we have, by far, the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world. The figures are that between 18 and 20 percent of our children live in poverty. As other speakers have pointed out, if children at an early age don't get the intellectual and emotional nourishment they need, they are not going to do well in life. It is not an accident that at the same time we have the highest rate of childhood poverty, we also have the highest rate of incarceration of any major nation on Earth. So we don't take adequate care of our children, and, lo and behold, we are shocked when they end up behind bars, and we spend $50,000 to $70,000 for each person who is incarcerated. It makes a lot more sense to me—and I hope my colleagues agree—that we put that money up front to make sure all of our kids get the opportunities they are entitled to as young Americans.

The truth is that while this bill is a significant step forward—and I applaud all those who built it—as Senator KENNEDY indicated earlier, only one-half of

the eligible children in America today, because of inadequate funding, are able to get into the Head Start Program. So this is an important step forward. I congratulate all who have made this day possible. We have a long way to go to, in fact, keep the faith with the children of America.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming and the Senator from Massachusetts. I rise to express my appreciation for their excellent work on this legislation. It has been a long time in gestation. I think it reflects their commitment to legislating in a bipartisan and effective way that the bill is now at this stage. I congratulate them.

I think anybody who has been exposed to Head Start is impressed by the program. There have been studies and reports of that which can be done to improve the program, and hopefully this bill will work in that direction. But the underlying idea of giving low-income kids the ability to come into an atmosphere where they get nurturing, good nutrition, and now, because of this bill, where they get starting blocks for learning how to deal with an academic program is totally appropriate and something that has succeeded.

If you look at what we are facing as a nation, as discussed here at considerable length—I heard the Senator from Tennessee make an excellent statement on the needs of education, and what our country really needs is the ability to bring into the educational mainstream children who today, unfortunately, are not able or do not come to school with the necessary skills to compete with some of their fellow students. Head Start gives those children that opportunity. It gives low-income kids the ability to start kindergarten and get into the first grade with an understanding of how, first, to be social and deal with an atmosphere where there are other children; secondly, to have the necessary nutrition to get through the day and be able to learn; and third, begin the building blocks of learning. This program works, and it has worked. It is something that should be continued to be supported by the Federal Government and also by the local communities that stand behind Head Start.

That is one of the great things about Head Start. In my experience, when you go to a local Head Start center in New Hampshire—or anywhere—as chairman of the committee, I visited Head Start centers all across the country. They are usually community-oriented events. Behind those teachers and committed people, who are willing to spend the day with the children and try to make their lives better during the day, there are usually a lot of volunteers and people from the community stepping up to also make those programs work well.

So Head Start is one of the success stories and one of the things we need as one of the building blocks in order to continue to make America a great place to live and give people the ability to participate in the American dream.

Again, I thank the Senators for orchestrating this effort.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Who yields time? The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, it has been a pleasure and an honor to get to work on this bill and to work with people on both sides of the aisle. You can see the unanimity from the Republican side and the Democratic side in making sure the bill came to pass.

As I mentioned before, we have had a lot of false starts trying to get Head Start done. This time, we have gotten through the process. Today, we will have a positive vote and send it to the President for signature. I think you can tell from the debate that it has been a very positive process.

The only distinction appears to be the few comments we have had about the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. I don't want to get into that issue because it will take a long time to discuss it. I ask unanimous consent to have the Wall Street Journal article from today called ''Return to Spender'' printed in the RECORD to counter some of the things talked about. It wasn't Head Start that he vetoed; it was the entire Labor-HHS budget.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

RETURN TO SPENDER

Congressional Democrats spent the fall preparing for their budget confrontation with the White House, and the strategy they seem to have settled on is futility. They knew President Bush would veto their first appropriations bill, as he did yesterday, and they also knew they'd lack the votes for an override. If they're wondering why the bottom's fallen out of their approval ratings, here it is.

Mr. Bush said the bill exceeds ''reasonable and responsible levels for discretionary spending,'' and he was being too kind. Ostensibly the $606 billion ''minibus''—combining funding for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education—is ''only'' $12.2 billion beyond the President's budget request for discretionary spending. But that's more than half of the $22 billion that Democrats want to spend for 2008 above the Administration's top line. (That $22 billion, by the way, swells to at least $205 billion in additional outlays over five years.)

Democrats are already feigning outrage. House Appropriations kingpin David Obey complained, ''There has been virtually no criticism of its contents,'' and if he's only referring to Congress, he's not far off. The bill marks a return to Capitol Hill's earmarks-as-usual spending culture, assuming it ever abated. There are more than 2,200 earmarks worth some $1 billion.

The pork includes $1.5 million for the AFL–CIO Working for America Institute and $2.2 million for the AFL–CIO Appalachian Council. There's $500,000 for a ''virtual herbarium'' in New York and $50,000 for a Utah ''ice center.'' Also check off $1 million for the Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock, and another $1 million for the Thomas Daschle Center for Public Service and Representative Democracy at South Dakota State University. Plus the usual assorted millions for art centers, aquariums, aviation and jazz museums, and so forth.

The Members also reverted to habit by using a House-Senate conference to ''airdrop'' $155 million in earmarks that were not included in earlier editions—in violation of the 2006 ethics ''reform.'' The conference also clandestinely removed a provision barring federal funding for the ''hippies museum'' near Woodstock. All of this from Democrats who rode into the majority promising to restore ''fiscal discipline.''

Mr. Obey was especially instructive in a speech immediately before the final House vote: ''I would ask every serious-minded person in this body, if they really think there is a chance of a snowball in Hades that Members' earmarks on either side of the aisle will survive if we wind up at the President's level of funding.'' He concluded: ''The fate of every project . . . is in your hands.''

The Democrats were desperate for a veto-proof majority, and for the sake of their earmarks some Republicans were content to go along. The pork, of course, was cover for much larger domestic spending excesses, including a $2.4 billion budget gimmick for'' advance appropriations'' designed to circumvent Democratic ''pay as you go'' budget rules. Thankfully, enough GOP Members realized it, and maybe a few even hoped to recover their credibility on spending.

Since there aren't enough votes to override Mr. Bush, it's back to the drawing board. Maybe next time Democrats should try something new—say, spending less money.

Mr. ENZI. I hope the vote today will display the unanimity we have had while working on this bill. I congratulate the Senator from Massachusetts for the way he is running the committee. We have not just done hearings on things—hearings are a little more divisive than the other mechanism, which has been his morning coffees. In hearings, the two sides bring people to testify, and we kind of beat up on each other's witnesses. In the coffees he has held, we get to bring in a bunch of people and hear what they think. We have the interaction of one person who has had experience, and he talks to another person who has had experience, and they talk about how the two experiences might come together. That has been helpful on this bill, as well as the other ones, the bookends I mentioned. This being the first part of the bookend, and the next one we will be working on is No Child Left Behind.

We have already done the Higher Education Act on this side. I look forward to conferencing that and getting on to the Workforce Investment Act, which passed this body twice already but never has been conferenced. Our work is still cut out for us, but this is a day to celebrate the good work done on both sides of the aisle.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague from Wyoming. He believes we ought to listen to experts before we actually legislate, which was a rather dramatic

thought to many around here. He certainly is right. He reminds us of our unfinished business in terms of higher education and the workforce legislation. We are strongly committed, and we will get a response on that.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—H. CON. RES. 258

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon the adoption of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 258, a correcting resolution; that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Finally, I would take a few moments to mention the staff who worked on this bill. I want to personally mention those who have worked so hard on this legislation. Some have been working on this for 4 years. I will not get into the reasons for that. This has been a very long and, in the past, contentious piece of legislation and without them, there is no way we could have completed this bill.

I would like to thank Michael Myers, Carmel Martin, Roberto Rodriguez, David Johns, Lily Clark, Liz Maher, and Raquel Alvarenga from my staff.

I would like to thank Katherine Graham Hildum of Senator DODD's staff; Janelle Krishnamoorthy of Senator HARKIN's staff; Mildred Otero of Senator CLINTON's staff; Michael Yudin of Senator BINGAMAN's staff; Robin Juliano of Senator MIKULSKI's staff; Seth Gerson of Senator REED's staff; Kathryn Young of Senator MURRAY's staff; Will Jawando of Senator BROWN's staff; Huck Gutman of Senator SANDERS' staff; and Steve Robinson of Senator OBAMA's staff.

This has been a bipartisan process all the way. I would also like to thank Senator ENZI's wonderful staff, specifically Katherine McGuire, Beth Buehlmann, Lindsay Hunsicker, and Adam Briddell.

I would also like to thank David Cleary and Sarah Rittling of Senator ALEXANDER's staff; Celia Sims of Senator BURR's staff; Juliann Andreen of Senator HATCH's staff; Allison Dembeck of Senator GREGG's staff; Elizabeth Floyd of Senator COBURN's staff; Karen McCarthy of Senator MURKOWSKI's staff; Suzanne Singleterry of Senator ALLARD's staff; Glee Smith of Senator ISAKSON's staff; and Alison Anway of Senator ROBERTS' staff.

It is important to mention the work done by our colleagues in the House and I would like to thank Ruth Freidman of Congressman MILLER's staff; James Bergeron, Kristen Duncan and Susan Ross of Congressman MCKEON's staff; Lloyd Horwich of Congressman KILDEE's staff and Jessica Gross of Congressman CASTLE's staff for all of their work on this legislation.

I would like to thank especially Roberto Rodriguez and David Johns who have taken the lead on Head Start in my office. Their good work has made all the difference. I know Roberto is especially pleased to see the Senate and House pass this conference report, as he has worked on this legislation for several years now. I commend him for his expertise, diligence, good nature and all of his efforts.

Mr. President, finally, the Head Start Program reaches the neediest children in this country. It reaches them to help and assist by providing health care, teaching proper nutrition, and by supporting proper development of cognitive abilities to ensure that children are ready to successfully transition to school.

Head Start is targeted to the neediest children in this country. Even with the small numbers we reach—we only reach a million, and there are 4 million poor children who are between ages 0 and 5—we see the difference it makes. Head Start raises them to a level playing ground. That is what our country is really about—trying to raise people to a level playing ground. Head Start alone does not guarantee success, but it gives them the opportunity to be successful.

If we have a group in our society that needs this kind of support, it is our children. As pointed out in this debate, through no fault of their own many children are born into difficult and challenging circumstances. As a nation we have a responsibility to get them up to a point where they can succeed in school and in life. That is what Head Start is about—a recognition that our Nation believes that children who are living in poverty, in some of the most challenging circumstances, should have the opportunity to be on a level playing field.

Finally, there is one thing we have learned in the area of education; that is, the more resources are targeted to early education, the better the opportunities these children have to succeed.

In this reauthorization we have taken advantage of the lessons we have learned from Head Start's successful history and built upon excellent recommendations made by members of our committee. This is a very solid and important piece of legislation that will make a difference in the lives of millions of children. I urge the Senate to support it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following three letters in support of the Head Start reauthorization conference report be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my remarks on the conference report.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, November 13, 2007.

Hon. EDWARD KENNEDY,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pension, Washington, DC

DEAR CHAIRMAN KENNEDY: On behalf of the National Head Start Association, the children, parents, staff and teachers of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and the Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, the members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pension for supporting the reauthorization of Head Start—truly a bipartisan effort and success story for America's premier preschool program, Head Start.

As the national association representing the Head Start community, we represent more than 1 million children and their families, 200,000 staff, and 2,700 Head Start programs. With the assistance of over 1 million volunteers, these programs comprehensively meet the early childhood development, educational, health and family needs of our children.

Head Start as you very well know, was established in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Baines Johnson's ''Great Society'' program, and is the most successful, longest running, national school readiness program in the United States. Head Start has served over 25 million preschool-age children, infants, toddlers, and pregnant women since its inception. Your successful reauthorization of Head Start signals the continued legacy for future low-income children and families.

The Head Start reauthorization bill is a lesson in bipartisan cooperation and leadership in addressing a critical priority need of our country—the preschool readiness of our children. In short, the ''Improving Head Start Act'' addresses income eligibility, where the working poor are supported and provided incentives to work; terminates the National Reporting System; helps more programs operate full-day and year round; reaffirms the accreditation of teachers in early childhood; provides expansion for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and American Indian/Alaskan Native populations; and underscores the importance of parental involvement in the education of their children.

Therefore, I call upon our longtime friends and supporters in the U.S. Congress to approve overwhelmingly the ''Improving Head Start Act of 2007'' and send it to the President for his signature.

Again, congratulations on your success and that of our children and families.

With great gratitude,

SARAH GREENE,
President and CEO.

FIGHT CRIME:
INVEST IN KIDS,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2007.

DEAR SENATORS KENNEDY, ENZI, DODD AND ALEXANDER: The over 3,500 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and violence survivors of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids know from the front lines—and the research—that investments in Head Start are critical to our nation's public safety. Head Start helps kids get a good start in life so that they avoid later criminality and grow up to become responsible citizens. But the maximum crime reduction impacts—and many other benefits of Head Start—can only occur when programs reach more of the at-risk kids and are comprehensive and of the highest quality.

We are pleased that the final conference report version of the Improving Head Start Act of 2007 (H.R. 1429) includes the following:

Funding authorization: We are pleased the bill includes increased funding authorizations in Fiscal Years (FY) 2008–2010, with ''such sums'' funding levels for FY11–FY12. A $750 million increase in FY08—beyond the FY07 level—is needed to simply restore funding to the FY02 service level. And that level would only serve a small portion of the eligible, poor kids now left out of Head Start. These increases are an important first step in the right direction.

Teacher qualifications: We are pleased the bill includes a quality improvement requirement that 50% of classroom lead teachers

have at least a bachelor's degree by 2013. The requirement is crucial to Head Start program quality, since no peer-reviewed, scientific research study has found an early care and education program that demonstrated significant, long-term crime reduction and education results without a bachelor's degree teacher requirement.

Quality improvement set-aside: We are pleased the bill directs 40% of annual increases over the prior year's funding level to quality improvement, with half of those funds directed toward improved teacher compensation rates. Improved teacher compensation is critical to attracting and retaining better-educated individuals—who would otherwise flock to higher-paying opportunities, including K–12 schools.

Targeting to serve the poorest children: We are pleased the bill maintains Head Start's priority for serving the poorest, most at-risk children by ensuring that children living in poverty are served first as income eligibility is expanded to 130% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Early head start: We are pleased that bill adds flexibility for Head Start programs to serve zero-to-three-year-olds if they meet the Early Head Start quality standards. In addition, we are pleased that the bill directs half of new expansion funding toward Early Head Start enrollment increases.

The bill also includes several provisions that will continue to strengthen Head Start's quality:

No state block grants, state waivers, or state application authority that might have endangered current quality standards;

Training/technical assistance activities (including through a 2.5%–3% set-aside);

Strengthened research-based school readiness elements of Head Start (of course, it is critical to maintain and strengthen all eight of the domains of Head Start's outcomes framework);

Strengthened parent education and home visiting provisions;

A requirement that Head Start agencies utilize high-quality, research-based developmental screening tools to identify children with early emotional and behavioral problems, so kids can receive the treatment they need to prevent later delinquency;

Improvements in fiscal and program accountability among grantees, including improved monitoring and termination of grantees that are significantly and/or systemically deficient;

Enhanced outreach to at-risk kids;

Enhanced collaboration and coordination efforts requirements between local Head Start grantees and other early education providers though collaboration grants;

Increased state-level coordination through State Advisory Councils on Early Childhood Education and Care;

The development of an integrated data collection system to provide complete information about children served by the programs and the services offered; and

Suspension of the National Reporting System, and provisions for any future assessment approaches to be based on the results the National Academy of Sciences study regarding appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically valid and reliable child assessments.

We appreciate the efforts of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and the Education and Labor Committee to strengthen Head Start through this reauthorization legislation. This bill will benefit at-risk kids now and help ensure safer communities in the years to come. The result will be generations of disadvantaged children progressing toward school success and graduation rather than later arrest and incarceration.

Sincerely,

DAVID S. KASS,
President.
MIRIAM A. ROLLIN,
Vice President.

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES WELCOME HEAD START RENEWAL

WASHINGTON (Nov. 14, 2007).—The nation's Community Action Agencies applaud the work of Senate and House conferees on Head Start reauthorization and look forward to passage of this national child development legislation later this week.

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) administer 30 percent of Head Start grants and a third of all enrollments nationwide. Children and families participating in programs offered by CAAs also benefit from the comprehensive services offered by these organizations to help them secure housing, gain employment, and build assets to help them achieve economic security.

''Low-wage working families who turn to Community Action Agencies to prepare their children for school with Head Start leave with a variety of resources to help them improve the lives of the entire family,'' said National Community Action Foundation Executive Director David Bradley.

The conference agreement expands access for more eligible children, increases classroom quality, enhances the Head Start workforce, strengthens governance and provides more tools for greater accountability.

''It is commendable that this Congress has focused so much of its agenda on domestic issues that are important to American voters, and, in this instance, has been able to do so with strong bipartisan cooperation to assist low-wage working families,'' Bradley said.

''Once these important enhancements are adopted for the Head Start program, we hope that Congress will next turn its attention to the remaining Human Services initiatives: the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Community Services Block Grant,'' he said. ''These programs make key investments in the daily lives of low-wage working American families, and are long overdue for reauthorization. NCAF hopes its proposals to strengthen and modernize these programs will be considered soon.''

Mr. KENNEDY. I yield back whatever time remains, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 409 Leg.]

YEAS—95

Akaka	Dorgan	McConnell
Alexander	Durbin	Menendez
Allard	Ensign	Mikulski
Barrasso	Enzi	Murkowski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Graham	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Grassley	Pryor
Bond	Gregg	Reed
Boxer	Hagel	Reid
Brown	Harkin	Roberts
Brownback	Hatch	Rockefeller
Bunning	Hutchison	Salazar
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Byrd	Inouye	Schumer
Cantwell	Isakson	Sessions
Cardin	Johnson	Shelby
Carper	Kennedy	Smith
Casey	Kerry	Snowe
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Specter
Coburn	Kohl	Stabenow
Cochran	Kyl	Stevens
Coleman	Landrieu	Sununu
Collins	Lautenberg	Tester
Conrad	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Levin	Vitter
Cornyn	Lieberman	Voinovich
Craig	Lincoln	Warner
Crapo	Lott	Webb
DeMint	Lugar	Whitehouse
Dole	Martinez	Wyden
Domenici	McCaskill	

NOT VOTING—5

Biden	Dodd	Obama
Clinton	McCain	

The conference report was agreed to.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise to applaud the Senate passage of the Head Start Improvement for School Readiness Act of 2007—a product of hard work by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

For more than 40 years, Head Start has provided comprehensive services to poor families—health, nutrition, academic skills, family literacy, and more—ensuring children get the cognitive, social-emotional, and academic skills they need to succeed in kindergarten and later in life. In New York, almost 50,000 families benefit from Head Start services.

This bill takes several steps forward in strengthening Head Start programs across the country. It dramatically expands Early Head Start—a program created under the Clinton administration to reach children from birth to age 3. Though we have decades of research underscoring the importance of this stage of development, Early Head Start has only been able to reach 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers. This conference report doubles Early Head Start funding from 10 percent to 20 percent to ensure more infants and toddlers receive services and arrive at kindergarten ready to learn.

The conference report increases Head Start authorization by 6 percent in the first year and 4 percent in the following 2 years. For years, our Head Start providers have had to make difficult decisions in the face of President Bush's budgets that have included flat-funding or funding cuts, as well as the effects of inflation. Many centers had to cut back on comprehensive services that Head Start families rely on. In

New York, programs have been forced to eliminate vital transportation services. This much needed increase in funding will finally give Head Start agencies the resources they need to maintain enrollment, improve quality service levels, and provide for the necessary cost of living increase for teachers.

The Head Start Improvement for School Readiness Act of 2007 enhances teacher quality. Research has shown that the right teaching training and successful instruction lead to successful Head Start programs. Right now, about a third of Head Start teachers hold a bachelor's degree. This bill will help increase the skills and training of more Head Start teachers and increase the quality of instruction for Head Start children. I am also pleased this conference report retains the important roles parents have always maintained in Head Start programs, including ensuring parents' voices are heard in Head Start's daily operations.

The bill also increases a portion of the income eligibility guidelines from the current 100 percent of poverty level to children in families with income up to 130 percent of poverty. This is particularly important for States like New York, where the cost of living is higher than most States'. Many programs need flexibility in serving these families earning just slightly above the poverty line, including the ability to assist families who have moved off welfare and are now working and struggling to make ends meet. For New York City, this provision means thousands more children will be able to participate in Head Start programs. This bill will give those hard working families support as they become self sustainable.

This bill also terminates use of the National Reporting System, NRS. I have expressed my concern about this test for several years now. In 2003, I joined my colleague Senator BINGAMAN in offering an amendment during the markup of Head Start to suspend NRS. In 2005, the Government Accountability Office produced a report underscoring our concerns when it called into question the validity and reliability of the NRS. I am pleased this bill suspends the unfair NRS test and asks the National Academy of Sciences to make recommendations on an appropriate assessment for young children.

Head Start is critical to ensuring our most vulnerable children enter school ready to learn. Head Start has provided comprehensive services to low-income families—from health and nutrition, to academic skills and family literacy. I am pleased that we were able to move this bill forward in this session in a bipartisan fashion. The Senate passage of this bill is a victory for our neediest children and the Head Start community that serves them.●

Mr. KENNEDY. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, H. Con. Res. 258 is adopted, and a motion to reconsider that vote is considered made and laid on the table.

The resolution (H. Con. Res. 258) was agreed to.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SALAZAR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that we are on the farm bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk on the substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Harkin amendment No. 3500 (Substitute) to H.R. 2419, the farm bill.

Tom Harkin, Jon Tester, Daniel K. Inouye, Dick Durbin, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Bernard Sanders, Kent Conrad, Ben Cardin, Debbie Stabenow, Ben Nelson, Byron L. Dorgan, Max Baucus, Ken Salazar, Claire McCaskill, Bob Casey, Jr., Sherrod Brown.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send another cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 339, H.R. 2419, the Farm, Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act of 2007.

Tom Harkin, Harry Reid, Kent Conrad, Ben Nelson, Amy Klobuchar, Frank R. Lautenberg, Daniel K. Inouye, Bernard Sanders, Russell D. Feingold, Patty Murray, Claire McCaskill, Byron L. Dorgan, Max Baucus, John Kerry, Debbie Stabenow, Richard J. Durbin, Sherrod Brown.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I indicated this morning that sometime today, unless something changed, I would file a cloture motion on the Dorgan-Grassley amendment and, as I have indicated, on the bill, which I have just done. I had a long conversation with the distinguished Senator from North Dakota. Very few people know the farm bill as well as he does. Certainly his partner in this amendment, Senator GRASSLEY—no one can dispute his knowledge of the farm bill.

It is the feeling of Senator DORGAN, after having conferred with Senator GRASSLEY, that it would not be in the interests of the Senate, the farm community, and the country to go forward on cloture on that amendment at this time. I have followed their suggestion and that is why I did not go forward with this.

Unless something is worked out, it appears very clear—we have heard the debate all day on the farm bill. Tremendously difficult, hard work has gone on. The bill was reported out of the Agriculture Committee. Every Senator there voted for it. There was not a recorded ''no'' vote, but that only says part of the story. The rest of the story is numerous Senators worked for weeks and weeks to arrive at a point where a bill could come out of that committee. It came out here to the floor. It came out last week and we have tried to move forward on it. That we have been unable to do that was unfortunate.

I hope Senators, when they are called upon to vote cloture on this matter, would understand that the work of the committee was very good work. Does that mean there should not be amendments to improve it? Probably not. But if we did nothing more than pass the bill that came out of that committee and took it to conference with the House-passed bill, we would be way ahead of the game. I hope that is what Senators will understand.

I am confident virtually every Democratic Senator will vote for cloture on the farm bill, even though there are many Democratic Senators whose No. 1 industry in the State is not agriculture. But they recognize that agriculture is an important business for this country. It is an important business for this country for so many reasons, one of which is the farming and ranching industry in this country is exemplary. We are able to compete with the rest of the world, without any question. We have modern techniques that have gone into farming that have made our production extraordinary.

We now have, as represented by Senator TESTER from Montana—one example—we have now a thriving business in America of organic farming. There are many people in this Senate who, when they go shopping, will only buy organic produce. That is part of this bill. Part of this bill recognizes that. It is very unfortunate that we have been stopped from going forward on this bill because people want to vote on immigration matters, they want to vote on tax matters, they want to vote on issues that are not related. I went over that entire list this morning, of all the nonrelevant, totally nongermane amendments that have been given to us.

I have said we Democrats will agree to five amendments. Five amendments; that is all we want. We don't expect the same from the Republicans. If they want more amendments—fine, give them to us. I said to SAXBY CHAMBLISS and to TRENT LOTT, we will even take a look at some of the nonrelevant amendments. If you want to meet the standard that has been in the last three farm bills and come up with one amendment—that is what has been the average—but come up with some nonrelevant amendments that people believe they have to offer, we will be happy to consider that. But let's agree to a finite number of amendments. We will take a few. The Republicans have more than we have.

This is something we want to do. We want to do the farm bill. As I have said before on the Senate floor, the farm bill is not the most important bill for the State of Nevada. When I go shopping at Smith's or one of the other grocery stores in Las Vegas, I am impressed with all that I find on those shelves: food produced in America. There is no question we import some food. I always look at the labels. We get some mangoes from other places and a few things, but we in America do well. Even though I am from Nevada—and I am very proud of the white onions we grow. The largest white onion producer is in Nevada, in Lyon County. I am happy about the garlic we grow and I am happy about the alfalfa we grow, but the driving force is tourism and gold. We produce 85 percent of all the gold that is produced in America.

But I think I represent the Democratic caucus. We are not all pushing forward on this farm bill because it is the most important thing in our State, directly. But indirectly, it is one of the most important things this body can do.

There can be all the statements made about: he will not take down the tree, and we never did do this before, and the last bill we had 240 amendments, the one before we had 196 or whatever it is. Of course there are a lot of amendments filed on bills, but we don't deal with that many of them. We have been stopped for 10 days from dealing with these amendments.

I reach out to my Republican colleagues and I say this with all sincerity: You want to bring down this bill? That is what you are doing. Yes, maybe we can take it up some other time, and I will certainly try to do that, but I think the time is slowly evaporating here. We need to get this bill done. We could still complete the bill before we leave here. If we couldn't complete the bill before we leave here for Thanksgiving, we certainly could get it teed up so we could finish in a day or so when we get back.

I hope above all hope, with the hard work that has gone into this bill on a bipartisan basis—this is not a Democratic bill by any stretch of the imagination; this is a bipartisan farm bill—I hope somehow we can work our way out of this.

I stand willing to do whatever I can, to be as reasonable as I can be. I am sure I have Senators on my side of the aisle over here who are not happy with the proposal I have made—five amendments. But I have done that because I believe it is that important to get the bill done.

This is a bill where there will be a conference. We have had bills that passed here and passed the House and we have not had a conference. This is a bill that will be conferenced.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the majority leader yield?

Mr. REID. I will be happy to yield to my friend from Kentucky for a question.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I believe I heard my good friend say what we needed to do was get a list of amendments and a starting place. I remind my good friend from Nevada, the majority leader, we were prepared to do that yesterday. We are prepared to do that now, if we could enter into an agreement to have a finite list of amendments, which I offered to do yesterday. That would at least define the universe, and at whatever point we get back to beginning to make progress on the bill, it would be a good starting place.

I was pleased to hear the majority leader indicate that is what we need to do and I say to him I am happy to do that.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, as you can see, looking at our list, our list of amendments is mostly amendments saying, ''If you offer one, I am going to offer one.'' I don't have the list before me. Well over half of the amendments we have are ''relevant''—just relevant amendments. In the vernacular, that means I have an amendment but probably not. That is to protect them in case they want to offer an amendment.

I plead to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—yes, you have given us a list. But give us a real list. I have made a proposal I think is very reasonable. We will take five relevant amendments. You give us a number of amendments that you have, relevant and nonrelevant, and let's see if we can work something out. I talked with the distinguished manager of the bill and he said to me: I have no authority to do anything. So talking to my friend from Georgia, for lack of a better description, is a waste of my time. He says he has no authority to do anything. What kind of negotiation is that?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Will the majority leader yield?

Mr. REID. Of course.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Would the majority leader agree with me that it would be at least desirable to prevent there being a further proliferation of amendments? It strikes me the longer we are out here, the more the amendments would multiply. Why would it not be a good idea to enter into a consent agreement now to limit the universe of amendments, as I was prepared to do yesterday, at least to give us a first step toward preventing the multiplicity of amendments that have a way of coming out of the woodwork around here, so at whatever point we go back to the farm bill we have at least defined the universe? That is the way we almost always start on a bill of that magnitude. It is the way we started on past farm bills. At the end we, of course, will pass a farm bill. We have in the past and we will this year.

I ask my friend from Nevada, what would be wrong with locking in the master, the universe—the list that we both produced yesterday? I was happy to enter into a consent agreement to limit the amendments to that 24 hours ago.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, there is no question, if you have to walk a mile, a few steps is better than nothing. Here is what I would be willing to do on behalf of the Democratic caucus. OK, we have your list, they have our list. We have two lists. I would have no problem entering into an agreement that that is a finite list. How we complete all those amendments is a different question. I am not going to take down the tree at this stage. I am happy to work on that at a subsequent time, to see what we can do in that regard, but I am willing to do that.

We have their amendments and our amendments. I agree to a unanimous consent proposal that that is the finite list of amendments and that we will try to figure out a way to move through that. Maybe, as I have indicated, each mile has to be done in short steps. This would be a short step. I would be willing to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, obviously we prefer the tree be taken down so we didn't have one Senator, in effect, dictating to the rest of the Senate what amendments get to be considered. But it does strike me that at least that is a place to start. Both sides are familiar with the list that was produced yesterday. I wish to ask unanimous consent that that list be adopted as the list that could be—we all know the vast majority of these amendments are never offered and will not be offered on this one.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would say to my friend and friends on the other side of the aisle, we will continue to work. We have now a tentative arrangement, starting arrangement. This is not the end, we know that. But we will figure out a way that people can offer amendments.

I will be happy to consider—I do not like language like this, but that is what we use around here, ''take down the tree.'' That kind of turns into a buzzword for—it is kind of like ''earmarks'' or something like it is real bad.

So I would be happy, at this stage, to accept the proposal that these two lists the staff has, these be the entire universe of the amendments that we will work on, on this bill. We will come back at a subsequent time to figure out

a way to take down the tree and work our way through these.

I think it is fair. I would say this to my friend, that these amendments would be subject to relevant second-degree amendments. I accept that.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, obviously I am not going to, I wish to make sure we do not have any misunderstanding. This is a little, small step forward. This does not mean we will invoke cloture on either the bill or the substitute.

But it does indicate there is an interest, on this side of the aisle and on the other side of the aisle, in preventing the further kind of proliferation of amendments that will go on a virtually daily basis until we define the universe.

At whatever point we go back to the bill and seriously try to go forward with it, we can have further discussions about some further limitation of amendments. We are certainly, in order to agree to any further limitation of amendments, going to want the tree to be unfilled so we can have a more free-flowing debate on this bill, as we have had in the past.

Mr. REID. I am happy to work with my esteemed colleague, the minority leader, to see how we can work our way through this procedure. We have taken a short step, but it is at least a very important step.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I want to make sure I got the nod of Senator MCCONNELL's important staff person. The agreement says there will be unanimous consent that there be only relevant second-degree amendments.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Reserving the right to object, I shall not object to a baby step, but let me try to understand exactly what we have.

I looked at the list that is before us. My name is not on that list. I assume that the Dorgan-Grassley amendment is now pending. And if the tree is taken—

Mr. REID. You are protected.

Mr. DORGAN. I wish to make sure there is protection for that amendment. I also would like, if I might for a moment, to say that the cloture motion you have filed does not alter or change the opportunity for Senator GRASSLEY and myself? The point that you had made was I did not want a vote on the Dorgan-Grassley amendment to be a cloture vote because there may be some who feel they have to vote with their leadership on a cloture, in a manner that would be different than if we had it straight up and down on the merits. It will still be pending, and we will intend to pursue that amendment.

The list of amendments is as follows:

Akaka—Amdt. No. 3538, Alexander—SoS: Broadband, Alexander—Increase Ag Research, Alexander—Strike renewable tax credit, Alexander—Wind energy tax credit, Alexander—Wind energy property taxes, Allard—PART, Allard—Vet Food Systems, Allard—Forest Reassessment, Barrasso—Support project-7, Baucus—State assistance for beginning farmers (Amdt. No. 3598), Baucus—Ag Research, Baucus—Brucellosis, Baucus—Agriculture supply, Bingaman—1 relevant amendment, Bingaman—Ground and water surface conservation program, Bingaman—Regional Water Enhancement program, Bond—Food Stamps, Bond—Red-tape Reduction, Bond—Research.

Boxer—6 relevant amendments, Brown/Hatch—Crop Insurance, Bunning—Disaster Relief, Cantwell—Study on climate change and impact on wine industry, Cantwell—increase funding specialty crop block grant, Cantwell—Minor oil seed crops, Cantwell—tree assistance program, Cardin—2 relevant amendments, Casey—crop insurance, Casey—agriculture inspectors, Casey—food stamp nutrition education, Casey—emergency funding for invasive pests and diseases, Chambliss—Farm Credit Service, Chambliss—Crop Insurance Fix, Chambliss—Trade-strikes section 3101, Chambliss—Biotech—PPV, Chambliss—Sugar technical fix, Chambliss—Ethanol/direct payments, Chambliss—Conservation AGI, Chambliss—5 Relevant.

Chambliss—2 Relevant to any on the list, Coburn—Waste, Coburn—Chinese garden maintenance, Coburn—Transparency, Coburn—Estate payments, Coburn—Federal hunger problems, Coburn—Crop Insurance, Coburn—Equip, Coleman—AGI Caps, Coleman—Drivers License, Conrad—3 relevant amendments, Corker—Coal gasification project credits, Cornyn—Child obesity study, Cornyn—Strike Disaster Trust Fund, Cornyn—New Budget P/O, Craig—Loan Repayment, Craig—Land Preservation, Craig—Worker Housing, Craig—Biogas.

DeMint—Death tax, Dorgan CRP, Dorgan—2 SECA tax amendments, Dorgan—Secretary's rule regarding cattle and beef (Amdt. No. 3602), Dorgan—Amdt. No. 3508 (pending), Dorgan—payment limits, Dole—Tax Credit, Domenici—Renewable Energy, Domenici—Land Transfer, Durbin—Food Safety sunset, Durbin—McGovern-Dole funding, Durbin—ACR improvements, Durbin—Puppy information, Durbin—Low-interest financing to fight invasive species, Durbin—Food Safety, Ensign—5 Relevant Amendments, Enzi—Captive Supply, Feingold—13 relevant amendments, Feinstein—Ag inspectors, Feinstein—Energy market oversight, Feinstein—Leafy greens, Feinstein—Clementines.

Graham—Cellulosic Ethanol, Grassley—Agricultural mergers, Gregg-Mortgage Crisis, Gregg—Drivers License, Gregg—Firefighters, Gregg—Ag disaster funds, Gregg—Farm stress program, Gregg—Proper budget accounting, Gregg—Commodity subsidies, Gregg—Sugar Program, Gregg—Loss assistance (asparagus), Gregg—Commodity subsidies, Gregg—Gulf of Mexico, Gregg—Farm and rural healthcare.

Harkin—7 relevant amendments, Harkin—2 amendments relevant to any on the list, Harkin—School nutrition standards, Harkin—Packers and stockyards Act, Harkin—Managers' Amendments, Hutchison—Southwest Dairy, Hutchison—Land Grants, Hutchison—Rio Grande, Hutchison—Renewables, Inouye—Food for Peace, Inouye—Rail related, Inouye—Broaband Data, Inouye—Energy related, Inouye—Sugar/ethanol loan guarantee grant program, Inouye—Exemption for Hawaii, Inouye—Reimbursement payment to geographically disadvantaged farmers/ranchers.

Kerry—4 relevant amendments, Kohl—Revised membership/Federal Milk Marketing (Amdt. No. 3531), Kohl—SOS Rural Energy America Program (Amdt. No. 3532), Kohl—Amdt. No. 3533, Kohl—Amdt. No. 3534, Kohl—Amdt. No. 3535, Kohl—Amdt. No. 3536, Kohl—Amdt. No. 3537, Kohl—Amdt. No. 3555, Klobuchar—AGI Limits, Klobuchar—Timber contracts, Klobuchar—Beginning farmers/ranchers, Kyl—Tax/AMT, Kyl—Relevant.

Landrieu—7 relevant amendments, Lautenberg—FRESH Act, Lautenberg—FEED Act, Levin—Energy Markets, Lincoln—4 Ag tax amendments, Lincoln—Bio Fuels, Lincoln—Small Procedure Credit, Lincoln—1 relevant amendment, Lott—Gulf of Mexico task force, Lott—Tax/AMT, Lott—2 Relevant, Lugar—Complete overhaul, Lugar—Trade, Lugar—2 Relevant.

McCaskill—Amdt. No. 3556, McConnell—4 Relevant, McConnell—Death Tax, McConnell—AMT, McConnell—Tax/Horses, McConnell—2 Relevant to any on the list, Menendez—4 relevant amendments, Mikulski—2 cloned foods amendments, Mikulski—2 H2B amendments, Murkowski—Exxon Valdez litigation, Murkowski—Specialty crops, Murray—2 Conservation amendments, Murray—Energy, Murray—Specialty crop, Nelson (NE)—Amdt. No. 3576, Pryor—Broadband (Amdt. No. 3625), Pryor—4 relevant amendments.

Reid—Amdt. No. 3509, Reid—Amdt. No. 3510, Reid—Amdt. No. 3511, Reid—Amdt. No. 3512, Reid—Amdt. No. 3513, Reid—Amdt. No. 3514, Reid—2 relevant amendments, Reid—2 amendments relevant to any on the list, Roberts—Technical, Roberts—Ag Fair Practices, Roberts—Definitions, Roberts—Regulations, Roberts—Conservation, Roberts—Conservation, Roberts—Trade, Roberts—Nutrition, Roberts—Rural Development, Roberts—Rural Development, Salazar—Cellulosic Biofuels Production Incentives (Amdt. No. 3616), Salazar—Colorado Good Neighbor Agreements (Forestry), Sanders—Amdt. No. 3595, Schumer—5 Conservation amendments, Sessions—Rural Hospital, Sessions—Farm Savings Accounts.

Smith—Americorp Vista volunteers, Smith—River Conservatory, Smith—Deschutes River, Smith—Wallowa Lake Dam, Smith—Oregon Subbasins, Smith—North Irrigation unit, Smith—Irrigation Districts, Smith—Fire sprinkler systems, Stabenow—Local farmer initiative—Buy America, Stabenow—CSFP, Stevens—Protecting Kids Online, Stevens—e911, Stevens—FSA operating loans, Stevens—Quarantine inspection fees, Stevens—Bloc Grant to seafood, Stevens—AQI User Fees, Stevens—Fishing Loans, Sununu—Biomass Fuel.

Tester—Amdt No. 3516, Tester—Live Stock Title, Thune—Bioluels, Vitter—National Finance Center, Webb—3 relevant amendments, Wyden—Illegal logging, Wyden—Biomass grants (Nov. 14, 2007).

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to announce there will be no further votes on this today.

Unless someone has something else, I yield to my friend from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wanted to speak on the farm bill. I am glad to see we are taking baby steps forward. If the leaders have their things worked out, I want to go ahead and speak.

The farm bill obviously for my State is a very important issue. I appreciate that we are making some steps forward. I do think it would be wiser if we could start amending and start working as a legislative body and see how far we get. We have been on the bill now for 10 days. We have not had a vote. It seems it would be prudent to go ahead and try it. I realize the leaders are trying to work something out,

and I hope they can. But each day we do not get something moving, we are not moving forward on the farm bill.

I think we can trust each other in the process. I do want to recognize the work that has been done by the committee on the farm bill, the Agriculture Committee and their work. I think they have done a number of very nice things in the bill. I say that as someone from an agricultural State, from an agricultural family, who has been Secretary of Agriculture for the State of Kansas and has a degree in agriculture.

I can see some very positive things. I like the overall trend in certain areas of the bill and some of it not. I wish to comment on both of those and make one particular policy provision notice to my colleagues and friends in the Senate.

The Senate farm bill creates the Average Crop Revenue Program, a new safety net for farmers to utilize if they choose to do so. That is key for me, giving farmers the choice in how they manage their risk and not requiring that they take and use this program. Farmers may choose to stay in the current system or may opt into the new ACR Program. I think that flexibility is a good way to go forward.

Despite several threats throughout the year, the farm bill leaves direct payments at their current level. I think that is a victory and that is good for farmers in farm country. Direct payments are the only commodity title program that provides direct assistance to producers when they have no crop to harvest. Unfortunately, that happens all too often in my State.

It has happened in places of my State this year. In fact, 2 weeks ago, I was in a field of soybeans tilling them up. There was not enough there to harvest. It happens. There is nothing a farmer can do about it if the weather breaks that poorly against him.

So I am pleased to see those direct payments continue to exist, because when you have no crop, it does not matter how much the price is, it doesn't work, you have nothing to sell.

I also particularly appreciate the expanded research for energy coming from agriculture. To me, this has been one of the Holy Grails in agriculture for years and years, to expand the definition of the business from food and fiber, to food, fiber, and fuels. This effort recognizes our need to grow more of our own fuel to help in the environment in doing that, to help in the economy, the rural economy in doing that. It recognizes this fabulous chance we have in a world today to do things along that line.

If I could take a moment to set a root off to the side or shoot it off to the side, on this particular energy provision, I think there is another way we can also go that the managers have put in the base bill; that is, replacing oil-based products with starch-based products. This is again something the agricultural industry has worked at for a long time, is doing a much better job of, but we still do not have many of the products on the marketplace.

For instance, I had a company from my State, Midwest Grain Products, in my office 2 weeks ago with now 100 percent starch-based plastic utensils. He gave me some spoons and chopsticks that were made 100 percent out of wheat starch. They had been going 50 percent out of starch and 50 percent out of oil-based products. But he is now at 100 percent.

Yet they have not been able to crack through the marketplace yet on this, a totally biodegradable product made out of agricultural commodities, better for the environment, certainly better for our economy.

One of the things we have put in this farm bill is a New Uses Expo, where we would showcase on an annual basis, almost like you do at an auto show, the computer shows, on an annual basis, the new widgets coming out of agriculture, replacing, in many times and places, oil-based products with agricultural-based products, but showcasing that, having the Secretary of Agriculture and indeed even the Secretary of Energy cohosting that event. I think that is something that can help us expand the marketplace and expand value added coming out of agriculture, which is key for rural communities in my State and many others.

There are problems in the bill. That is why I hoped we could get some amendments moving. First, the bill contains a ban on packers owning livestock. This is a very contentious issue in my State and many places around the country.

Under this packer ban provision, processers would be prohibited from owning, feeding or controlling livestock more than 14 days before slaughter. You can look at this, and as someone raised in a farm family, I look at this and say: Well, that sounds like a pretty good thing. I do not want packers owning livestock. I want the family farm, I want my dad and my brother to be owning that livestock rather than the packers.

But then you start looking at the marketplace and the changes taking place in the marketplace and say: Wait. This is going to disrupt some good things happening. Ten days ago, I was on a ranch, a feed yard in Lyons, KS. They are raising certified Angus beef, natural, no artificial hormones, no antibiotics in the livestock, and then direct marketing that to consumers on the east coast, a great innovative product they have got coming out. They are getting a premium then for farmers when they can market this product that way.

But to do it, they had to enter into a contractual agreement with the packers that are set to process the animal and to deliver it to the end consumer, to the stores that they are going to directly to the consumers with.

So with this packer prohibition ban, this innovative market technique that is getting more in the pocketbooks of my farmers, because they are working with the packers, going straight to the consumer with a product they want, certified Angus beef, that is all natural, you are going to break that supply chain.

They are not going to be able to work with the packer on a contractual arrangement to do this. They are saying: Look, this is going to hurt us. We are not going to be able to do this. Now your ban that you are doing to try to save family farmers is going to hurt family farmers. So this is kind of the law of unintended consequences, that something people are trying to do on a positive basis to help family farmers is, in the end, going to hurt many of them in being able to increase the income they get from their livestock.

That is what they need. They need to be able to get more income from their livestock, and here is a key marketing tool and a way to be able to do that. I would hope that would be something we could deal with and something we can get passed.

Overall, I do not want to take a lot of time of my colleagues, other than to recognize the importance of getting this bill through. I would urge them on the Democratic side to let us start doing some amendments and working this bill through. I think we have a good base bill to work from. I think we can make some sensible decisions around here and get a farm bill through that is important to my State, important to the country, important to the future of the industry, and important to security in the United States on energy security.

But to do that, we need to get the process going. I would urge my colleagues to allow that to move on forward.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I want to express my support for the tribal forestry provisions in title VIII of S. 2302, the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007, also referred to as the 2007 farm bill. These tribal provisions make important and needed improvements in the U.S. Forest Service by authorizing direct tribal governmental participation in State and private forestry conservation and support activities, and by providing the Secretary with flexible authority to enhance and facilitate tribal relations with the Forest Service and activities on National Forest System lands. The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry is to be commended for its bipartisan development and adoption of these provisions.

There are nine federally recognized tribes within my home State of Oregon, and it is my pleasure to serve on the Committee on Indian Affairs. Indian tribal governments are separate sovereigns that have a unique government-to-government relationship with the United States. That relationship embraces special duties to tribes that extend throughout the Federal Government, including the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service.

Within the Forest Service, State and private forestry programs authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act are intended to conserve and strengthen America's non-Federal forest resources across the landscape. However, the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 does not authorize direct support to tribal governments, and the Forest Service has found that tribal forest land participation is inconsistent and low. The new authorities in title VIII will help rectify these matters by establishing a more appropriate and equitable relationship between tribal government and the Forest Service. In so doing, it will also enable State and private forestry to better meet its mission among all stakeholders across the landscape.

The tribal provisions in title VIII authorize direct tribal governmental participation in a new Community Forest and Open Space Conservation program and in the established forest legacy conservation easement program. The title also authorizes Forest Service support directly to tribal governments for consultation and coordination, for conservation activities, and for technical assistance for tribal forest resources.

Additional tribal provisions in title VIII facilitate the Forest Service's interaction with tribal governments on National Forest System lands. In Oregon, all nine of the tribes in the State have deep historical ties and active current interests in the National Forests around the State. From time immemorial, the tribes have drawn physical and spiritual sustenance from what are today Oregon's national forests, and they continue those activities to this day. Of course, the modern conduct of those activities involves both the tribes and the Forest Service, and the Senate's farm bill provides the Secretary and the Forest Service new authorities that will enable these two stewards of our forests—one ancient and one contemporary—to work in closer cooperation. The bill gives clear authority for the reburial of tribal remains and cultural items on National Forest System land, and it allows free tribal access to forest products from the national forests for cultural and traditional purposes. It also allows the Secretary to temporarily close National Forest System land for the tribal conduct of cultural and traditional activities. Finally, it enables the Secretary to preserve the confidentiality of sensitive tribal information that has come into the possession of the Forest Service in the course of its collaborating with tribes.

The tribal forestry authorities in title VIII of S. 2302 are a historic step forward for the Forest Service and tribal governments. They are supported by Oregon tribes and I am pleased they are in the bill. Once again, I want to express my support, and I urge the support of all my colleagues as well.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NUCLEAR TERRORISM

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, the United States today faces a broad set of national security challenges, so many of them, but just to name a few: initiating a responsible redeployment of U.S. combat troops out of Iraq, preventing the Taliban from making a comeback in Afghanistan, addressing the current turmoil in Pakistan, responding to antidemocratic trends in Russia.

Our whole country has a full plate of national security challenges. So today I wish to speak about one of those, but I think it is at the top of the list, and I think it is an issue that has not received nearly enough attention in the Senate or in the other body. It is a longer term threat that has not received the attention it deserves, but I believe this issue is the single greatest peril to this great Nation, and that is the prospect that a terrorist group, possibly with the active support of a nation state, will detonate an improvised nuclear weapon in an American city.

I commend those who have displayed outstanding leadership on this issue, many of these individuals over several years, if not, in some cases, decades. Former Senator Nunn, of course, has been a leader on this issue; Senator LUGAR, a colleague of ours and the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, a committee on which I have the honor to serve; and, of course, the chairman of that committee, Senator JOE BIDEN. All of these individuals and others have worked on this issue for many years.

In the weeks following 9/11, a lot of Americans know our intelligence community picked up a very frightening report from an agent. It was rumored that al-Qaida had acquired a Soviet-era nuclear weapon and had managed to smuggle it into New York City. The response of our Government, although secret at the time, was swift. Teams of experts were deployed across New York City with state-of-the-art detection equipment in an effort to track down this bomb before it exploded.

The threat was ultimately discounted. There was no nuclear weapon inside the United States at that time. The intelligence community's agent had bad information. But what is so frightening about these events is that it is entirely plausible that al-Qaida could have smuggled a nuclear weapon into our Nation.

One can only imagine the retrospective questions that would have followed such a horrific attack. What could our Federal Government have done to prevent such a detonation, we would ask. What policies or programs did we fail to prioritize? And, thirdly, how could we not have appreciated the urgency and the magnitude of the threat of nuclear terrorism?

I hope we never have to ask and answer those questions. But here we are 6 years later and neither the United States nor any other nation has been forced to confront the aftermath of a terrorist attack involving a nuclear weapon. Yet I regret to say we cannot rely upon good luck continuing indefinitely. The threat of nuclear terrorism persists, and the United States and the international community are failing to move quickly enough to neutralize this threat.

Why am I so concerned about nuclear terrorism and the challenges that it poses, not just for the world of today but for the world of our children and the world of our grandchildren? Some may ask that, and in response I just will cite a couple examples as to why I and everyone in this body should be concerned.

No. 1, last year a Russian citizen was arrested in Georgia on charges of seeking to smuggle 100 grams of highly enriched uranium on the local black market in that country, with the promise made that he could deliver another 2 to 3 kilograms of highly enriched uranium at a later time.

This arrest on smuggling charges is only one of hundreds involving fissile material that have emerged since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. The good news is the quantities detected so far have been very small. The bad news is, just as with drug trafficking, those transactions come to our attention only after a fraction of what may actually be occurring.

No. 2, too many facilities across the globe do not yet have the security safeguards we should demand for stockpiles of fissile material. Today, as many as 40 nations—40 nations—possess the key materials and components required to assemble a nuclear weapon. Surprisingly, we don't fully understand the magnitude of this problem. Among other experts, Dr. Matthew Bunn, a leading expert on nuclear terrorism, reports that neither the United States nor the International Atomic Energy Agency—we know from the news as IAEA—has a comprehensive prioritized list assessing which facilities around the world pose the most serious risk of nuclear theft.

Finally, the third example I would cite in terms of why this is such an important issue and important question is, a columnist by the name of David Ignatius, with the Washington Post, reported last month that a senior Energy Department intelligence official had briefed the President and other administration officials that al-Qaida is engaged in a long-term mission—a long-term mission—to acquire a nuclear weapon to use against the United

States. According to this report by a senior Energy Department official, al-Qaida may have held off against further attacks against our Nation since 9/11 to focus on attaining a nuclear weapon.

Madam President, I do have good news in this area. It is a serious topic, but there is some good news to report, although it also presents a challenge to us. The good news is, we know exactly what needs to be done to address the threat of nuclear terrorism. And a terrorist group as sophisticated as al-Qaida cannot build a nuclear weapon from scratch. The production of nuclear weapons and the fissile material that gives these nuclear weapons their deadly explosive power remains a capacity limited to a national government. A terrorist group can acquire a nuclear weapon through several means: It can purchase or steal a completed warhead from a state, or it can acquire the weapons-grade plutonium or enriched uranium at the core of a nuclear warhead to devise an improvised nuclear device.

Thus, if the United States works in concert with other nations to ''lock down'' nuclear warheads and weapons grade materials around the world, we can prevent terrorists from accessing this material in the first place. We are making some progress on this front through programs such as the Nunn-Lugar effort—named after Senators Nunn and Lugar. This effort to dismantle nuclear weapons and secure excess nuclear materials is playing out, but we are not moving fast enough. Additional funding is required but, perhaps even more important, high-level attention at the level of Presidents and Prime Ministers is necessary to break through the bureaucratic obstacles and political inertia blocking more rapid security gains.

After 9/11, the President should have made nuclear terrorism a key international priority, raising it to the very top of the U.S.-Russian agenda, for example. Instead, this administration continued a business-as-usual approach. I believe this was a gross misjudgment. This issue cries out for Presidential leadership.

But as vital as cooperative threat reduction programs are, we must go above and beyond them if we are to be successful in deterring a nuclear attack or nuclear terrorism. Not only should we do everything we can to prevent terrorist groups from acquiring the means to detonate a nuclear weapon, we must also fortify our capability to deter their use. A terrorist group such as al-Qaida is undeterred, but states, and certainly the states from which al-Qaida would acquire or steal a nuclear weapon, are not undeterred. We should make sure we keep pressure on them. We must enhance our ability to threaten overwhelming retribution against any state that by inattention or lax security enables a terrorist group to detonate a nuclear warhead in the United States.

We can do this in a number of ways: First, we must elevate the cost for individuals and businesses that choose to facilitate illicit smuggling of fissile material and related nuclear components. Nuclear smugglers and nuclear smuggling networks rely upon middlemen to transport fissile material and nuclear components, to forge export licenses and Customs slips, and engage in other black market activities. Too often in the past, when such individuals and businesses are caught in the act, so to speak, or with their hands dirty, they receive minimal prison sentences. For example, the Russian citizen arrested in Georgia for nuclear smuggling was sentenced to only 8 years in prison. These lax criminal penalties cannot deter future actions of nuclear smuggling.

Aiding and abetting nuclear smuggling is abhorrent and should be recognized for what it is—a crime against humanity. Just as the international community has banded together in the past to stigmatize the slave trade and genocide as crimes against humanity, so too should it now do the same thing for those who help terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction. The United States should be a leader in this effort.

No. 2, we should be working with the International Atomic Energy Agency to establish a global library, a library of nuclear fissile material. If the IAEA were to have nuclear samples from every weapons production facility in the world, when a nuclear device exploded somewhere in the world, we could, in short order, trace the nuclear material used in that explosion to the originating reactor or production facility. The capability of a library such as this could serve as a powerful deterrent. If a state knew it could be held ultimately responsible for a nuclear detonation, it would have a far greater incentive to secure and protect its nuclear materials. Those states that refuse to cooperate with such a global library would risk condemnation and suspicion in the event of a nuclear attack.

Our colleague, Senator BIDEN, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, has worked with the Armed Services Committee to strengthen U.S. efforts to take the first steps toward such a global library. Today, a group such as al-Qaida can get away with a nuclear attack on the United States because it does not have a fixed address at which we can easily retaliate. The same, however, does not apply to a nation that intentionally or through lax security provides the means for a terrorist group to detonate a nuclear device. The United States must leverage the same type of deterrence against those nations as it did against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Finally, we must be doing more in the overall effort to combat nuclear proliferation among states. It is a very simple equation. The more states that acquire a nuclear weapon and fissile material, the more likely it is one of those states or some of those weapons and/or fissile material may be vulnerable to theft or illicit sale to terrorist groups. That is but one reason we must prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. It is why we must work with our international allies and partners to continue to ensure that North Korea verifiably dismantles its nuclear facilities and weapons under the Six Party Talks. This link between nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism demonstrates the importance of reinforcing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

It is very difficult to imagine the utter devastation of an American city by an improvised nuclear device. It is perhaps for that reason the spectre of nuclear terrorism remains an abstract threat today. Yet before 9/11, very few of us could appreciate the dangers by commercial jet airliners hijacked by those on a suicide mission.

Madam President, the time for action on the challenge of nuclear terrorism is now. We must move to bolster existing threat reduction programs, strengthen our deterrence capability against those who would perpetrate acts of nuclear terrorism, and, finally, recommit ourselves to the effort to reduce the role and the number of nuclear weapons in our world today. We do not have the luxury of time to wait.

Before I relinquish the floor, I want to thank one of our great staff members for his work on this and so many other areas of our work. Jofi Joseph is one of our great legislative assistants who did a lot of work on this to prepare these remarks, and in so many other areas, and I want to commend him for his work.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

FHA MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, I am glad I had the opportunity to listen to my friend from Pennsylvania give this very well thought out and very important statement. It is important for our country and for the world. Thank you very much.

Madam President, tomorrow, among other things, we will turn to consideration of the FHA Modernization Act, which has now been reported by the Senate Banking Committee. The bill enjoys wide bipartisan support, and for a good reason. It passed out of the committee by an overwhelming 20-to-1 vote.

The reason we must act now is clear for all to see. Every day new evidence emerges, and the depth and severity of our country's subprime mortgage and foreclosure crisis is painted before our eyes. Hundreds of thousands of mortgages are now delinquent nationwide. This is leading to real pain and hardship for American families. The most alarming fact is, this could be just the beginning.

This is why House and Senate Democrats announced earlier this year that we would address the subprime mortgage and foreclosure crisis comprehensively. I am pleased to say Democrats and Republicans have joined to work diligently toward that goal. Tomorrow, we bring the product of that hard work to the floor of the Senate.

This modernization bill is one of several ways we plan to assist deserving families not with a handout or a bailout but with education and assistance to help them weather this storm.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4156

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate begins the rule XIV procedure with respect to the House bridge bill regarding funding for Iraq and Afghanistan, that it be considered as having been initiated on Wednesday, November 14.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to go into morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS LEGISLATION

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, last Thursday, November 8, 2007, the assistant majority leader, Senator DURBIN, propounded unanimous consent agreements on two bills reported by the Veterans' Affairs Committee—S. 1233, the proposed ''Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury and Other Health Programs Improvement Act of 2007'' and S. 1315, the proposed ''Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act of 2007.''

Both proposed agreements called for the bills to be considered ''at any time determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader'' and also provided that the only amendments that would be in order would be ''first-degree amendments that are relevant to subject matter of the bill.'' In other words, the request was for the Senate to take up these two bills, ordered reported by the committee in late June and reported in August, at some future time with the only exclusion being that no nonrelevant amendments would be in order.

It is hard to think of a more modest request for action on legislation. Unfortunately, my friend and colleague, the former chairman and ranking member of the committee, Senator CRAIG, objected to both unanimous consent agreements.

In explaining his objection, Senator CRAIG expressed the view that some provisions in the two bills are ''controversial enough to merit considerable floor debate.'' Whether I agree with that characterization of the provisions, I would not seek to keep Senator CRAIG or any other Senator from debating the two bills. As I just noted, that was precisely what the unanimous consent called for—debate, at a mutually agreed upon time, with the only limitation being that any amendment had to be relevant. Judging by the concerns Senator CRAIG discussed in his explanation of his objection to the unanimous consent agreement, his amendments would, indeed, be relevant.

I was patient while our colleagues on the other side of the aisle dealt with the upheaval that followed the unanticipated change in the minority leadership on the committee. I recognized that they needed time to reorganize and for Senator BURR to move into his new role as the committee's ranking member. However, that change in the ranking member's position occurred over 2 months ago. It is time to bring these bills to the floor, time to engage in a full and open debate, time to vote on any amendments, and time to allow the Senate to have its say on the bills.

In his objection, Senator CRAIG spoke of the committee's history of working in a bipartisan fashion to resolve differences at the committee level. He is certainly correct that our committee rarely brings measures to the floor for debate. However, I do not understand that history to mean that any and all differences of opinion on legislation are resolved before we seek Senate action. Rather, it is my understanding that the committee's bipartisan practice means that we seek to negotiate so as to reach agreed-upon positions on legislation after legislative hearings and before committee markups. When we are unable to reach agreement, there is an opportunity for amendments to be offered during markups. After a markup, our traditional practice has been to move forward from a committee markup without further debate on the floor.

That approach is exactly what happened in 2005, when Senator CRAIG was chairman of the committee. He and I had negotiated on a variety of legislative initiatives up to the markup but could not reach agreement on a number of matters. At the markup, I offered amendments—five or six is my memory—on a number of the issues about which I had strong feelings. I did not, however, continue to pursue those matters on the floor. And I most assuredly did not do anything to block Senate consideration of the legislation that I had sought to amend. In fact, as ranking member, I worked with then-Chairman CRAIG to gain passage of the legislation by unanimous consent.

While I would certainly appreciate similar cooperation with respect to S. 1233 and S. 1315, I realize that Senator CRAIG and others may wish to continue to pursue amendments during debate before the full Senate, and I am prepared to support that result. All that is needed for that to happen is for agreement to be reached to begin that debate, as set forth in the unanimous consent agreement put forward by Senator DURBIN last week.

I do not know why others on the other side of the aisle are blocking this debate. I urge them to reconsider and to agree to allow the debate to go forward. Our committee should finish our work. America's veterans deserve no less.

MORTGAGE CANCELLATION RELIEF ACT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to speak concerning the Mortgage Cancellation Relief Act, S. 1394. In previous Congresses, I have introduced this legislation to provide immediate tax relief to homeowners adversely impacted by the recent downturn in the Nation's housing markets.

However, this Congress, I am pleased to join my friend and colleague from Michigan, Senator DEBBIE STABENOW, as a cosponsor of S. 1394. She was on the floor earlier this morning, and she had the opportunity to address this bill. I want to thank her for her continued interest in this issue.

I agree with her that it is well past time for Congress to act on this legislation.

There are a number of positive things I can say about S. 1394. It is a bipartisan bill. It is sound tax policy. It is good economic policy. And it treats those who have been impacted by housing declines fairly in their time of need.

As I mentioned, Senator STABENOW introduced this bill in May.

The President recommended a similar proposal in August.

However, the one not-so-positive thing I can say is that it is not law.

We are now into November. And despite all of the positive aspects of S. 1394, it has still not been reported by the Finance Committee or debated on the Senate floor.

The problem addressed by this legislation has its roots in the housing market.

In September, overall home sales slid 8 percent from the month before. Single-family sales slowed to the lowest pace in nearly 10 years.

Inventory is going up. At the end of August, there was a 9.6-month supply of homes. At the end of September, there was a 10.5-month supply of homes on the market.

So supply is up, and demand is down.

A high school senior, barely paying attention in his economics class, could tell you the result.

The result is a buyer's market. The median home price is down 4.2 percent from the year before.

With the dip in the housing market has come a corollary decrease in new home construction.

According to one recent estimate, construction spending on all new homes fell by 22 percent in 2007. The decline was even greater for single family homes—25 percent.

With another 4 percent dip in 2008, residential construction spending will be down to $254 billion in 2008 from $384 billion in 2005.

While this is not good news for the Nation's builders, at least it tells us that the U.S. housing market is functioning rationally. As the supply of housing tightens, demand and prices will once again go up. This leads many economists to believe that housing markets will turn the corner sooner rather than later.

In the meantime, however, we have a deadly economic mix of declining housing prices, interest rate volatility, and adjustable rate mortgages that are beginning to reset. When this convergence of events takes place and is followed by a certain unnecessarily punitive and totally unfair provision in our Tax Code, life becomes even more burdensome for some of our most vulnerable families and communities.

Let me explain why.

Adjustable rate mortgages are a product that provides an opportunity for millions of families to achieve home ownership. Because they pose less risk to lenders, these mortgages can be a more affordable product that allows families to purchase homes while assuming the risk that interest rates will increase.

Yet because of the easy availability of adjustable rate mortgages, some people took out very high mortgages and according to the Wall Street Journal, there are 17 percent adjustable rate mortgage holders who cannot make their payments on time.

We are currently witnessing how well private industry will be able to handle this problem on its own. The Nation's largest mortgage lender, Countrywide Financial, announced that it is modifying the terms of $16 billion in adjustable rate mortgages. Thirty thousand have already restructured their loans, and Countrywide intends to contact 52,000 borrowers to see if they would like to restructure their loans as well.

Still, the declines in the Nation's housing markets have left two groups particularly vulnerable.

First, there are those who sell their homes for less than the outstanding amount of the mortgage.

Second, there are those who are unable to make their mortgage payments and suffer foreclosure.

As I mentioned earlier, the Tax Code effectively kicks these folks while they are down.

The Internal Revenue Code defines income very broadly.

And when lenders forgive mortgage debt in a short-sale or a foreclosure, the borrower has technically received taxable income. Yet this is phantom income, and it makes little sense to have these financially vulnerable families getting a form 1099 and an increased tax liability for income they never received.

This makes little sense as public policy. And it is inequitable as tax policy.

Section 121 of the Internal Revenue Code allows the exclusion of up to $250,000—or $500,000 on a joint return—of gain on the sale of a home. Few people realize gains in excess of this statutory exclusion. And for those who do, those gains are taxed at lower capital gains rates.

Yet if a family is in such a dire financial situation that it is losing its home or selling it at a loss, the phantom gain on these transactions is taxed at ordinary income rates.

With adjustable rate mortgages being reset, growing housing inventory, and declining housing prices, too many people will be getting a 1099 form in the mail telling them that they owe income taxes on this debt forgiveness.

This is not the way it ought to be.

Our legislation would remedy this problem by excluding this debt forgiveness from gross income.

There is precedent for this. Congress provided similar relief in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Given the ramifications of housing market declines, we should extend this needed relief to all Americans who find themselves receiving this kind of phantom income.

Yes, we would forgo some tax revenue by making this simple, fair, and commonsense change to our tax laws, but the House has found a reasonable offset that is supported by the housing industry so the net effect to the Federal budget should be zero.

As I stated earlier, it is time to act. I am not sure what the delay is.

The drop in the housing market and the problems with adjustable rate mortgages are no longer breaking news. It has been nearly 6 months since this bipartisan legislation was introduced. It has been over 2 months since the President indicated he supported this legislation and wanted to get it signed into law.

This Congress seems to have ground to a halt.

You can hear crickets chirping on the Senate floor lately. To say we are too busy to address this important legislation is simply false.

The lack of quick action on this legislation is no longer acceptable.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 1394 and for the Senate to pass this legislation as soon as possible. Families in need and vulnerable communities demand that we act.

MOTORCOACH ENHANCED SAFETY ACT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, on March 1, 2007, the Bluffton University baseball team left Ohio for a tournament in Florida.

Early the next morning on Interstate 75 in Atlanta, their trip came to a tragic halt when their motorcoach, attempting to exit the highway, fell off an overpass and landed on its side on the road below.

The crash resulted in the deaths of five members of the baseball team: Tyler Williams, Cody Holp, Scott Harmon, Zack Arend, David Joseph Betts. The driver, Jerome Niemeyer, and his wife Jean were also killed in the crash. Many of the other 33 passengers were treated for injuries.

For John Betts, who lost his son David in the crash, it was important to take the accident and make it into something positive, in honor of his son and the other bright, talented young men who died that morning. Motorcoach safety became his crusade.

Mr. Betts has been interviewed by the media, local and national, bringing to light the need for stronger motorcoach safety regulations.

He has called for seatbelts for all passengers as well as other regulations that lower the risk of injury or fatality in accidents.

Mr. Betts sees upgrading the safety laws for motorcoaches as an opportunity to save the lives of future riders.

More importantly, he sees it as a way to memorialize David and his teammates and, as he puts it, to make the world they lived in better than it was when they left it.

Sadly, the Bluffton University baseball team's fatal accident was not unique. We have witnessed story after story about motorcoach accidents.

While the investigation into the cause of the crash is ongoing, one thing is clear—stronger safety regulations could have minimized the fatalities resulting from this crash.

The Motorcoach Safety Enhancement Act, which I introduced today along with Senator HUTCHISON, would address the shortfall in safety regulations for motorcoaches.

Many of the injuries sustained in motorcoaches could be prevented by incorporating high-quality safety technologies that exist today but are not widely used, such as crush-proof roofing and glazed windows to prevent ejection.

More basic safety features, such as readily accessible fire extinguishers and seatbelts for all passengers, are still not required on motorcoaches.

As a father of four, I find it particularly disturbing to know students are still riding in vehicles without even the option of buckling up.

I applaud Mr. Betts and the other Bluffton parents for their courageous fight in the midst of so much personal pain.

Seatbelts, window glazing, fire extinguishers—these are not new technologies. These are commonsense safety features that are widely used.

And they are features that the National Transportation Safety Board recommends be enacted into law. Yet they have been languishing for years.

The Motorcoach Safety Enhancement Act would instruct the Secretary of

Transportation to enact these and other safety features. It would put a timeframe on final rulings so these safety requirements do not spend any more time in limbo.

This bill takes the lessons learned from the tragic events of the Bluffton University baseball team's motorcoach accident, and aims to correct them for future riders.

It is my hope that in the future, parents will not have to endure the anguish and grief that John Betts and the other family members experienced.

I hope for swift consideration of this bill.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

• Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, today I honor the 50th anniversary of the Student Conservation Association. Over these last five decades, the SCA has led the way in promoting the importance of conservation service and stewardship. Its staff and supporters have made an extraordinary commitment to instilling this ethic in our country's young people. While it is headquartered in my home State of New Hampshire, the SCA's reach and influence go far beyond the borders of New Hampshire. Since its founding in 1957 by Elizabeth C. Titus Putnam, nearly 50,000 SCA volunteers have worked to protect the critical natural habitats and threatened wildlife in our country's parks, forests, and urban green spaces. Its members can be found in all 50 States, as well as Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Germany and Latvia. In 2006 alone, 4,000 volunteers logged 1.6 million service hours at 511 separate sites. In past years, they worked to restore the Everglades following the devastation Hurricane Hugo left behind and to repair the damage to Yellowstone National Park following the fires which damaged that park in 1988. This year, they were chosen to lead the Northwest Recovery at Mount Ranier and other parks in that region of the United States following the floods of 2006. It is, in fact, the largest conservation service program in the country.

Those numbers and facts are impressive, but they do not fully convey the central role this organization plays in strengthening the quality of life in the United States. The thousands of volunteers and interns clearly have relished meeting the obligation we all have to protecting the vital natural areas in our country. Their unique dedication and enthusiasm have made them great role models and leaders. These qualities explain why such Federal agencies as the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Armed Forces all have partnered with the SCA and are the reason the White House, National Wildlife Federation, and the National Park Service have recognized the SCA's achievements.

The prime architect behind the SCA is Elizabeth Titus Putnam, and I am especially pleased to honor her. It is a great reflection on her character that the vision she developed 50 years ago became a reality. Her energy and passion for environmental protection have touched countless people and demonstrate why the SCA continues to be an effective and vibrant organization.

For these reasons, I am proud to be a member of the 50th Anniversary Honorary Committee. I hope all the alumni and current volunteers will long remember the deep impact they have made on communities from Maine to Hawaii and from Alaska to Florida. Happy Birthday to the Student Conservation Association and my best wishes for continued success.•

RETIREMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM T. BESTER

• Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the service of a great public servant, outstanding Army officer, and dedicated academic leader.

In his latest stint of public service, BG William T. Bester, U.S. Army retired, distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious service to the Graduate School of Nursing, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD, as acting dean from 10 July 2006 to 30 December 2007.

During this period, the outstanding leadership and ceaseless efforts of General Bester resulted in major contributions to the Graduate School of Nursing, GSN, and to the Uniformed Services University, USU. He assumed his duties during a period of significant change and growth in the history of the GSN and the USU. He lead efforts in dealing with substantial change in the GSN: planning for a new psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner master's option, facilitating the merger of the GSN and Navy nurse anesthesia master's option, fostering renewed collaboration with the Federal nursing service chiefs, FNSCs, assisting the USU with the search for a new brigade commander and GSN dean, and dealing with base closure and realignment strategy and requirements. He focused on every issue with unwavering directness, a spirit of community participation, collegial respect, enthusiasm, and a wonderful sense of humor and fair play. His leadership brought about a change in GSN character and personality that is visible at every level of USU. His tenure has been marked by strong, supportive relationships with senior USU leaders, an increase in FNSC collaboration and trust resulting in additional senior scholars assigned to the Nursing Science Doctoral Program and new educational program opportunities and increased student involvement in and enthusiasm for the school and the university.

Working closely with my office, he was instrumental in solidifying DOD core budgeting for the GSN. He negotiated an expansion of faculty research support with the School of Medicine and the USU vice president for research. He established a sense of calm and collaborative team building by fostering a common vision, always listening to the faculty and staff issues, and addressing their concerns. As a genuine and dedicated ambassador of the university, General Bester often represented the USU president at external senior level meetings. His career interdisciplinary leadership experiences and the respect he maintains within the Department of Defense always provided credibility as spokesperson when he represented the university and its president. These same qualities allowed him to be an essential advisor to President Rice during a time of significant change within USU, on the Bethesda campus, and in emerging military and Federal health cooperative concerns. Brigadier General Bester's total dedication to service in all aspects of his leadership of the Graduate School of Nursing and his exceptional leadership contributions to USU reflect an unsurpassed commitment to maintaining the highest standards for military and Federal health nurse education at the Uniformed Services University. The distinctive accomplishments of Brigadier General Bester reflect great credit upon himself, the Department of Defense, and the Uniformed Services University.

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences continues to fulfill our vision as a key part of the Nation's academic health education enterprise because of the dedication of its faculty and administrative leadership. General Bester exemplifies the best of the best. We owe a debt of gratitude for his years of public service, and I wish to take this opportunity to thank him along with his family: his wife Cheryl, his son Jason, daughter Jodi, and grandsons Will and Jake.

We wish General Bester Godspeed as he returns to his family and Texas where his children and grandchildren now live.•

RECOGNIZING JORDAN-FERNALD FUNERAL HOMES

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Jordan-Fernald Funeral Homes, an outstanding small business in my home State of Maine that exemplifies the best of Maine's community spirit. Founded in 1860 by the Fernald family, Jordan-Fernald is now in its fourth and fifth generations of ownership. Over the years, the Fernalds purchased several Jordan Funeral Home locations to become Jordan-Fernald in 2004. Currently, four Fernalds siblings—Bill, Tom, and Lauri, along with their father, Robert—co-own the business.

Presently maintaining funeral homes in four towns in Hancock County, the Fernalds have always prided themselves on their stalwart commitment to the ever-changing needs of the local communities. For example, Bill participates in a local project to prepare

the Hancock County area against a potential pandemic flu. Meanwhile, Tom serves on the boards of the Maine Funeral Directors Association and the Maine Coast Memorial Hospital and Lauri serves on the boards of the Hospice of Hancock County, the Abbe Museum, and the Hospice Regatta of Maine. Finally, Robert is well known in the area for his work on behalf of the Lions Club.

In recognition of the Fernalds' contributions to the communities, Jordan-Fernald received the Gannett Family Business of the Year Award in 2005. This award recognizes family-run businesses that demonstrate creativity in ensuring their company's vitality while maintaining ties with their communities and stakeholders. Jordan-Fernald was selected, along with one other business, out of a pool of 22 nominees. Family-owned businesses represent approximately 90 percent of all Maine businesses, yet less than 30 percent survive to the second generation and only 13 percent survive to the third generation, making it all the more impressive that Jordan-Fernald has survived to the fifth generation!

Most recently, Jordan-Fernald received the Top Drawer Award from the Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce. The award is presented to a business that has made a substantial contribution to the growth, development, and improvement of Ellsworth, Hancock County, and the State of Maine. The Ellsworth Area Chamber president, Chrissi Maguire-Harding, cited Jordan-Fernald's commitment to the region through participation on community boards, support of other businesses, and economic growth as the main reasons for the award. In modern times, where one-third of Maine funeral homes are owned by a single corporation based in Texas, Jordan-Fernald has managed to maintain independence and a bountiful community spirit.

Jordan-Fernald is an exemplary small business. The firm's dynamic approach toward business and community involvement benefits everyone throughout eastern Maine and, indeed, the entire State of Maine. I commend Jordan-Fernald Funeral Homes for its dedication and leadership, and I wish the enterprise much success going forward.●

RECOGNIZING THE RAPID CITY MEALS PROGRAM

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I honor the Rapid City, SD, MEALS program as they celebrate 26 years of dedicated service to the Black Hills community.

For more than a quarter century, the Rapid City MEALS program has provided our seniors with quality nutrition, education, community, and support services so they can live in their own homes and maintain their independence.

The MEALS program would not be able to perform its invaluable mission without the hard work and dedication of the many volunteers who put in countless hours serving the needs of others. These compassionate individuals are truly the backbone of the Rapid City community and I hope that their service will inspire others to lend a helping hand.

It gives me great pleasure, with the State of South Dakota, to congratulate the MEALS Program of Rapid City on this important anniversary and wish them continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE DURING RECESS

Under authority of the order of the Senate of January 4, 2007, the Secretary of the Senate, on November 14, 2007, during the recess of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1429) to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 258. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 5:01 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, announced that the House has passed the following bills and joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1534. An act to prohibit certain sales, distributions, and transfers of elemental mercury, to prohibit the export of elemental mercury, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1593. An act to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2614. An act to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in certain water projects in California.

H.R. 2627. An act to establish the Thomas Edison National Historical Park in the State of New Jersey as the successor to the Edison National Historic Site.

H.R. 2705. An act to amend the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3013. An act to provide appropriate protection to attorney-client privileged communications and attorney work product.

H.R. 3315. An act to provide that the great hall of the Capitol Visitor Center shall be known as Emancipation Hall.

H.R. 3403. An act to promote and enhance public safety by facilitating the rapid deployment of IP-enabled 911 and E–911 services, encourage the Nation's transition to a national IP-enabled emergency network, and improve 911 and E–911 access to those with disabilities.

H.R. 3461. An act to establish a public awareness campaign regarding Internet safety.

H.R. 3470. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 744 West Oglethorpe Highway in Hinesville, Georgia, as the ''John Sidney 'Sid' Flowers Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3569. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the ''Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3703. An act to amend section 5112(p)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code, to allow an exception from the $1 coin dispensing capability requirement for certain vending machines.

H.R. 3919. An act to provide for a comprehensive nationwide inventory of existing broadband service, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3974. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 797 Sam Bass Road in Round Rock, Texas, as the ''Marine Corps Corporal Steven P. Gill Post Office Building''.

H.R. 4134. An act to direct the Attorney General to provide grants for Internet crime prevention education programs.

H.R. 4153. An act to make certain technical corrections and transition amendments to the College Cost Reduction and Access Act.

H.R. 4154. An act to increase the insurance limitations on Federal insurance for bonds issued by the designated bonding authority for Historically Black Colleges and Universities capital financing.

H.J. Res. 62. Joint resolution to honor the achievements and contributions of Native Americans he United States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 122. Concurrent resolution supporting the goal and mission of America Recycles Day.

H. Con. Res. 211. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day.

H. Con. Res. 229. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States should seek a review of compliance by all nations with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' conservation and management recommendations for Atlantic bluefin tuna and other species, and should pursue strengthened conservation and management measures to facilitate the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution:

S. Con. Res. 45. Concurrent resolution commending the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation for its work in aiding children and families affected by child abuse, and designating November 2007 as National Courage Month.

At 5:48 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 report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills and joint resolution were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1534. To prohibit certain sales, distributions, and transfers of elemental mercury, to prohibit the export of elemental mercury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1593. An act to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2614. An act to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in certain water projects in California; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2627. An act to establish the Thomas Edison National Historical Park in the State of New Jersey as the successor to the Edison National Historic Site; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3013. An act to provide appropriate protection to attorney-client privileged communications and attorney work product; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3403. An act to promote and enhance public safety by facilitating the rapid deployment of IP-enabled 911 and E–911 services, encouraging the nation's transition to a national IP-enabled emergency network and improve 911 and E–911 access to those with disabilities; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3461. An act to establish a public awareness campaign regarding Internet safety; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3470. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 744 West Oglethorpe Highway in Hinesville, Georgia, as the ''John Sidney 'Sid' Flowers Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3569. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the ''Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3919. An act to provide for a comprehensive nationwide inventory of existing broadband service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3974. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 797 Sam Bass Road in Round Rock, Texas, as the ''Marine Corps Corporal Steven P. Gill Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 4134. An act to direct the Attorney General to provide grants for Internet crime prevention education programs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4153. An act to make certain technical corrections and transition amendments to the College Cost Reduction and Access Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 4154. An act to increase the insurance limitations on Federal insurance for bonds issued by the designated bonding authority for Historically Black Colleges and Universities capital financing; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.J. Res. 62. Joint resolution to honor the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

The following concurrent resolutions were read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 122. Concurrent resolution supporting the goal and mission of America Recycles Day; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H. Con. Res. 211. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H. Con. Res. 229. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States should seek a review of compliance by all nations with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' conservation and management recommendations for Atlantic bluefin tuna and other species, and should pursue strengthened conservation and management measures to facilitate the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3996. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions, and for other purposes.

S. 2334. A bill to withhold 10 percent of the Federal funding apportioned for highway construction and maintenance from States that issue driver's licenses to individuals without verifying the legal status of such individuals.

S. 2340. A bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

S. 2346. A bill to temporarily increase the portfolio caps applicable to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, to provide the necessary financing to curb foreclosures by facilitating the refinancing of at-risk subprime borrowers into safe, affordable loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2348. A bill to ensure control over the United States border and to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws.

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2705. An act to amend the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. INOUYE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 311. A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to prohibit the shipping, transporting, moving, delivering, receiving, possessing, purchasing, selling, or donation of horses and other equines to be slaughtered for human consumption, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-229).

By Mr. LIEBERMAN, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

H.R. 2089. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the ''Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office''.

H.R. 2276. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the ''Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3297. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 West Trenton Avenue in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Nate De Tample Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3307. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3308. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 East Main Street in Atwood, Indiana, as the ''Lance Corporal David K. Fribley Post Office''.

H.R. 3325. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, as the ''Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office''.

H.R. 3382. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 North William Street in Goldsboro, North Carolina, as the ''Philip A. Baddour, Sr. Post Office''.

H.R. 3446. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Michigan Avenue in Marshall, Michigan, as the ''Michael W. Schragg Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3518. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1430 South Highway 29 in Cantonment, Florida, as the ''Charles H. Hendrix Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3530. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 Highway 41 North in Inverness, Florida, as the ''Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Weaver Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3572. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building''.

S. 2107. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building''.

S. 2110. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the ''Larry S. Pierce Post Office''.

S. 2150. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building''.

S. 2174. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the ''Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building''.

S. 2290. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the ''Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building''.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of committee were submitted:

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

[Treaty Doc. 110–3 Tax Convention with Belgium (Ex. Rept. 110–2); Treaty Doc. 109–19 Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Denmark (Ex. Rept. 110–3); Treaty Doc. 109–18 Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Finland (Ex. Rept. 110–4); and Treaty Doc. 109–20 Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Germany (Ex. Rept. 110–5)]

The text of the committee-recommended resolutions of advice and consent to ratification are as follows:

110–3: TAX CONVENTION WITH BELGIUM

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and accompanying Protocol, signed at Brussels on November 27, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 110–3).

109–19: PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION WITH DENMARK

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Copenhagen on May 2, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 109–19).

109–18: PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION WITH FINLAND

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Finland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, signed at Helsinki on May 31, 2006 (Treaty Doc. 109–18).

109–20: PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION WITH GERMANY

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital and to Certain Other Taxes, signed at Berlin on June 1, 2006 and an Exchange of Notes dated August 17, 2006 (EC–2046) (Treaty Doc. 109–20).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. KENNEDY for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Charles E. F. Millard, of New York, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

*Mark D. Gearan, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring December 1, 2010.

*Julie Fisher Cummings, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring September 14, 2011.

*Donna N. Williams, of Texas, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2009.

*Tom Osborne, of Nebraska, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2012.

*Alan D. Solomont, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring October 6, 2009.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the RECORD on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Public Health Service nominations beginning with Harry J. Brown and ending with Elaine C. Wolff, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 16, 2007.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Ellen C. Williams, of Kentucky, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2014.

*W. Ross Ashley, III, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Mr. REID (for Mr. BIDEN (for himself and Mr. LUGAR)):

S. 2349. A bill to reauthorize the programs of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2350. A bill to establish a grant program to provide screenings for glaucoma to individuals determined to be at a high risk for glaucoma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 2351. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for medical research related to developing qualified infectious disease products; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2352. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries greater choice with regard to accessing hearing health services and benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2353. A bill to increase the annual salaries of justices and judges of the United States, and to increase fees for bankruptcy trustees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. CRAIG):

S. 2354. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey 4 parcels of land from the Bureau of Land Management to the city of Twin Falls, Idaho; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2355. A bill to amend the National Climate Program Act to enhance the ability of the United States to develop and implement climate change adaptation programs and policies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. COLEMAN:

S. 2356. A bill to enhance national security by restricting access of illegal aliens to driver's licenses and State-issued identification documents; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LOTT, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CASEY, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. BIDEN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. GREGG, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. Res. 378. A resolution recognizing and thanking all military families for the tremendous sacrifices and contributions they have made to the Nation; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. BENNETT):

S. Res. 379. A resolution designating Thursday, November 15, 2007, as ''Feed America Thursday''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Mr. INOUYE):

S. Res. 380. A resolution recognizing Hostelling International USA for 75 years of service to intercultural understanding and to youth travel; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 381. A resolution remembering and commemorating the lives and work of Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, who were executed by members of the Armed Forces of El Salvador on December 2, 1980; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. COLEMAN):

S. Res. 382. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 22

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 22, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a program of educational assistance for members of the Armed Forces who serve in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, and for other purposes.

S. 67

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 67, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit former members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated as total to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the Armed Forces are entitled to travel on such aircraft.

S. 507

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 507, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for reimbursement of certified midwife services and to provide for more equitable reimbursement rates for certified nurse-midwife services.

S. 518

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 578

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to improve requirements under the Medicaid program for items and services furnished in or through an educational program or setting to children, including children with developmental, physical, or mental health needs, and for other purposes.

S. 583

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 583, a bill to create a competitive grant program for States to enable the States to award salary bonuses to highly qualified elementary school or secondary school teachers who teach, or commit to teach, for at least 3 academic years in a school served by a rural local educational agency.

S. 968

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 968, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide increased assistance for the prevention, treatment, and control of tuberculosis, and for other purposes.

S. 1164

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1164, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve patient access to, and utilization of, the colorectal cancer screening benefit under the Medicare Program.

S. 1382

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1382, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of an Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry.

S. 1394

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1394, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to exclude from gross income of individual taxpayers discharges of indebtedness attributable to certain forgiven residential mortgage obligations.

S. 1465

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1465, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of certain medical mobility devices approved as class III medical devices.

S. 1494

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1494, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the special diabetes programs for Type I diabetes and Indians under that Act.

S. 1534

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1534, a bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its human rights record and to support a transition to democracy in Iran.

S. 1551

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1551, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to making progress toward the goal of eliminating tuberculosis, and for other purposes.

S. 1679

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1679, a bill to provide that the great hall of the Capitol Visitor Center shall be known as Emancipation Hall.

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1679, supra.

S. 1734

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1734, a bill to provide for prostate cancer imaging research and education.

S. 1852

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1852, a bill to designate the Friday after Thanksgiving of each year as ''Native American Heritage Day'' in honor of the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States.

S. 1858

At the request of Mr. CASEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1858, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish grant programs to provide for education and outreach on newborn screening and coordinated followup care once newborn screening has been conducted, to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1858, supra.

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1858, supra.

S. 1943

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1943, a bill to establish uniform standards for interrogation techniques applicable to individuals under the custody or physical control of the United States Government.

S. 1958

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1958, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure and foster continued patient quality of care by establishing facility and patient criteria for long-term care hospitals and related improvements under the Medicare program.

S. 1991

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1991, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of extending the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to include additional sites associated with the preparation and return phases of the expedition, and for other purposes.

S. 2056

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2056, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act

to restore financial stability to Medicare anesthesiology teaching programs for resident physicians.

S. 2071

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) were added as cosponsors of S. 2071, a bill to enhance the ability to combat methamphetamine.

S. 2123

At the request of Mr. GREGG, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2123, a bill to provide collective bargaining rights for public safety officers employed by States or their political subdivisions.

S. 2136

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2136, a bill to address the treatment of primary mortgages in bankruptcy, and for other purposes.

S. 2161

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2161, a bill to ensure and foster continued patient safety and quality of care by making the antitrust laws apply to negotiations between groups of independent pharmacies and health plans and health insurance issuers (including health plans under parts C and D of the Medicare Program) in the same manner as such laws apply to protected activities under the National Labor Relations Act.

S. 2257

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2257, a bill to impose sanctions on officials of the State Peace and Development Council in Burma, to amend the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 to prohibit the importation of gemstones and hardwoods from Burma, to promote a coordinated international effort to restore civilian democratic rule to Burma, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2257, supra.

S. 2278

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2278, a bill to improve the prevention, detection, and treatment of community and healthcare-associated infections (CHAI), with a focus on antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

S. 2303

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2303, a bill to amend section 435(o) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding the definition of economic hardship.

S. 2324

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2324, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) to enhance the Offices of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and for other purposes.

S. 2331

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2331, a bill to exclude from gross income payments from the Hokie Spirit Memorial Fund to the victims of the tragic event, loss of life and limb, at Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University.

S. 2332

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2332, a bill to promote transparency in the adoption of new media ownership rules by the Federal Communications Commission, and to establish an independent panel to make recommendations on how to increase the representation of women and minorities in broadcast media ownership.

S. 2340

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2340, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

S. 2347

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2347, a bill to restore and protect access to discount drug prices for university-based and safety-net clinics.

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2347, supra.

S. 2348

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2348, a bill to ensure control over the United States border and to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws.

S. RES. 273

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 273, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Postal Service should issue a semipostal stamp to support medical research relating to Alzheimer's disease.

S. RES. 356

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 356, a resolution affirming that any offensive military action taken against Iran must be explicitly approved by Congress before such action may be initiated.

S. RES. 358

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 358, a resolution expressing the importance of friendship and cooperation between the United States and Turkey.

S. RES. 376

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 376, a resolution providing the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of Commerce should declare a commercial fishery failure for the groundfish fishery for Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island and immediately propose regulations to implement section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 3508

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3508 proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3544

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3544 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3545

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3545 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3615

At the request of Mr. GREGG, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3615 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3616

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3616 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3625

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3625 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3649

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3649 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2419, a bill to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2352. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries greater choice with regard to accessing hearing health services and benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce the Medicare Hearing Health Care Enhancement Act with my colleagues, Senators HARKIN, COLEMAN, and MENENDEZ. This legislation is the companion bill to legislation introduced in the House by Representative MIKE ROSS, with a number of cosponsors.

This legislation will provide Medicare beneficiaries with the same hearing care options available to veterans and Federal employees, including every member of this body. Under this bill, Medicare beneficiaries who experience hearing problems will have the option of going directly to an audiologist, rather than first visiting a physician. This is the policy for the health care programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Office of Personnel Management. Direct access works well for our veterans and for Federal employees, including Members of Congress, and direct access should be available to senior citizens in the Medicare program.

More than 31 million Americans have some type of hearing problem, making hearing loss the third most common health problem in the U.S. Many of them are older Americans, and this statistic is fast increasing with the aging of the ''baby boomers.'' Yet half of all hearing impaired persons are under age 65. With 80 to 90 percent of hearing problems not medically or surgically treatable, it seems only reasonable that Medicare patients be allowed to consult with an audiologist without first seeing another health care provider. It is part of regular audiological practice to refer patients for medical management when clinical indicators are present.

In 1992, the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, changed its health care policy to allow for the option of direct access to a licensed audiologist. The VA reports: ''the policy has provided and continues to provide high quality, cost effective, and successful hearing health care to veterans.'' The VA did not experience increased utilization of audiology services due to the policy change and instead found, ''the policy did not increase the number of visits beyond what would be expected in the aging veteran population.''

In 2003, the Congress in the Appropriations Conference Report number 108–10 recommended that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services make this change. We have since learned that CMS does not have the authority to do so under current law. Therefore, I hope that we can all agree that this is a common sense idea whose time has come, and move this legislation forward to enactment.

Direct access would facilitate access to hearing care without expanding the scope of practice for audiologists. This legislation will make it easier for Medicare beneficiaries, particularly in rural America, to have the same high quality hearing care provided by the VA and OPM. It is also important to point out that both the Medicare and Medicaid programs now recognize State licensure as the appropriate standard for determining who is a qualified audiologist.

This legislation enjoys the support of a large number of organizations including the American Academy of Audiology, the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, the National Association of the Deaf and the National Rural Health Association. I commend this legislation to the attention of my colleagues and urge them to lend their support by cosponsoring this bill.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2353. A bill to increase the annual salaries of justices and judges of the United States, and to increase fees for bankruptcy trustees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the 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. 2353

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 ''Fair Judicial Compensation Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. JUDICIAL SALARY INCREASE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The annual salaries of the Chief Justice of the United States, associate justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, United States circuit judges, United States district judges, and judges of the United States Court of International Trade are increased in the amount of 16.5 percent of their respective annual salary rates in effect on the effective date of this Act, rounded to the nearest $100 (or, if midway between multiples of $100, to the next higher multiple of $100).

(b) COORDINATION RULE.—If a pay adjustment under subsection (a) is to be made for an office or position as of the same date that any other pay adjustment would take effect for such office or position, the adjustment under this Act shall be made first.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. BANKRUPTCY TRUSTEES.

Section 330(b)(2) of title 11, United States Code, is amended, in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (B), by striking ''$15'' each place that term appears and inserting ''$55''.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2355. A bill to amend the National Climate Program Act to enhance the ability of the United States to develop and implement climate change adaptation programs and policies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Climate Change Adaptation Act of 2007.

Before I describe the merits of this bill, I would like to take a moment to commend many of my colleagues for their ongoing efforts to develop legislative solutions to meet the enormous challenges global warming poses to our Nation and our planet. I feel this bill helps address a somewhat overlooked, but key tool, to tackling this preeminent challenge facing our Nation.

I am proud that Washington State is taking the lead on the issue of global climate change. While my State's contribution to global warming is relatively small—because we are fortunate enough to derive about 70 percent of our electricity from inexpensive, emissions-free hydropower—global warming threatens to seriously impact our economy.

Ironically, one of the primary impacts of global warming on the Pacific Northwest will be to change our rainfall patterns in a way that reduces the amount of water available for hydropower production.

And these changes will not only harm electricity generation, they will also impact billions of dollars of economic infrastructure associated with irrigation systems, municipal water supplies, even ski resorts that depend on our historic snowfall patterns.

Faced with these possibilities, we must ask several simple questions: What are we doing to prepare for these changes? How are predicted sea level rises being incorporated into shoreline restoration projects, siting of public infrastructure, or disaster response plans, among many other examples? What tools do we need to give Federal, State, and local decisionmakers to take climate change into account on long-term, multibillion-dollar decisions?

Unfortunately, we don't have any answers.

As we discovered when I held a hearing on ocean acidification as chair of the Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard subcommittee last May, our Government is ill-equipped to plan for the consequences of global climate change. We simply lack the tools to develop the strategies we need to adapt.

In August, the Government Accountability Office found that the Federal government is not providing Federal agencies with the proper tools or policy mandates to take climate change impacts into account in carrying out their responsibilities to manage public resources.

In September, the National Academy of Sciences concluded there is a tremendous need to improve the delivery of climate change information to Federal, regional, and local levels so they can take climate change impacts into account in planning and managing resources.

The reality is that even if we were somehow able to stop using fossil fuels today, a certain degree of warming and ocean acidification will still occur over the next 2 or 3 decades.

While my top priority is to move our Nation to a clean energy system, we must face the fact that global warming is happening already, and it is only going to get worse.

That is why I am pleased today to be introducing the Climate Change Adaptation Act—a bill to ensure that our government plans for the changes that global warming will inevitably bring. This bill will require the President to develop a national strategy for addressing the impacts that climate change will have on our natural resources. It will also specifically require NOAA to conduct vulnerability assessments on the impacts of climate change on coastal and ocean resources, and to prepare adaptation plans for those resources.

Planning for the future isn't just common sense—it's responsible government.

This bill is complementary to several bills under consideration by the Commerce Committee on which I serve, including the Kerry-Snowe bill that was under discussion at a Commerce Committee hearing earlier today. Their bill contains many provisions I believe are vitally important—including language I authored with Senator COLLINS on the need for a program to study the threat of abrupt climate change. I'm also proud to work with Senator LAUTENBERG on legislation combating ocean acidification.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to move all these critical bills out of the committee and through the Senate in the coming weeks.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the 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. 2355

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 ''Climate Change Adaptation Act''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT OF NATIONAL CLIMATE PROGRAM ACT.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this title an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the National Climate Program Act (15 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Section 2 (15 U.S.C. 2601) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

''The Congress finds that—

''(1) weather, climate change, and climate variability affect public safety, environmental services and security, human health, agriculture, energy use, water resources, and other factors vital to national security and human welfare;

''(2) the present rate of advance of national efforts in research and development and the application of such advances is inadequate to meet the challenges posed by observed and projected rates of climate change and climate variability and the increasing demand for information to guide planning and response across all sectors;

''(3) the United States lacks adequate research, infrastructure, and coordinated outreach and communication mechanisms to meet national climate monitoring, prediction, and decision support needs for adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change and climate variability;

''(4) information regarding climate change and climate variability is not being fully disseminated or used, and Federal efforts have given insufficient attention to assessing and applying this information;

''(5) climate change and climate variability occur on a global basis making international cooperation essential for the purpose of sharing the benefits and costs of a global effort to understand and communicate these changes;

''(6) recent scientific reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change conclusively found that climate change is occurring, and that impacts from climate change can be expected in even shorter time periods than had been previously predicted;

''(7) the Panel found that the resilience of many ecosystems is likely to be exceeded this century by an unprecedented combination of climate change, associated disturbances such as flooding and drought, and other global change drivers such as land-use change;

''(8) according to the Panel, approximately 20 to 30 percent of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at increased risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5 to 2.5 degrees Celsius;

''(9) the Panel also found that the progressive acidification of oceans due to increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide is expected to have negative impacts on marine shell-forming organisms, such as corals, and their dependent species;

''(10) the Panel found that coasts will be exposed to increasing risks, including coastal erosion, over coming decades due to climate change and sea-level rise, and that adaptation costs for vulnerable coasts are much less than the costs of inaction;

''(11) in its September, 2007, study entitled Evaluating Progress of the U.S. Climate Change Science Program: Methods and Preliminary Results, the National Academy of Sciences concluded that there is a tremendous need to improve the delivery of information to decision makers at the Federal, regional, and local levels on climate change impacts and to take such impacts into account in planning and in managing resources;

''(12) States and local communities may need Federal assistance in developing and implementing strategies to address the impacts of climate change;

''(13) in its August, 2007, report entitled Climate Change: Agencies Should Develop Guidance for Addressing the Effects on Federal Land and Water Resources, GAO-07-863, the Government Accountability Office found that the Federal government is not providing the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other Federal agencies that are responsible for managing natural resources with the proper tools or policy mandates to take the impacts of climate change into account in carrying out their responsibilities to manage public resources;

''(14) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which plays a leading role in the Federal government's Global Change Research Program, has a key role to play both in predicting impacts of climate change on natural resources and in improving the delivery of information critical to adaptation and management to end users; and

''(15) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has a key role to play in addressing the impacts of climate change on our Nation's coastal areas and ocean resources.''.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 (15 U.S.C. 2903) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (1) and (2).

SEC. 5. NATIONAL CLIMATE PROGRAM ELEMENTS.

Section 5 (15 U.S.C. 2904) is amended—

(1) by striking ''subsection (d)(9);'' in subsection (b)(1) and inserting ''section 6;'';

(2) by striking subsections (c), (e), (f), and (g); and

(3) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(c) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Program shall include—

''(1) a strategic plan to address the impacts of climate change within the United States; and

''(2) a National Climate Service to be established within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.''.

SEC. 6. NATIONAL CLIMATE STRATEGY.

The Act is amended by striking sections 6 through 9 (15 U.S.C. 2905 et seq.) and inserting the following:

''SEC. 6. NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Climate Change Adaptation Act, the President shall provide to the Congress a 5-year national strategic plan to address the impacts of climate change within the United States, to implement such strategy for Federally-managed resources and actions, and to provide information to and coordinate with State and local governments and nongovernmental entities to support similar efforts with respect to non-Federal natural resources. The President shall provide a mechanism for consulting with States and local governments, the private sector, universities, and other nongovernmental entities in developing the plan. The plan shall be updated at least every 5 years.

''(b) CONTENTS OF PLAN.—The plan shall, at a minimum—

''(1) identify existing Federal requirements, protocols, and capabilities for addressing climate change impacts on Federally managed resources and actions;

''(2) identify measures to improve such capabilities and the utilization of such capabilities;

''(3) include protocols to integrate climate change impacts into Federal agency actions and policies, consistent with existing authorities;

''(4) address vulnerabilities and priorities identified through the assessments carried out under the Global Change Research Act of 1990 and this Act;

''(5) establish a mechanism for the exchange of information related to addressing the impacts of climate change with, and provide technical assistance to, State and local governments and nongovernmental entities;

''(6) develop partnerships with State and local governments and nongovernmental entities to support and coordinate implementation of the plan;

''(7) include implementation and funding strategies for short-term and long-term actions that may be taken at the national, regional, State, and local level;

''(8) establish a process to develop more detailed agency and department- specific plans;

''(9) identify opportunities to utilize remote sensing and other geospatial technologies to improve planning for adaptation to climate change impacts; and

''(10) identify existing legal authorities and additional authorities necessary to implement the plan.

''(c) AGENCY-LEVEL STRATEGIES.—

''(1) AGENCY PLANS.—Each department and agency of the Executive Branch shall develop a detailed plan, based on the national plan, for addressing climate change impacts with respect to such department or agencies policies and actions, within 1 year after the date that the plan is submitted under subsection (b) and provide such plan to Congress.

''(2) INTERIM ACTIVITIES.—Nothing in this section shall be understood to prevent any Federal agency or department to take climate change impacts into account, consistent with its existing authorities, until the plans are provided to Congress and steps to implement such plans are taken.

''(d) COORDINATION.—The President shall ensure that the mechanism to provide information related to addressing the impacts of climate change to State and local governments and nongovernmental entities is appropriately coordinated or integrated with existing programs that provide similar information on climate change predictions.

''(e) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—Nothing in this section shall supersede any Federal authority in effect on the date of enactment of the Climate Change Adaptation Act.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 $10,000,000 to carry out this section.

''SEC. 7. OCEAN AND COASTAL VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION.

''(a) COASTAL AND OCEAN VULNERABILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Within 2 years after the date of enactment of the Climate Change Adaptation Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall, in consultation with the appropriate Federal, State, and local governmental entities, conduct regional assessments of the vulnerability of coastal and ocean areas and resources to hazards associated with climate change, climate variability, and ocean acidification including—

''(A) sea level rise;

''(B) fluctuation of Great Lakes water levels;

''(C) increases in severe weather events;

''(D) storm surge;

''(E) rainfall;

''(F) flooding and inundation;

''(G) changes in sea ice;

''(H) changes in ocean currents impacting global heat transfer;

''(I) increased siltation due to coastal erosion;

''(J) shifts in the hydrological cycle;

''(K) natural hazards, including tsunami, drought, flood, and fire;

''(L) coral reef bleaching; and

''(M) alteration of ecological communities, including at the ecosystem or watershed levels,

''(2) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall update such assessments at least once every 5 years.

''(3) REGIONAL COASTAL AND OCEAN ASSESSMENTS.—In preparing the regional coastal assessments, the Secretary shall take into account the information and assessments being developed pursuant to the Global Change Research Program. The regional assessments shall include an evaluation of—

''(A) physical, biological, and ecological impacts, such as coastal erosion, flooding and loss of estuarine habitat, saltwater intrusion of aquifers and saltwater encroachment, impacts on food web distribution, species migration, species abundance, and changes in marine pathogens and diseases;

''(B) social impacts associated with threats to and potential losses of housing, communities, and infrastructure; and

''(C) economic impacts on local, State, and regional economies, including the impact on abundance or distribution of economically important living marine resources.

''(b) COASTAL AND OCEAN ADAPTATION PLAN.—The Secretary shall, within 3 years after the date of enactment of the Climate Change Adaptation Act, submit to the Congress a national coastal and ocean adaptation plan, composed of individual regional adaptation plans that recommend targets and strategies to address coastal and ocean impacts associated with climate change, ocean acidification, sea level rise, and climate variability. The plan shall be developed with the participation of other Federal, State, and local government agencies that will be critical in the implementation of the plan at the State and local levels and shall take into account recommendations of the National Science Board in its January 12, 2007, report entitled Hurricane Warning: The Critical Need for a National Hurricane Research Initiative and other relevant studies, and not duplicate existing Federal and State hazard planning requirements. The Plan shall recommend both short- and long-term adaptation strategies and shall include recommendations regarding—

''(1) Federal flood insurance program modifications;

''(2) areas that have been identified as high risk through mapping and assessment;

''(3) mitigation incentives such as rolling easements, strategic retreat, State or Federal acquisition in fee simple or other interest in land, construction standards, and zoning;

''(4) land and property owner education;

''(5) economic planning for small communities dependent upon affected coastal and ocean resources, including fisheries;

''(6) coastal hazards protocols to reduce the risk of damage to lives and property, and a process for evaluating the implementation of such protocols;

''(7) strategies to address impacts on the most vulnerable living marine resources;

''(8) proposals to integrate measures into the actions and policies of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

''(9) a plan for additional research and development of technologies and capabilities to address such impacts;

''(10) plans to pursue bilateral and multilateral agreements necessary to effectively address such impacts;

''(11) partnerships with States and nongovernmental organizations;

''(12) methods to mitigate the impacts identified, including habitat restoration measures; and

''(12) funding requirements and mechanisms.

''(c) TECHNICAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall establish a coordinated program to provide technical planning assistance and products to coastal States and local governments as they develop and implement adaptation or mitigation strategies and plans. Products, information, tools and technical expertise generated from the development of the regional coastal and ocean assessments and the coastal and ocean adaptation plans will be made available to coastal States for the purposes of developing their own State and local plans.

''(d) COASTAL AND OCEAN ADAPTATION GRANTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide grants of financial assistance to coastal States with federally approved coastal zone management programs to develop and begin implementing coastal and ocean adaptation programs.

''(2) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall distribute grant funds under paragraph (1) among coastal States in accordance with the formula established under section 306(c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1455(c)), adjusted in consultation with the States as necessary to provide assistance to particularly vulnerable coastlines.

''(3) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall make grants under paragraph (1) on a matching basis under which the ratio of Federal to State funds is—

''(A) 4 to 1 in the first fiscal year;

''(B) 2.3 to 1 in the second fiscal year;

''(C) 2 to 1 in the third fiscal year; and

''(D) 1 to 1 thereafter.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere $35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 to carry out the provisions of this section, of which $25,000,000 shall be available for grants under subsection (d) for each of such fiscal years. Not more than 75 percent of the amount available for grants under subsection (d) for any fiscal year may be used for grants relating to coastal impacts.''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 378—RECOGNIZING AND THANKING ALL MILITARY FAMILIES FOR THE TREMENDOUS SACRIFICES AND CONTRIBUTIONS THEY HAVE MADE TO THE NATION

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LOTT, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CASEY, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. BIDEN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON,

Mr. GREGG, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. BAUCUS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 378

Whereas there are currently more than 3,000,000 immediate family members of individuals serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas these family members bear the most immediate and profound burden of the absence of their loved ones during the performance of their duties;

Whereas these families have been the bedrock of support and strength for our Nation's Armed Forces for over 230 years;

Whereas military families serve this country with an equal amount of dedication and patriotism as their loved ones who are fighting for the United States;

Whereas the families of servicemembers—whether in the regular components of the Armed Forces, the Reserve, or the National Guard—feel enormous amounts of pride, love, and trepidation during the absence of their loved ones;

Whereas it is essential that the Nation recognize the contributions made by military families and celebrate their strength; and

Whereas the Senate stands in humble respect of the sacrifice made by our military families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the families of members of the Armed Forces and recognizes that they too share in the burden of protecting the Nation;

(2) urges the people of the United States to join with the Senate in thanking military families for their tremendous sacrifice on behalf of the Nation; and

(3) recognizes with great appreciation the contributions made by military families in providing the essential personal support that our Nation's warriors need.

SENATE RESOLUTION 379—DESIGNATING THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2007, AS ''FEED AMERICA THURSDAY''

Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. BENNETT) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 379

Whereas Thanksgiving Day celebrates the spirit of selfless giving and an appreciation for family and friends;

Whereas the spirit of Thanksgiving Day is a virtue upon which the Nation was founded;

Whereas, according to the Department of Agriculture, roughly 35,000,000 people in the United States, including 12,000,000 children, continue to live in households that do not have an adequate supply of food; and

Whereas selfless sacrifice breeds a genuine spirit of thanksgiving, both affirming and restoring fundamental principles in our society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates Thursday, November 15, 2007, as ''Feed America Thursday''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to sacrifice 2 meals on Thursday, November 15, 2007, and to donate the money that they would have spent on food to a religious or charitable organization of their choice for the purpose of feeding the hungry.

SENATE RESOLUTION 380—RECOGNIZING HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL USA FOR 75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND TO YOUTH TRAVEL

Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Mr. INOUYE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 380

Whereas travel promotes awareness and knowledge of peoples, places, and cultures;

Whereas hostelling is educational travel, local and global, using hostels and other programs to facilitate interaction among travelers and with local communities;

Whereas hostels are simple, safe, shared accommodations that promote community and cooperation among users and introduce young people of limited means to travel;

Whereas Hostelling International USA (HI-USA) is a nonprofit educational organization established in 1934 as American Youth Hostels to promote hostelling in the United States;

Whereas, since its founding, HI-USA has provided in its hostels more than 22,000,000 overnight stays to visitors from the United States and more than 150 countries worldwide;

Whereas today HI-USA has a network of 70 hostels in areas of cultural, historic, and recreational interest, often in partnership with public, private, and other nonprofit organizations, that annually hosts nearly 1,000,000 overnights stays by both domestic and foreign travelers;

Whereas HI-USA today offers programs through its hostels and local chapters that promote the appreciation of local culture and environment, while facilitating the discovery of both world and self, to more than 65,000 participants annually;

Whereas HI-USA has made a unique and notable contribution to intercultural understanding in the United States and worldwide, especially among youth: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Hostelling International USA on its 75 years of service; and

(2) commends Hostelling International USA for its contributions to intercultural exchange and its leadership in the field of youth travel.

SENATE RESOLUTION 381—REMEMBERING AND COMMEMORATING THE LIVES AND WORK OF MARYKNOLL SISTERS MAURA CLARKE AND ITA FORD, URSULINE SISTER DOROTHY KAZEL, AND CLEVELAND LAY MISSION TEAM MEMBER JEAN DONOVAN, WHO WERE EXECUTED BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF EL SALVADOR ON DECEMBER 2, 1980

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the followint resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 381

Whereas on December 2, 1980, four churchwomen from the United States, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, were violated and executed by members of the National Guard of El Salvador;

Whereas in 1980, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford were working in the parish of the Church of San Juan Bautista in Chalatenango, El Salvador, providing food, transportation, and other assistance to refugees, and Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan were working in the parish of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in La Libertad, El Salvador, providing assistance and support to refugees and other victims of violence;

Whereas these four churchwomen from the United States dedicated their lives to working with the poor of El Salvador, especially women and children left homeless, displaced, and destitute by the civil war in El Salvador;

Whereas these four churchwomen from the United States were among the more than 70,000 civilians who were murdered during the course of the civil war in El Salvador;

Whereas on May 23 and May 24, 1984, five members of the National Guard of El Salvador, Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman, Daniel Canales Ramirez, Carlos Joaquin Contreras Palacios, Francisco Orlando Contreras Recinos, and Jose Roberto Moreno Canjura, were found guilty by the El Salvador courts of the executions of these four churchwomen from the United States and were sentenced to 30 years in prison, marking the first time in El Salvador history in which a member of the Armed Forces of El Salvador was convicted of murder by an El Salvador judge;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador was established under the terms of the historic January 1992 Peace Accords that ended 12 years of civil war in El Salvador and was charged to investigate and report to the El Salvador people on human rights crimes committed by all sides during the course of the civil war;

Whereas in March 1993, the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador found that the execution of these four churchwomen from the United States was planned, that Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman carried out orders from a superior to execute them, that then Colonel Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, then Director-General of the National Guard and his cousin, Lieutenant Colonel Oscar Edgardo Casanova Vejar, then Commander of the Zacatecoluca military detachment where the murders were committed, and other military personnel knew that members of the National Guard had committed the murders pursuant to orders of a superior, and that the subsequent coverup of the facts adversely affected the judicial investigation into the murders of the churchwomen;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador determined that General Jose Guillermo Garcia, then Minister of Defense, made no serious effort to conduct a thorough investigation of responsibility for the murders of these four churchwomen from the United States;

Whereas the families of these four churchwomen from the United States continue their efforts to determine the full truth surrounding the murders of their loved ones, appreciate the cooperation of United States Government agencies in disclosing and providing documents relevant to the murders of the churchwomen, and pursue requests to release to the family members the few remaining undisclosed documents and reports pertaining to the case;

Whereas the families of these four churchwomen from the United States appreciate the ability of those harmed by violence to bring suit against El Salvador military officers in United States courts under the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 (28 U.S.C. 1350 note);

Whereas the lives of these four churchwomen from the United States have, for the past 27 years, served as inspiration for and continue to inspire Salvadorans, Americans, and people throughout the world to answer the call to service and to pursue lives dedicated to addressing the needs and aspirations of the poor, the vulnerable, and the disadvantaged, especially among women and children;

Whereas the lives of these four churchwomen from the United States have also inspired numerous books, plays, films, music, religious events, and cultural events;

Whereas schools, libraries, research centers, spiritual centers, health clinics, women's and children's programs in the United States and in El Salvador have been named after or dedicated to Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

Whereas the Maryknoll Sisters, headquartered in Ossining, New York, the Ursuline Sisters, headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, numerous religious task forces in the United States, and the Salvadoran and international religious communities based in El Salvador annually commemorate the lives and martyrdom of these four churchwomen from the United States;

Whereas the historic January 1992 Peace Accords ended 12 years of civil war in El Salvador and have allowed the Government and the people of El Salvador to achieve significant progress in creating and strengthening democratic, political, economic, and social institutions in El Salvador; and

Whereas December 2, 2007, marks the 27th anniversary of the deaths of these four spiritual, courageous, and generous churchwomen from the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) remembers and commemorates the lives and work of Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

(2) extends sympathy and support for the families, friends, and religious communities of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(3) continues to find inspiration in the lives and work of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(4) calls upon the people of the United States and religious congregations to participate in local, national, and international events commemorating the 27th anniversary of the martyrdom of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(5) recognizes that while progress has been made in El Salvador during the post-civil war period, the work begun by these four churchwomen from the United States remains unfinished and social and economic hardships persist among many sectors of El Salvador society; and

(6) calls upon the President, the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the heads of other United States Government agencies to continue to support and collaborate with the Government of El Salvador and with private sector, nongovernmental, regional, international, and religious organizations in their efforts to reduce poverty and hunger and to promote educational opportunity, health care, and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

SENATE RESOLUTION 382—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD DIABETES DAY

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. COLEMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 382

Whereas the World Health Organization and the International Diabetes Federation established World Diabetes Day in 1991 with the aim of coordinating diabetes advocacy worldwide;

Whereas World Diabetes Day is celebrated annually on November 14;

Whereas, on December 20, 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a landmark resolution recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating, and costly disease;

Whereas the resolution designates World Diabetes Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting in 2007 in order to raise global awareness of diabetes;

Whereas the theme of the 2007 United Nations World Diabetes Day campaign focuses on raising awareness of diabetes in children and adolescents, who face unique challenges when diagnosed with diabetes;

Whereas the United Nations campaign aims, among other objectives, to firmly establish the message that no child should die of diabetes;

Whereas the global diabetes epidemic has devastating effects on families, societies, and national economies;

Whereas diabetes is the 4th leading cause of death by disease in the world, and is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States;

Whereas diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, kidney failure, amputation, heart attack, and stroke;

Whereas in almost every country the incidence of diabetes is increasing, growing from an estimated 30,000,000 people worldwide in 1985 to an estimated 245,000,000 people in 2007, and to 380,000,000 by 2025, as reported by the International Diabetes Federation;

Whereas diabetes is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases;

Whereas diabetes can strike children at any age, and when diagnosed in young people the risk of developing life-threatening complications at an early age increases and life expectancy is shortened by, on average, 10 to 20 years;

Whereas new figures from the International Diabetes Federation's Diabetes Atlas suggest that more than 70,000 children develop type 1 diabetes each year and 440,000 children worldwide under the age of 14 now live with type 1 diabetes;

Whereas recent data indicate that 1 out of every 3 children born in the United States will develop diabetes during their lifetime, including 1 out of every 2 children from ethnic minority groups;

Whereas in low- and middle-income countries, many children with diabetes die because they are diagnosed late or misdiagnosed or because insulin is unaffordable, unavailable, or in short supply;

Whereas the incidence of type 2 diabetes, which was previously rare in children, is rising at alarming rates, with more than 200 children a day developing this form of diabetes;

Whereas obesity is a major contributor to type 2 diabetes;

Whereas according to the International Obesity Task Force of the International Association for the Study of Obesity, 155,000,000 school-age children worldwide are overweight, representing at least 1 out of every 10 school-age children;

Whereas at least 30,000,000 of those overweight children are classified as obese, accounting for at least 2 percent of the world's children between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age;

Whereas research has shown conclusively that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or significantly delayed through healthy weight maintenance and regular physical activity;

Whereas adopting a lifestyle high in physical activity and adopting a low-sugar, low-fat diet can successfully prevent the onset of obesity and diabetes among school-age children;

Whereas diabetes is costly, with the world estimated to spend at least $232,000,000,000 in 2007 and over $302,500,000,000 by 2025 to treat and prevent diabetes and its complications;

Whereas world treatment costs for diabetes are growing more quickly than the world population;

Whereas diabetes threatens to subvert global economic advancement by both straining government budgets worldwide (with the cost of diabetes-related disability payments, pensions, social and medical service costs, and lost revenue) and burdening private health insurers and employers with spiraling health care costs;

Whereas by 2025 the largest increases in diabetes prevalence will take place in developing countries, whose economies are less able to support increased expenditures to provide for those with the disease and engage in effective prevention efforts; and

Whereas the economic impact of diabetes threatens to undermine the achievement of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals for developing countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3654. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3655. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3656. Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3657. Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3658. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3659. Mr. NELSON, of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3660. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3661. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3662. Mr. FEINGOLD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3663. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3664. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3665. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3666. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3667. Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3668. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3669. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3670. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3671. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3672. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3673. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3674. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3675. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3676. Mr. DURBIN (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. HUTCHISON)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 597, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years .

SA 3677. Mr. DURBIN (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 299, recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

SA 3678. Mr. DURBIN (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 597, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3654. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 272, after line 24, add the following:

SEC. 19___ SHARE OF RISK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508(k)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(k)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''require the reinsured'' and inserting the following: ''require—

''(A) the reinsured'';

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B)(i) the cumulative underwriting gain or loss, and the associated premium and losses with such amount, calculated under any reinsurance agreement (except livestock) ceded to the Corporation by each approved insurance provider to be not less than 12.5 percent; and

''(ii) the Corporation to pay a ceding commission to reinsured companies of 2 percent of the premium used to define the loss ratio for the book of business of the approved insurance provider that is described in clause (i).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 516(a)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1516(a)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(E) Costs associated with the ceding commissions described in section 508(k)(3)(B)(ii).''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section take effect on June 30, 2008.

On page 273, lines 12 and 13, strike ''2 percentage points'' and insert ''4.0 percentage points''.

Beginning on page 445, strike line 18 and all that follows through page 446, line 7, and insert the following:

''(5) The farmland protection program under subchapter B of chapter 2, using, to the maximum extent practicable, $110,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

''(6) The grassland reserve program under chapter C of chapter 2, using, to the maximum extent practicable, $300,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

''(7) The environmental quality incentives program under chapter 4, using, to the maximum extent practicable—

''(A) $1,345,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

''(B) $1,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;

''(C) $1,385,000,000 for fiscal year 2010; and

''(D) $1,420,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 and 2012.''.

SA 3655. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 972, strike line 2 and insert the following:

on reproductive fitness and related measures.

''(56) BRUCELLOSIS CONTROL AND ERADICATION.—Research and extension grants may be made available—

''(A) for the conduct of research relating to the development of vaccines and vaccine delivery systems to effectively control and eliminate brucellosis in wildlife; and

''(B) to assist with the controlling of the spread of brucellosis from wildlife to domestic animals in the greater Yellowstone area.''

SA 3656. Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1192, strike line 13 and insert the following:

''SEC. 9023. REPORT ON THE GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR CELLULOSIC MATERIAL.

''Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a comprehensive report that, on a State-by-State basis—

''(1) identifies the range of cellulosic feedstock materials that can be grown and are viable candidates for renewable fuel production;

''(2) estimates the acreage available for growing the cellulosic feedstock materials identified under paragraph (1);

''(3) estimates the quantity of available energy per acre for each cellulosic feedstock material identified under paragraph (1);

''(4) calculates the development potential for growing cellulosic feedstock materials, based on—

''(A) the range of cellulosic materials available for growth;

''(B) soil quality;

''(C) climate variables;

''(D) the quality and availability of water;

''(E) agriculture systems that are in place as of the date of enactment of this Act;

''(F) available acreage; and

''(G) other relevant factors identified by the Secretary; and

''(5) rates the development potential for growing cellulosic feedstock material, with the ratings displayed on maps of the United States that indicate the development potential of each State, as calculated by the Secretary under paragraph (4).

''SEC. 9024. FURTURE FARMSTEADS PROGRAM.

SA 3657. Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1362, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

SEC. 11072. REGULATIONS TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF CERTAIN REGULATED ARTICLES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations—

(1) to implement, as appropriate, each issue identified in the document entitled ''Lessons Learned and Revisions under Consideration for APHIS' Biotechnology Framework'', dated October 4, 2007; and

(2) to improve the management and oversight of articles regulated under the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.).

(b) INCLUSIONS.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (a), the Secretary

shall include provisions that are designed to enhance—

(1) the quality and completeness of records;

(2) the availability of representative samples;

(3) the maintenance of identity and control in the event of an unauthorized release;

(4) corrective actions in the event of an unauthorized release;

(5) protocols for conducting molecular forensics;

(6) clarity in contractual agreements;

(7) the use of the latest scientific techniques for isolation and confinement;

(8) standards for quality management systems and effective research (including laboratory, greenhouse, and field research); and

(9) the design of electronic permits to store documents and other information relating to the permit and notification processes.

(c) CONSIDERATION.—In promulgating regulations under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider—

(1) establishing—

(A) a level of potential risk presented by each regulated article (including unintended release);

(B) a means to identify regulated articles (including the retention of seed samples); and

(C) scientifically valid and proven isolation and containment distances; and

(2) requiring permit holders—

(A) to maintain a positive chain of custody;

(B) to provide for the maintenance of records;

(C) to provide for the accounting of material;

(D) to conduct periodic audits;

(E) to establish an appropriate training program;

(F) to provide contingency and corrective action plans; and

(G) to submit reports as the Secretary considers to be appropriate.

SA 3658. Mr. DURBIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1362, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

SEC. 11072. INVASIVE SPECIES REVOLVING LOAN FUND.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''authorized equipment'' means any equipment necessary for the management of forest land.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''authorized equipment''includes—

(i) cherry pickers;

(ii) equipment necessary for—

(I) the construction of staging and marshalling areas;

(II) the planting of trees; and

(III) the surveying of forest land;

(iii) vehicles capable of transporting harvested trees;

(iv) wood chippers; and

(v) any other appropriate equipment, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) FUND.—The term ''Fund'' means the Invasive Species Revolving Loan Fund established by subsection (b).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Deputy Chief of the State and Private Forestry organization.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a revolving fund, to be known as the ''Invasive Species Revolving Loan Fund'', consisting of such amounts as are appropriated to the Fund under subsection (f).

(c) EXPENDITURES FROM FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), on request by the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Fund to the Secretary such amounts as the Secretary determines are necessary to provide loans under subsection (e).

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—An amount not exceeding 10 percent of the amounts in the Fund shall be available for each fiscal year to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this section.

(d) TRANSFERS OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amounts required to be transferred to the Fund under this section shall be transferred at least monthly from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—Proper adjustment shall be made in amounts subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

(e) USES OF FUND.—

(1) LOANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use amounts in the Fund to provide loans to eligible units of local government to finance purchases of authorized equipment to monitor, remove, dispose of, and replace infested trees that are located—

(i) on land under the jurisdiction of the eligible units of local government; and

(ii) within the borders of quarantine areas infested by invasive species.

(B) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The maximum amount of a loan that may be provided by the Secretary to an eligible unit of local government under this subsection shall be the lesser of—

(i) the amount that the eligible unit of local government has appropriated—

(I) to finance purchases of authorized equipment to monitor, remove, dispose of, and replace infested trees that are located—

(aa) on land under the jurisdiction of the eligible unit of local government; and

(bb) within the borders of a quarantine area infested by invasive species; and

(II) to enter into contracts with appropriate individuals and entities to monitor, remove, dispose of, and replace infested trees that are located in each area described in subclause (I); or

(ii) $5,000,000.

(C) INTEREST RATE.—The interest rate on any loan made by the Secretary under this paragraph shall be a rate equal to 2 percent.

(D) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which an eligible unit of local government receives a loan provided by the Secretary under subparagraph (A), the eligible unit of local government shall submit to the Secretary a report that describes each purchase made by the eligible unit of local government using assistance provided through the loan.

(2) LOAN REPAYMENT SCHEDULE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a loan from the Secretary under paragraph (1), in accordance with each requirement described in subparagraph (B), an eligible unit of local government shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary to establish a loan repayment schedule relating to the repayment of the loan.

(B) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO LOAN REPAYMENT SCHEDULE.—A loan repayment schedule established under subparagraph (A) shall require the eligible unit of local government—

(i) to repay to the Secretary of the Treasury, not later than 1 year after the date on which the eligible unit of local government receives a loan under paragraph (1), and semiannually thereafter, an amount equal to the quotient obtained by dividing—

(I) the principal amount of the loan (including interest); by

(II) the total quantity of payments that the eligible unit of local government is required to make during the repayment period of the loan; and

(ii) not later than 20 years after the date on which the eligible unit of local government receives a loan under paragraph (1), to complete repayment to the Secretary of the Treasury of the loan made under this section (including interest).

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Fund such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 11073. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION ACTIVITIES.

Any cooperative agreement entered into after the date of enactment of this Act between the Secretary and a State relating to the prevention of invasive species infestation shall allow the State to provide any cost-sharing assistance or financing mechanism provided to the State under the cooperative agreement to a unit of local government of the State that—

(1) is engaged in any activity relating to the prevention of invasive species infestation; and

(2) is capable of documenting each invasive species infestation prevention activity generally carried out by—

(A) the Department of Agriculture; or

(B) the State department of agriculture that has jurisdiction over the unit of local government.

SA 3659. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 895, trike lines 4 through 7 and insert the following:

Section 1408 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123) is amended—

(A) in subsection (g)(1), by striking ''$350,000'' and inserting ''$500,000''; and

(B) in subsection (h), by striking ''2007'' and inserting ''2012''.

SA 3660. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3___. AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 902(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (1); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY.—The term 'agricultural supply' includes—

''(A) agricultural commodities; and

''(B)(i) agriculture-related processing equipment;

''(ii) agriculture-related machinery; and

''(iii) other capital goods related to the storage or handling of agricultural commodities or products.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by striking ''agricultural commodities'' each place it appears and inserting ''agricultural supplies'';

(2) in section 904(2), by striking ''agricultural commodity'' and inserting ''agricultural supply''; and

(3) in section 910(a), in the subsection heading, by striking ''AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES'' and inserting ''AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES''.

SEC. 3___. CLARIFICATION OF PAYMENT TERMS UNDER TSREEA.

Section 908(b)(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7207(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) striking ''(1) IN GENERAL.—No United States person'' and inserting the following:

''(1) PROHIBITION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No United States person''; and

(3) in the undesignated matter following clause (ii) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking ''Nothing in this paragraph'' and inserting the following:

''(B) DEFINITION OF PAYMENT OF CASH IN ADVANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for purposes of this paragraph, the term 'payment of cash in advance' means only that payment must be received by the seller of an agricultural supply to Cuba or any person in Cuba before surrendering physical possession of the agricultural supply.

''(C) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall publish in the Federal Register a description of the contents of this section as a clarification of the regulations of the Secretary regarding sales under this title to Cuba.

''(D) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this paragraph''.

SEC. 3___. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CERTAIN TRAVEL-RELATED TRANSACTIONS WITH CUBA.

Section 910 of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7208) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) GENERAL LICENSE AUTHORITY FOR TRAVEL-RELATED EXPENDITURES IN CUBA BY PERSONS ENGAGING IN TSREEA-AUTHORIZED SALES AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) DEFINITION OF SALES AND MARKETING ACTIVITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In this subsection, the term 'sales and marketing activity' means any activity with respect to travel to, from, or within Cuba that is undertaken by United States persons—

''(i) to explore the market in Cuba for products authorized under this title; or

''(ii) to engage in sales activities with respect to such products.

''(B) INCLUSION.—The term 'sales and marketing activity' includes exhibiting, negotiating, marketing, surveying the market, and delivering and servicing products authorized under this title.

''(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall authorize under a general license the travel-related transactions listed in paragraph (c) of section 515.560 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on June 1, 2007), for travel to, from, or within Cuba in connection with sales and marketing activities involving products approved for sale under this title.

''(3) AUTHORIZED PERSONS.—Persons authorized to travel to Cuba under paragraph (2) shall include—

''(A) producers of products authorized under this title;

''(B) distributors of such products; and

''(C) representatives of trade organizations that promote the interests of producers and distributors of such products.

''(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out this subsection.''.

SEC. 3___. AUTHORIZATION OF DIRECT TRANSFERS BETWEEN CUBAN AND UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 911 (22 U.S.C. 7201 note; Public Law 106–387) as section 912; and

(2) by inserting after section 910 (22 U.S.C. 7209) the following:

''SEC. 911. AUTHORIZATION OF DIRECT TRANSFERS BETWEEN CUBAN AND UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

''Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), the President shall not restrict direct transfers from Cuban to United States financial institutions executed in payment for products authorized by this Act.''.

SEC. 3___. SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS OF TSREEA PRODUCTS SHOULD BE ISSUED VISAS TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of State should issue visas for temporary entry into the United States of Cuban nationals who demonstrate a full itinerary of purchasing activities relating to the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) while in the United States.

(b) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act and every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committees on Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, and Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Finance, and Foreign Relations of the Senate a report that describes any actions of the Secretary relating to this section, including—

(1) a full description of each application received from a Cuban national to travel to the United States to engage in purchasing activities described in subsection (a); and

(2) a description of the disposition of each such application.

SA 3661. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows;

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC.___. PREVENTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY.

(a) FEDERAL LEADERSHIP COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY.—Part Q of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280h et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 399Z–1. FEDERAL LEADERSHIP COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Federal Government coordinates efforts to develop, implement, and enforce policies that promote messages and activities designed to prevent obesity among children and youth.

''(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF LEADERSHIP COMMISSION.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall establish within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention a Federal Leadership Commission to Prevent Childhood Obesity (referred to in this section as the 'Commission') to assess and make recommendations for Federal departmental policies, programs, and messages relating to the prevention of childhood obesity. The Director shall serve as the chairperson of the Commission.

''(c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Commission shall include representatives of offices and agencies within—

''(1) the Department of Health and Human Services;

''(2) the Department of Agriculture;

''(3) the Department of Commerce;

''(4) the Department of Education;

''(5) the Department of Housing and Urban Development;

''(6) the Department of the Interior;

''(7) the Department of Labor;

''(8) the Department of Transportation;

''(9) the Federal Trade Commission; and

''(10) other Federal entities as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

''(d) DUTIES.—The Commission shall—

''(1) serve as a centralized mechanism to coordinate activities related to obesity prevention across all Federal departments and agencies;

''(2) establish specific goals for obesity prevention, and determine accountability for reaching these goals, within and across Federal departments and agencies;

''(3) review evaluation and economic data relating to the impact of Federal interventions on the prevention of childhood obesity;

''(4) provide a description of evidence-based best practices, model programs, effective guidelines, and other strategies for preventing childhood obesity;

''(5) make recommendations to improve Federal efforts relating to obesity prevention and to ensure Federal efforts are consistent with available standards and evidence; and

''(6) monitor Federal progress in meeting specific obesity prevention goals.

''(e) STUDY; SUMMIT; GUIDELINES.—

''(1) STUDY.—The Government Accountability Office shall—

''(A) conduct a study to assess the effect of Federal nutrition assistance programs and agricultural policies on the prevention of childhood obesity, and prepare a report on the results of such study that shall include a description and evaluation of the content and impact of Federal agriculture subsidy and commodity programs and policies as such relate to Federal nutrition programs;

''(B) make recommendations to guide or revise Federal policies for ensuring access to nutritional foods in Federal nutrition assistance programs; and

''(C) complete the activities provided for under this section not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this section.

''(2) INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE STUDY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall request that the Institute of Medicine (or similar organization) conduct a study and make recommendations on guidelines for nutritional food and physical activity advertising and marketing to prevent childhood obesity. In conducting such study the Institute of Medicine shall—

''(i) evaluate children's advertising and marketing guidelines and evidence-based literature relating to the impact of advertising on nutritional foods and physical activity in children and youth; and

''(ii) make recommendations on national guidelines for advertising and marketing

practices relating to children and youth that—

''(I) reduce the exposure of children and youth to advertising and marketing of foods of poor or minimal nutritional value and practices that promote sedentary behavior; and

''(11) increase the number of media messages that promote physical activity and sound nutrition.

''(B) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Institute of Medicine shall submit to the Commission the final report concerning the results of the study, and making the recommendations, required under this paragraph.

''(3) NATIONAL SUMMIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the report under paragraph (2)(B) is submitted, the Commission shall convene a National Summit to Implement Food and Physical Activity Advertising and Marketing Guidelines to Prevent Childhood Obesity (referred to in this section as the 'Summit').

''(B) COLLABORATIVE EFFORT.—The Summit shall be a collaborative effort and include representatives from—

''(i) education and child development groups;

''(ii) public health and behavioral science groups;

''(iii) child advocacy and health care provider groups; and

''(iv) advertising and marketing industry.

''(C) ACTIVITIES.—The participants in the Summit shall develop a 5-year plan for implementing the national guidelines recommended by the Institute of Medicine in the report submitted under paragraph (2)(B).

''(D) EVALUATION AND REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and biannually thereafter, the Commission shall evaluate and submit a report to Congress on the efforts of the Federal Government to implement the recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine in the report under paragraph (2)(B) that shall include a detailed description of the plan of the Secretary to implement such recommendations.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010.

''(g) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the definitions contained in section 401 of the Prevention of Childhood Obesity Act shall apply.''.

(b) FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION AND MARKETING TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 18 of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 57a), the Federal Trade Commission is authorized to promulgate regulations and monitor compliance with the guidelines for advertising and marketing of nutritional foods and physical activity directed at children and youth, as recommended by the National Summit to Implement Food and Physical Activity Advertising and Marketing Guidelines to Prevent Childhood Obesity (as established under section 399Z–1(e)(3) of the Public Health Service Act).

(2) FINES.—Notwithstanding section 18 of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 57a), the Federal Trade Commission may assess fines on advertisers or network and media groups that fail to comply with the guidelines described in paragraph (1).

SA 3662. Mr. FEINGOLD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 9_____. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING COOPERATIVE REGIONAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON BIOFUELS AND BIOPRODUCTS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary shall continue to allow and support efforts of regional consortiums of public institutions, including land grant universities and State departments of agriculture, to jointly support the bioeconomy through research, extension, and education activities, including—

(1) expanding the use of biomass;

(2) improving the efficiency and sustainability of bioenergy;

(3) supporting local ownership in the bioeconomy;

(4) communicating about the bioeconomy;

(5) facilitating information sharing; and

(6) assisting to coordinate regional approaches.

SA 3663. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 75___. MODIFICATIONS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall not implement any modification that reduces the availability or provision of information technology service, or administrative management control of that service, including data or center service agency, functions, and personnel at the National Finance Center and the National Information Technology Center service locations, until the date on which the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate receive a written determination and report from the Chief Financial Officer or Chief Information Officer of the Department of Agriculture and the Secretary that states that the implementation of the modification is in the best interests of the Department of Agriculture.

(b) REPORT ON PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, and the Comptroller General a report on any proposed modification to reduce the availability or provision of any information technology service, or administrative management control of such a service, including data or center service agency, functions, and personnel at the National Finance Center and National Technology Center service locations, that includes—

(1) a business case analysis (including of the near- and long-term costs and benefits to the Department of Agriculture and all other Federal agencies and departments that benefit from services provided by the National Finance Center and the National Information Technology Center service locations) of the proposed modifications, as compared with maintaining administrative management control or information technology service functions and personnel in the existing structure and at present locations; and

(2) an analysis of the impact of any changes in that administrative management control or information technology service (including data or center service agency, functions, and personnel) on the ability of the National Finance Center and National Information Technology Center service locations to provide, in the near- and long-term, to all Federal agencies and departments, cost-effective, secure, efficient, and interoperable—

(A) information technology services;

(B) cross-servicing;

(C) e-payroll services; and

(D) human resource line-of-business services.

(c) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Comptroller General receives the report submitted under subsection (b), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a detailed written assessment of the report that includes an analysis (including of near- and long-term cost benefits and impacts) of the alternatives available to all Federal agencies and departments to acquire cost-effective, secure, efficient, and interoperable information technology, cross-servicing, e-payroll, and human resource line-of-business services.

(d) OPERATING RESERVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Of annual income amounts in the working capital fund of the Department of Agriculture allocated for the National Finance Center, the Secretary may reserve not more than 4 percent—

(A) for the replacement or acquisition of capital equipment, including equipment for—

(i) the improvement and implementation of a financial management plan;

(ii) information technology; and

(iii) other systems of the National Finance Center; or

(B) to pay any unforeseen, extraordinary costs of the National Finance Center.

(2) AVAILABILITY FOR OBLIGATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), none of the amounts reserved under paragraph (1) shall be available for obligation unless the Secretary submits notification of the obligation to—

(i) the Committees on Appropriations and Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) the Committees on Appropriations and Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

(B) EXCEPTION.—The limitation described in subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any obligation that, as determined by the Secretary, is necessary—

(i) to respond to a declared state of emergency that significantly impacts the operations of the National Finance Center; or

(ii) to evacuate employees of the National Finance Center to a safe haven to continue operations of the National Finance Center.

SA 3664. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1362, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following:

SEC. 11_____. RIO GRANDE BASIN MANAGEMENT PROJECT.

The Food Security Act of 1985 is amended by inserting after section 1240K (as added by section 2361) the following:

"SEC. 1240L. RIO GRANDE BASIN MANAGEMENT PROJECT.

''(a) DEFINITION OF RIO GRANDE BASIN.—In this section, the term 'Rio Grande Basin' includes all tributaries, backwaters, and side channels (including watersheds) of the United States that drain into the Rio Grande River.

''(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in conjunction with partnerships of institutions of higher education working with farmers, ranchers, and other rural landowners, shall establish a program under which the Secretary shall provide grants to the partnerships to benefit the Rio Grande Basin by—

''(1) restoring water flow and the riparian habitat;

''(2) improving usage;

''(3) addressing demand for drinking water;

''(4) providing technical assistance to agricultural and municipal water systems; and

''(5) reducing biological and chemical hazards through alternative treatment of water and wastewater.

''(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant provided under this section may be used by a partnership for the costs of carrying out an activity described in subsection (b), including the costs of—

''(A) direct labor;

''(B) appropriate travel;

''(C) equipment;

''(D) instrumentation;

''(E) analytical laboratory work;

''(F) subcontracting;

''(G) cooperative research agreements; and

''(H) similar related expenses and costs.

''(2) LIMITATION.—A grant provided under this section shall not be used to purchase or construct any building.

''(d) REPORTS.—A partnership that receives a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Secretary annual reports describing—

''(1) the expenses of the partnership during the preceding calendar year; and

''(2) such other financial information as the Secretary may require.

''(e) FUNDING.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012, to remain available until expended.''.

SA 3665. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 210, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 212, line 21, and insert the following:

''(1) PROGRAMS.—

''(A) COMMODITY PROGRAMS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an individual or entity shall not be eligible to receive any benefit described in paragraph (2)(A) during a crop year if the average adjusted gross income of the individual or entity exceeds $200,000.

''(B) CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an individual or entity shall not be eligible to receive any benefit described in paragraph (2)(B) during a fiscal year if the average adjusted gross income of the individual or entity exceeds $2,500,000, unless not less than 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the individual or entity is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry operations, as determined by the Secretary.

''(2) COVERED BENEFITS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1)(A) applies with respect to the following:

''(i) A direct payment or counter-cyclical payment under part I or III of subtitle A of title I of the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007.

''(ii) A marketing loan gain or loan deficiency payment under part II or III of subtitle A of title I of the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007.

''(iii) An average crop revenue payment under subtitle B of title I of Food and Energy Security Act of 2007.

''(B) CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.—Paragraph (1)(B) applies with respect to a payment under any program under—

SA 3666. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1232, strike lines 9 through 12 and insert the following:

(1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively;

(2) in subsections (c), (d), (e), and (g) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking the semicolon each place it appears and inserting '', regardless of any alleged business justification;''; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

On page 1233, line 20, strike ''subsection (a)'' and insert ''subsection (a)(3)''.

On page 1234, line 2, strike ''subsection (a)'' and insert ''subsection (a)(3)''.

SA 3667. Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1232, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

SEC. 10207. NO COMPETITIVE INJURY REQUIREMENT.

(a) PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ACT, 1921.—Section 202(a) of the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921 (7 U.S.C. 192(a)), is amended by inserting '', regardless of whether the practice or device causes a competitive injury'' after ''or device''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) takes effect on the earlier of—

(1) the date on which the Department promulgates a final regulation to reflect the amendment made by subsection (a); and

(2) the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 3668. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3___. AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 902(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (1); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY.—The term 'agricultural supply' includes—

''(A) agricultural commodities; and

''(B)(i) agriculture-related processing equipment;

''(ii) agriculture-related machinery; and

''(iii) other capital goods related to the storage or handling of agricultural commodities or products.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by striking ''agricultural commodities'' each place it appears and inserting ''agricultural supplies'';

(2) in section 904(2), by striking ''agricultural commodity'' and inserting ''agricultural supply''; and

(3) in section 910(a), in the subsection heading, by striking ''AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES'' and inserting ''AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES''.

SEC. 3___. CLARIFICATION OF PAYMENT TERMS UNDER TSREEA.

Section 908(b)(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7207(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) striking ''(1) IN GENERAL.—No United States person'' and inserting the following:

''(1) PROHIBITION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No United States person''; and

(3) in the undesignated matter following clause (ii) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking ''Nothing in this paragraph'' and inserting the following:

''(B) DEFINITION OF PAYMENT OF CASH IN ADVANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for purposes of this paragraph, the term 'payment of cash in advance' means only that payment must be received by the seller of an agricultural supply to Cuba or any person in Cuba before surrendering physical possession of the agricultural supply.

''(C) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall publish in the Federal Register a description of the contents of this section as a clarification of the regulations of the Secretary regarding sales under this title to Cuba.

''(D) CLARIFICATION.—Nothing in this paragraph''.

SEC. 3___. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CERTAIN TRAVEL-RELATED TRANSACTIONS WITH CUBA.

Section 910 of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7208) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) GENERAL LICENSE AUTHORITY FOR TRAVEL-RELATED EXPENDITURES IN CUBA BY PERSONS ENGAGING IN TSREEA-AUTHORIZED SALES AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) DEFINITION OF SALES AND MARKETING ACTIVITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In this subsection, the term 'sales and marketing activity' means any activity with respect to travel to, from, or within Cuba that is undertaken by United States persons—

''(i) to explore the market in Cuba for products authorized under this title; or

''(ii) to engage in sales activities with respect to such products.

''(B) INCLUSION.—The term 'sales and marketing activity' includes exhibiting, negotiating, marketing, surveying the market, and delivering and servicing products authorized under this title.

''(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall authorize under a general license the travel-related transactions listed in paragraph (c) of section 515.560 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on June 1, 2007), for travel to, from, or within Cuba in connection with sales and marketing activities involving products approved for sale under this title.

''(3) AUTHORIZED PERSONS.—Persons authorized to travel to Cuba under paragraph (2) shall include—

''(A) producers of products authorized under this title;

''(B) distributors of such products; and

''(C) representatives of trade organizations that promote the interests of producers and distributors of such products.

''(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out this subsection.''.

SEC. 3___. AUTHORIZATION OF DIRECT TRANSFERS BETWEEN CUBAN AND UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 911 (22 U.S.C. 7201 note; Public Law 106–387) as section 912; and

(2) by inserting after section 910 (22 U.S.C. 7209) the following:

''SEC. 911. AUTHORIZATION OF DIRECT TRANSFERS BETWEEN CUBAN AND UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

''Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), the President shall not restrict direct transfers from Cuban to United States financial institutions executed in payment for products authorized by this Act.''.

SA 3669. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 160, after line 24, insert the following:

SEC. 15___. PROHIBITION ON SUGAR ASSISTANCE WITHOUT HEALTH CERTIFICATION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this title or an amendment made by this title, no loan, payment, purchase, allotment, or other assistance may be provided to or for a producer of sugarcane or sugar beets under this title or an amendment made by this title unless the Secretary of Health and Human Services certifies to Congress, before the assistance is provided, that sugarcane, sugar beets, and the products of sugarcane and sugar beets do not contribute to childhood obesity, tooth decay, or diabetes.

SA 3670. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PROHIBITION ON ISSUANCE OF IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS TO ILLEGAL ALIENS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law and after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, no State or subdivision of a State may issue a driver's license or other identification document to an alien who is unlawfully present in the United States.

SA 3671. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 7042.

SA 3672. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 254, strike line 19 and all that follows through page 255, line 22.

SA 3673. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—

HEALTHY MOTHERS AND HEALTHY BABIES RURAL ACCESS TO CARE

SEC. _01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Healthy Mothers and Healthy Babies Rural Access to Care Act''.

SEC. _02. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—

(1) EFFECT ON WOMEN'S ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES.—Congress finds that—

(A) the current civil justice system is eroding women's access to obstetrical and gynecological services;

(B) the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has identified nearly half of the States as having a medical liability insurance crisis that is threatening access to high-quality obstetrical and gynecological services;

(C) because of the high cost of medical liability insurance and the risk of being sued, one in seven obstetricians and gynecologists have stopped practicing obstetrics and one in five has decreased their number of high-risk obstetrics patients; and

(D) because of the lack of availability of obstetrical services, women—

(i) must travel longer distances and cross State lines to find a doctor;

(ii) have longer waiting periods (in some cases months) for appointments;

(iii) have shorter visits with their physicians once they get appointments;

(iv) have less access to maternal-fetal medicine specialists, physicians with the most experience and training in the care of women with high-risk pregnancies; and

(v) have fewer hospitals with maternity wards where they can deliver their child, potentially endangering the lives and health of the woman and her unborn child.

(2) EFFECT ON INTERSTATE COMMERCE.—Congress finds that the health care and insurance industries are industries affecting interstate commerce and the health care liability litigation systems existing throughout the United States are activities that affect interstate commerce by contributing to the high costs of health care and premiums for health care liability insurance purchased by health care system providers.

(3) EFFECT ON FEDERAL SPENDING.—Congress finds that the health care liability litigation systems existing throughout the United States have a significant effect on the amount, distribution, and use of Federal funds because of—

(A) the large number of individuals who receive health care benefits under programs operated or financed by the Federal Government;

(B) the large number of individuals who benefit because of the exclusion from Federal taxes of the amounts spent to provide them with health insurance benefits; and

(C) the large number of health care providers who provide items or services for which the Federal Government makes payments.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this title to implement reasonable, comprehensive, and effective health care liability reforms designed to—

(1) improve the availability of health care services in cases in which health care liability actions have been shown to be a factor in the decreased availability of services;

(2) reduce the incidence of ''defensive medicine'' and lower the cost of health care liability insurance, all of which contribute to the escalation of health care costs;

(3) ensure that persons with meritorious health care injury claims receive fair and adequate compensation, including reasonable noneconomic damages;

(4) improve the fairness and cost-effectiveness of our current health care liability system to resolve disputes over, and provide compensation for, health care liability by reducing uncertainty in the amount of compensation provided to injured individuals; and

(5) provide an increased sharing of information in the health care system which will reduce unintended injury and improve patient care.

SEC. _03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION SYSTEM; ADR.—The term ''alternative dispute resolution system'' or ''ADR'' means a system that provides for the resolution of health care lawsuits in a manner other than through a civil action brought in a State or Federal court.

(2) CLAIMANT.—The term ''claimant'' means any person who brings a health care lawsuit, including a person who asserts or claims a right to legal or equitable contribution, indemnity or subrogation, arising out of a health care liability claim or action, and any person on whose behalf such a claim is asserted or such an action is brought, whether deceased, incompetent, or a minor.

(3) COLLATERAL SOURCE BENEFITS.—The term ''collateral source benefits'' means any amount paid or reasonably likely to be paid in the future to or on behalf of the claimant, or any service, product or other benefit provided or reasonably likely to be provided in the future to or on behalf of the claimant, as a result of the injury or wrongful death, pursuant to—

(A) any State or Federal health, sickness, income-disability, accident, or workers' compensation law;

(B) any health, sickness, income-disability, or accident insurance that provides health benefits or income-disability coverage;

(C) any contract or agreement of any group, organization, partnership, or corporation to provide, pay for, or reimburse the cost of medical, hospital, dental, or income disability benefits; and

(D) any other publicly or privately funded program.

(4) COMPENSATORY DAMAGES.—The term ''compensatory damages'' means objectively verifiable monetary losses incurred as a result of the provision of, use of, or payment for (or failure to provide, use, or pay for) health care services or medical products, such as past and future medical expenses, loss of past and future earnings, cost of obtaining domestic services, loss of employment, and loss of business or employment opportunities, damages for physical and emotional pain, suffering, inconvenience, physical impairment, mental anguish, disfigurement, loss of enjoyment of life, loss of society and companionship, loss of consortium (other than loss of domestic service), hedonic damages, injury to reputation, and all other nonpecuniary losses of any kind or nature. Such term includes economic damages and noneconomic damages, as such terms are defined in this section.

(5) CONTINGENT FEE.—The term ''contingent fee'' includes all compensation to any person or persons which is payable only if a recovery is effected on behalf of one or more claimants.

(6) ECONOMIC DAMAGES.—The term ''economic damages'' means objectively verifiable monetary losses incurred as a result of the provision of, use of, or payment for (or failure to provide, use, or pay for) health care services or medical products, such as past and future medical expenses, loss of past and future earnings, cost of obtaining domestic services, loss of employment, and loss of business or employment opportunities.

(7) HEALTH CARE GOODS OR SERVICES.—The term ''health care goods or services'' means any obstetrical or gynecological goods or services provided by a health care institution, provider, or by any individual working under the supervision of a health care provider, that relates to the diagnosis, prevention, care, or treatment of any obstetrical or gynecological-related human disease or impairment, or the assessment of the health of human beings.

(8) HEALTH CARE INSTITUTION.—The term ''health care institution'' means any entity licensed under Federal or State law to provide health care services (including but not limited to ambulatory surgical centers, assisted living facilities, emergency medical services providers, hospices, hospitals and hospital systems, nursing homes, or other entities licensed to provide such services).

(9) HEALTH CARE LAWSUIT.—The term ''health care lawsuit'' means any health care liability claim concerning the provision of obstetrical or gynecological goods or services affecting interstate commerce, or any health care liability action concerning the provision of (or the failure to provide) obstetrical or gynecological goods or services affecting interstate commerce, brought in a State or Federal court or pursuant to an alternative dispute resolution system, against a physician or other health care provider who delivers obstetrical or gynecological services in an rural area or a health care institution (only with respect to obstetrical or gynecological services) located in a rural area regardless of the theory of liability on which the claim is based, or the number of claimants, plaintiffs, defendants, or other parties, or the number of claims or causes of action, in which the claimant alleges a health care liability claim.

(10) HEALTH CARE LIABILITY ACTION.—The term ''health care liability action'' means a civil action brought in a State or Federal Court or pursuant to an alternative dispute resolution system, against a health care provider who delivers obstetrical or gynecological services in a rural area or a health care institution (only with respect to obstetrical or gynecological services) located in a rural area regardless of the theory of liability on which the claim is based, or the number of plaintiffs, defendants, or other parties, or the number of causes of action, in which the claimant alleges a health care liability claim.

(11) HEALTH CARE LIABILITY CLAIM.—The term ''health care liability claim'' means a demand by any person, whether or not pursuant to ADR, against a health care provider who delivers obstetrical or gynecological services in a rural area or a health care institution (only with respect to obstetrical or gynecological services) located in a rural area, including third-party claims, cross-claims, counter-claims, or contribution claims, which are based upon the provision of, use of, or payment for (or the failure to provide, use, or pay for) obstetrical or gynecological services, regardless of the theory of liability on which the claim is based, or the number of plaintiffs, defendants, or other parties, or the number of causes of action.

(12) HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''health care provider'' means any person (including but not limited to a physician (as defined by section 1861(r) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(r)), nurse, dentist, podiatrist, pharmacist, chiropractor, or optometrist) required by State or Federal law to be licensed, registered, or certified to provide health care services, and being either so licensed, registered, or certified, or exempted from such requirement by other statute or regulation, and who is providing such services in a rural area.

(B) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.—For purposes of this title, a professional association that is organized under State law by an individual physician or group of physicians, a partnership or limited liability partnership formed by a group of physicians, a nonprofit health corporation certified under State law, or a company formed by a group of physicians under State law shall be treated as a health care provider under subparagraph (A).

(13) MALICIOUS INTENT TO INJURE.—The term ''malicious intent to injure'' means intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury other than providing health care goods or services.

(14) NONECONOMIC DAMAGES.—The term ''noneconomic damages'' means damages for physical and emotional pain, suffering, inconvenience, physical impairment, mental anguish, disfigurement, loss of enjoyment of life, loss of society and companionship, loss of consortium (other than loss of domestic service), hedonic damages, injury to reputation, and all other nonpecuniary losses of any kind or nature.

(15) OBSTETRICAL OR GYNECOLOGICAL SERVICES.—The term ''obstetrical or gynecological services'' means services for prenatal care or labor and delivery, including the immediate postpartum period (as determined in accordance with the definition of postpartum used for purposes of title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.)).

(16) PUNITIVE DAMAGES.—The term ''punitive damages'' means damages awarded, for the purpose of punishment or deterrence, and not solely for compensatory purposes, against a health care provider who delivers obstetrical or gynecological services or a health care institution. Punitive damages are neither economic nor noneconomic damages.

(17) RECOVERY.—The term ''recovery'' means the net sum recovered after deducting any disbursements or costs incurred in connection with prosecution or settlement of the claim, including all costs paid or advanced by any person. Costs of health care incurred by the plaintiff and the attorneys' office overhead costs or charges for legal services are not deductible disbursements or costs for such purpose.

(18) RURAL AREA.—The term ''rural area'' means any area of the United States that is not—

(A) included within the boundaries of any city, town, borough, or village, whether incorporated or unincorporated, with a population of more than 20,000 inhabitants; or

(B) the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town.

(19) STATE.—The term ''State'' means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States, or any political subdivision thereof.

SEC. __04. ENCOURAGING SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided for in this section, the time for the commencement of a health care lawsuit shall be 3 years after the date of manifestation of injury or 1 year after the claimant discovers, or through the use of reasonable diligence should have discovered, the injury, whichever occurs first.

(b) GENERAL EXCEPTION.—The time for the commencement of a health care lawsuit shall not exceed 3 years after the date of manifestation of injury unless the tolling of time was delayed as a result of—

(1) fraud;

(2) intentional concealment; or

(3) the presence of a foreign body, which has no therapeutic or diagnostic purpose or effect, in the person of the injured person.

(c) MINORS.—An action by a minor shall be commenced within 3 years from the date of the alleged manifestation of injury except that if such minor is under the full age of 6 years, such action shall be commenced within 3 years of the manifestation of injury, or prior to the eighth birthday of the minor, whichever provides a longer period. Such time limitation shall be tolled for minors for any period during which a parent or guardian and a health care provider or health care institution have committed fraud or collusion in the failure to bring an action on behalf of the injured minor.

(d) RULE 11 SANCTIONS.—Whenever a Federal or State court determines (whether by motion of the parties or whether on the motion of the court) that there has been a violation of Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (or a similar violation of applicable State court rules) in a health care liability action to which this title applies, the court shall impose upon the attorneys, law firms, or pro se litigants that have violated Rule 11 or are responsible for the violation, an appropriate sanction, which shall include an order to pay the other party or parties for the reasonable expenses incurred as a direct result of the filing of the pleading, motion, or other paper that is the subject of the violation, including a reasonable attorneys' fee. Such sanction shall be sufficient to deter repetition of such conduct or comparable conduct by others similarly situated, and to compensate the party or parties injured by such conduct.

SEC. __05. COMPENSATING PATIENT INJURY.

(a) UNLIMITED AMOUNT OF DAMAGES FOR ACTUAL ECONOMIC LOSSES IN HEALTH CARE LAWSUITS.—In any health care lawsuit, nothing

in this title shall limit the recovery by a claimant of the full amount of the available economic damages, notwithstanding the limitation contained in subsection (b).

(b) ADDITIONAL NONECONOMIC DAMAGES.—

(1) HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—In any health care lawsuit where final judgment is rendered against a health care provider, the amount of noneconomic damages recovered from the provider, if otherwise available under applicable Federal or State law, may be as much as $250,000, regardless of the number of parties other than a health care institution against whom the action is brought or the number of separate claims or actions brought with respect to the same occurrence.

(2) HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS.—

(A) SINGLE INSTITUTION.—In any health care lawsuit where final judgment is rendered against a single health care institution, the amount of noneconomic damages recovered from the institution, if otherwise available under applicable Federal or State law, may be as much as $250,000, regardless of the number of parties against whom the action is brought or the number of separate claims or actions brought with respect to the same occurrence.

(B) MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONS.—In any health care lawsuit where final judgment is rendered against more than one health care institution, the amount of noneconomic damages recovered from each institution, if otherwise available under applicable Federal or State law, may be as much as $250,000, regardless of the number of parties against whom the action is brought or the number of separate claims or actions brought with respect to the same occurrence, except that the total amount recovered from all such institutions in such lawsuit shall not exceed $500,000.

(c) NO DISCOUNT OF AWARD FOR NONECONOMIC DAMAGES.—In any health care lawsuit—

(1) an award for future noneconomic damages shall not be discounted to present value;

(2) the jury shall not be informed about the maximum award for noneconomic damages under subsection (b);

(3) an award for noneconomic damages in excess of the limitations provided for in subsection (b) shall be reduced either before the entry of judgment, or by amendment of the judgment after entry of judgment, and such reduction shall be made before accounting for any other reduction in damages required by law; and

(4) if separate awards are rendered for past and future noneconomic damages and the combined awards exceed the limitations provided for in subsection (b), the future noneconomic damages shall be reduced first.

(d) FAIR SHARE RULE.—In any health care lawsuit, each party shall be liable for that party's several share of any damages only and not for the share of any other person. Each party shall be liable only for the amount of damages allocated to such party in direct proportion to such party's percentage of responsibility. A separate judgment shall be rendered against each such party for the amount allocated to such party. For purposes of this section, the trier of fact shall determine the proportion of responsibility of each party for the claimant's harm.

SEC. __06. MAXIMIZING PATIENT RECOVERY.

(a) COURT SUPERVISION OF SHARE OF DAMAGES ACTUALLY PAID TO CLAIMANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In any health care lawsuit, the court shall supervise the arrangements for payment of damages to protect against conflicts of interest that may have the effect of reducing the amount of damages awarded that are actually paid to claimants.

(2) CONTINGENCY FEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In any health care lawsuit in which the attorney for a party claims a financial stake in the outcome by virtue of a contingent fee, the court shall have the power to restrict the payment of a claimant's damage recovery to such attorney, and to redirect such damages to the claimant based upon the interests of justice and principles of equity.

(B) LIMITATION.—The total of all contingent fees for representing all claimants in a health care lawsuit shall not exceed the following limits:

(i) 40 percent of the first $50,000 recovered by the claimant(s).

(ii) 33⅓ percent of the next $50,000 recovered by the claimant(s).

(iii) 25 percent of the next $500,000 recovered by the claimant(s).

(iv) 15 percent of any amount by which the recovery by the claimant(s) is in excess of $600,000.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The limitations in subsection (a) shall apply whether the recovery is by judgment, settlement, mediation, arbitration, or any other form of alternative dispute resolution.

(2) MINORS.—In a health care lawsuit involving a minor or incompetent person, a court retains the authority to authorize or approve a fee that is less than the maximum permitted under this section.

(c) EXPERT WITNESSES.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—No individual shall be qualified to testify as an expert witness concerning issues of negligence in any health care lawsuit against a defendant unless such individual—

(A) except as required under paragraph (2), is a health care professional who—

(i) is appropriately credentialed or licensed in 1 or more States to deliver health care services; and

(ii) typically treats the diagnosis or condition or provides the type of treatment under review; and

(B) can demonstrate by competent evidence that, as a result of training, education, knowledge, and experience in the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease or injury which is the subject matter of the lawsuit against the defendant, the individual was substantially familiar with applicable standards of care and practice as they relate to the act or omission which is the subject of the lawsuit on the date of the incident.

(2) PHYSICIAN REVIEW.—In a health care lawsuit, if the claim of the plaintiff involved treatment that is recommended or provided by a physician (allopathic or osteopathic), an individual shall not be qualified to be an expert witness under this subsection with respect to issues of negligence concerning such treatment unless such individual is a physician.

(3) SPECIALTIES AND SUBSPECIALTIES.—With respect to a lawsuit described in paragraph (1), a court shall not permit an expert in one medical specialty or subspecialty to testify against a defendant in another medical specialty or subspecialty unless, in addition to a showing of substantial familiarity in accordance with paragraph (1)(B), there is a showing that the standards of care and practice in the two specialty or subspecialty fields are similar.

(4) LIMITATION.—The limitations in this subsection shall not apply to expert witnesses testifying as to the degree or permanency of medical or physical impairment.

SEC. __07. ADDITIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amount of any damages received by a claimant in any health care lawsuit shall be reduced by the court by the amount of any collateral source benefits to which the claimant is entitled, less any insurance premiums or other payments made by the claimant (or by the spouse, parent, child, or legal guardian of the claimant) to obtain or secure such benefits.

(b) PRESERVATION OF CURRENT LAW.—Where a payor of collateral source benefits has a right of recovery by reimbursement or subrogation and such right is permitted under Federal or State law, subsection (a) shall not apply.

(c) APPLICATION OF PROVISION.—This section shall apply to any health care lawsuit that is settled or resolved by a fact finder.

SEC. __08. PUNITIVE DAMAGES.

(a) PUNITIVE DAMAGES PERMITTED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Punitive damages may, if otherwise available under applicable State or Federal law, be awarded against any person in a health care lawsuit only if it is proven by clear and convincing evidence that such person acted with malicious intent to injure the claimant, or that such person deliberately failed to avoid unnecessary injury that such person knew the claimant was substantially certain to suffer.

(2) FILING OF LAWSUIT.—No demand for punitive damages shall be included in a health care lawsuit as initially filed. A court may allow a claimant to file an amended pleading for punitive damages only upon a motion by the claimant and after a finding by the court, upon review of supporting and opposing affidavits or after a hearing, after weighing the evidence, that the claimant has established by a substantial probability that the claimant will prevail on the claim for punitive damages.

(3) SEPARATE PROCEEDING.—At the request of any party in a health care lawsuit, the trier of fact shall consider in a separate proceeding—

(A) whether punitive damages are to be awarded and the amount of such award; and

(B) the amount of punitive damages following a determination of punitive liability. If a separate proceeding is requested, evidence relevant only to the claim for punitive damages, as determined by applicable State law, shall be inadmissible in any proceeding to determine whether compensatory damages are to be awarded.

(4) LIMITATION WHERE NO COMPENSATORY DAMAGES ARE AWARDED.—In any health care lawsuit where no judgment for compensatory damages is rendered against a person, no punitive damages may be awarded with respect to the claim in such lawsuit against such person.

(b) DETERMINING AMOUNT OF PUNITIVE DAMAGES.—

(1) FACTORS CONSIDERED.—In determining the amount of punitive damages under this section, the trier of fact shall consider only the following:

(A) the severity of the harm caused by the conduct of such party;

(B) the duration of the conduct or any concealment of it by such party;

(C) the profitability of the conduct to such party;

(D) the number of products sold or medical procedures rendered for compensation, as the case may be, by such party, of the kind causing the harm complained of by the claimant;

(E) any criminal penalties imposed on such party, as a result of the conduct complained of by the claimant; and

(F) the amount of any civil fines assessed against such party as a result of the conduct complained of by the claimant.

(2) MAXIMUM AWARD.—The amount of punitive damages awarded in a health care lawsuit may not exceed an amount equal to two times the amount of economic damages awarded in the lawsuit or $250,000, whichever is greater. The jury shall not be informed of the limitation under the preceding sentence.

(c) LIABILITY OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A health care provider who prescribes, or who dispenses pursuant to a prescription, a drug, biological product, or medical device approved by the Food and Drug Administration, for an approved indication of the drug, biological product, or medical device, shall not be named as a party to a product liability lawsuit invoking such drug, biological product, or medical device and shall not be liable to a claimant in a class action lawsuit against the manufacturer, distributor, or product seller of such drug, biological product, or medical device.

(2) MEDICAL PRODUCT.—The term ''medical product'' means a drug or device intended for humans. The terms ''drug'' and ''device'' have the meanings given such terms in sections 201(g)(1) and 201(h) of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321), respectively, including any component or raw material used therein, but excluding health care services.

SEC. __09. AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENT OF FUTURE DAMAGES TO CLAIMANTS IN HEALTH CARE LAWSUITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In any health care lawsuit, if an award of future damages, without reduction to present value, equaling or exceeding $50,000 is made against a party with sufficient insurance or other assets to fund a periodic payment of such a judgment, the court shall, at the request of any party, enter a judgment ordering that the future damages be paid by periodic payments. In any health care lawsuit, the court may be guided by the Uniform Periodic Payment of Judgments Act promulgated by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—This section applies to all actions which have not been first set for trial or retrial before the effective date of this title.

SEC. __10. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

(a) GENERAL VACCINE INJURY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that title XXI of the Public Health Service Act establishes a Federal rule of law applicable to a civil action brought for a vaccine-related injury or death—

(A) this title shall not affect the application of the rule of law to such an action; and

(B) any rule of law prescribed by this title in conflict with a rule of law of such title XXI shall not apply to such action.

(2) EXCEPTION.—If there is an aspect of a civil action brought for a vaccine-related injury or death to which a Federal rule of law under title XXI of the Public Health Service Act does not apply, then this title or otherwise applicable law (as determined under this title) will apply to such aspect of such action.

(b) SMALLPOX VACCINE INJURY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that part C of title II of the Public Health Service Act establishes a Federal rule of law applicable to a civil action brought for a smallpox vaccine-related injury or death—

(A) this title shall not affect the application of the rule of law to such an action; and

(B) any rule of law prescribed by this title in conflict with a rule of law of such part C shall not apply to such action.

(2) EXCEPTION.—If there is an aspect of a civil action brought for a smallpox vaccine-related injury or death to which a Federal rule of law under part C of title II of the Public Health Service Act does not apply, then this title or otherwise applicable law (as determined under this title) will apply to such aspect of such action.

(c) OTHER FEDERAL LAW.—Except as provided in this section, nothing in this title shall be deemed to affect any defense available, or any limitation on liability that applies to, a defendant in a health care lawsuit or action under any other provision of Federal law.

SEC. __11. STATE FLEXIBILITY AND PROTECTION OF STATES' RIGHTS.

(a) HEALTH CARE LAWSUITS.—The provisions governing health care lawsuits set forth in this title shall preempt, subject to subsections (b) and (c), State law to the extent that State law prevents the application of any provisions of law established by or under this title. The provisions governing health care lawsuits set forth in this title supersede chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, to the extent that such chapter—

(1) provides for a greater amount of damages or contingent fees, a longer period in which a health care lawsuit may be commenced, or a reduced applicability or scope of periodic payment of future damages, than provided in this title; or

(2) prohibits the introduction of evidence regarding collateral source benefits.

(b) PREEMPTION OF CERTAIN STATE LAWS.—No provision of this title shall be construed to preempt any State law (whether effective before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this title) that specifies a particular monetary amount of compensatory or punitive damages (or the total amount of damages) that may be awarded in a health care lawsuit, regardless of whether such monetary amount is greater or lesser than is provided for under this title, notwithstanding section __05(a).

(c) PROTECTION OF STATE'S RIGHTS AND OTHER LAWS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any issue that is not governed by a provision of law established by or under this title (including the State standards of negligence) shall be governed by otherwise applicable Federal or State law.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to—

(A) preempt or supersede any Federal or State law that imposes greater procedural or substantive protections for a health care provider or health care institution from liability, loss, or damages than those provided by this title;

(B) preempt or supercede any State law that permits and provides for the enforcement of any arbitration agreement related to a health care liability claim whether enacted prior to or after the date of enactment of this title;

(C) create a cause of action that is not otherwise available under Federal or State law; or

(D) affect the scope of preemption of any other Federal law.

SEC. __12. APPLICABILITY; EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall apply to any health care lawsuit brought in a Federal or State court, or subject to an alternative dispute resolution system, that is initiated on or after the date of the enactment of this title, except that any health care lawsuit arising from an injury occurring prior to the date of enactment of this title shall be governed by the applicable statute of limitations provisions in effect at the time the injury occurred.

SA 3674. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. DISCHARGES OF INDEBTEDNESS ON PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXCLUDED FROM GROSS INCOME.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 108(a) is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting '', or'', and by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) the indebtedness is qualified principal residence indebtedness which is discharged before January 1, 2010.''.

(b) SPECIAL RULES RELATING TO QUALIFIED PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE INDEBTEDNESS.—Section 108 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) SPECIAL RULES RELATING TO QUALIFIED PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE INDEBTEDNESS.—

''(1) BASIS REDUCTION.—The amount excluded from gross income by reason of subsection (a)(1)(E) shall be applied to reduce (but not below zero) the basis of the principal residence of the taxpayer.

''(2) QUALIFIED PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE INDEBTEDNESS.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified principal residence indebtedness' means acquisition indebtedness (within the meaning of section 163(h)(3)(B)).

''(3) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN DISCHARGES NOT RELATED TO TAXPAYER'S FINANCIAL CONDITION.—Subsection (a)(1)(E) shall not apply to the discharge of a loan if the discharge is on account of services performed for the lender or any other factor not directly related to a decline in the value of the residence or to the financial condition of the taxpayer.

''(4) ORDERING RULE.—If any loan is discharged, in whole or in part, and only a portion of such loan is qualified principal residence indebtedness, subsection (a)(1)(E) shall apply only to so much of the amount discharged as exceeds the amount of the loan (as determined immediately before such discharge) which is not qualified principal residence indebtedness.

''(5) PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'principal residence' has the same meaning as when used in section 121.''.

(c) COORDINATION.—

(1) Subparagraph (A) of section 108(a)(2) is amended by striking ''and (D)'' and inserting ''(D), and (E)''.

(2) Paragraph (2) of section 108(a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXCLUSION TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER INSOLVENCY EXCLUSION UNLESS ELECTED OTHERWISE.—Paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to a discharge to which paragraph (1)(E) applies unless the taxpayer elects to apply paragraph (1)(B) in lieu of paragraph (1)(E).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to discharges of indebtedness on or after January 1, 2007.

SA 3675. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3500 proposed by Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. GRASSLEY) to the bill H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 1363, strike line 7 and all that follows through page 1395, line 19 and insert the following:

Subtitle A—Individuals With Disabilities Education Trust Fund

SEC. 12101. ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

The Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"TITLE IX—ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

"SEC. 901. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION TRUST FUND.

''(a) CREATION OF TRUST FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the 'Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund', consisting of such amounts as may be appropriated or credited to such Trust Fund as provided in this section.

''(b) TRANSFER TO TRUST FUND.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There are appropriated to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund amounts equivalent to 3.34 percent of the amounts received in the general fund of the Treasury of the United States during fiscal years 2008 through 2012 attributable to the duties collected on articles entered, or withdrawn from warehouse, for consumption under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States.

''(2) AMOUNTS BASED ON ESTIMATES.—The amounts appropriated under this section shall be transferred at least monthly from the general fund of the Treasury of the United States to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund on the basis of estimates made by the Secretary of the Treasury. Proper adjustments shall be made in the amounts subsequently transferred to the extent prior estimates were in excess of or less than the amounts required to be transferred.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) REPORTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall be the trustee of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund and shall submit an annual report to Congress each year on the financial condition and the results of the operations of such Trust Fund during the preceding fiscal year and on its expected condition and operations during the 5 fiscal years succeeding such fiscal year. Such report shall be printed as a House document of the session of Congress to which the report is made.

''(2) INVESTMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund as is not in his judgment required to meet current withdrawals. Such investments may be made only in interest bearing obligations of the United States. For such purpose, such obligations may be acquired—

''(i) on original issue at the issue price, or

''(ii) by purchase of outstanding obligations at the market price.

''(B) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at the market price.

''(C) INTEREST ON CERTAIN PROCEEDS.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund shall be credited to and form a part of such Trust Fund.

''(d) EXPENDITURES FROM TRUST FUND.—Amounts in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Trust Fund shall be available to the Secretary of Education to carry out part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.).''.

SA 3676. Mr. DURBIN (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. HUTCHISON)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 597, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years; as follows:

In section 1, in the section heading, strike ''**2-YEAR**'' and insert ''**4-YEAR**''.

In section 1, strike ''2009'' and insert ''2011''.

SA 3677. Mr. DURBIN (for Mr. MENENDEZ) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 299, recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali; as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 4 and 5 and insert the following:

(2) in observance of Diwali, the festival of lights, expresses its deepest respect for Indian Americans and the Indian diaspora throughout the world on this significant occasion.

SA 3678. Mr. DURBIN (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 597, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''To extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. 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 November 14, 2007, at 10:30 a.m., in order to conduct a hearing entitled ''Shareholder Rights and Proxy Access.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. 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 November 14, 2007, at 2 p.m., in order to conduct a hearing entitled ''Sovereign Wealth Fund Acquisitions and Other Foreign Government Investments in the U.S.: Assessing the Economic and National Security Implications.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, in order to conduct a hearing.

The hearing will focus on the need to improve the U.S. Global Change Research Program, which is responsible for coordinating and directing Federal climate change research. It will also address the need for improved communication of climate information to decision makers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, in order to conduct a hearing.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership as it relates to U.S. policy on nuclear fuel management.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. HARKIN, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10 a.m., in room 215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to hear testimony on ''Federal Estate Tax: Uncertainty in Planning Under the Current Law.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10 a.m. in order to conduct a business meeting to consider pending committee business.

Agenda

Legislation

S. 2324, Inspector General Reform Act of 2007; S. 2292, National Bombing Prevention Act of 2007; S. 1667, a bill to establish a pilot program for the expedited disposal of Federal real property; S. 1000, Telework Enhancement Act of 2007; S. 2321, E-Government Reauthorization Act of 2007; H.R. 390, Preservation of Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction Act; and H.R. 3571, a bill to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to permit individuals who have served as employees of the Office of Compliance to serve as Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, or General Counsel of the Office, and to permit individuals appointed to such positions to serve one additional term.

Nominations

Robert D. Jamison, Under Secretary for National Protection and Programs, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Wiley Ross Ashley III, Assistant

Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; and the Honorable Ellen C. Williams, Member, Postal Board of Governors.

Postal Naming Bills

S. 2174, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the ''Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building;'' H.R. 2089, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the ''Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office;'' H.R. 3297, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 West Trenton Avenue in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Nate DeTample Post Office Building;'' H.R. 3308, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 East Main Street in Atwood, Indiana, as the ''Lance Corporal David K. Fribley Post Office;'' H.R. 3530, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 Highway 41 North in Inverness, Florida, as the ''Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Weaver Post Office Building;'' H.R. 2276, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the ''Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building;'' H.R. 3325, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, as the ''Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office;'' S. 2110, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the ''Larry S. Pierce Post Office;'' H.R. 3382, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 North William Street in Goldsboro, North Carolina, as the ''Philip A. Baddour Sr. Post Office;'' S. 2290, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the ''Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building;'' S. 2272, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service known as the Southpark Station in Alexandria, Louisiana, as the ''John 'Marty' Thiels Southpark Station;'' H.R. 3446, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Michigan Avenue in Marshall, Michigan, as the ''Michael W. Schragg Post Office Building;'' S. 2150/H.R. 3572, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building;'' S. 2107/H.R. 3307, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building;'' H.R. 3518, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1430 South Highway 29 in Cantonment, Florida, as the ''Charles H. Hendrix Post Office Building.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, in order to conduct a markup of pending legislation. Immediately following the conclusion of the markup, the Committee will conduct a hearing on the nomination of Michael W. Hager, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Human Resources and Management. The committee will meet in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 2:30 p.m., in order to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Medicaid Providers That Cheat on Their Taxes and What Can Be Done About It.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE LAW

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law, be authorized to meet in order to conduct a hearing entitled ''No Safe Haven: Accountability for Human Rights Violators in the United States'' on Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room SD–266 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Witness list

Panel I: Sigal P. Mandelker, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, and Marcy M. Forman, Director of Office of Investigations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

Panel II: David Scheffer, Mayer Brown/Robert A. Helman Professor of Law, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago, IL; Pamela Merchant, Executive Director, Center for Justice and Accountability, San Francisco, CA; and Juan Romagoza Arce, Executive Director, La Clínica del Pueblo, Washington, DC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HATCH. I ask unanimous consent that Jesse Baker, a Federal Government detailee, be granted the privileges of the floor for the remainder of this session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BREAST CANCER RESEARCH STAMP EXTENSION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 473, S. 597.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 597) to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 2 years.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and that any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3676) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years)

In section 1, in the section heading, strike ''**2-YEAR**'' and insert ''**4-YEAR**''.

In section 1, strike ''2009'' and insert ''2011''.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask that the title amendment be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The title amendment (No. 3678) was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: ''To extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years.''.

The bill (S. 597), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 597

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

SECTION 1. 4-YEAR EXTENSION OF POSTAGE STAMP FOR BREAST CANCER RESEARCH.

Section 414(h) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking ''2007'' and inserting ''2011''.

RECOGNIZING THE FESTIVAL OF DIWALI

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 299 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 299) recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3677) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 4 and 5 and insert the following:

(2) in observance of Diwali, the festival of lights, expresses its deepest respect for Indian Americans and the Indian diaspora throughout the world on this significant occasion.

The resolution (S. Res. 299), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 299

Whereas Diwali, a festival of great significance to Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, is celebrated annually by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains throughout the United States;

Whereas there are nearly 2,000,000 Hindus in the United States, approximately 1,250,000 of which are of Indian and South Asian origin;

Whereas the word ''Diwali'' is a shortened version of the Sanskrit term ''Deepavali'', which means ''a row of lamps'';

Whereas Diwali is a festival of lights, during which celebrants light small oil lamps, place them around the home, and pray for health, knowledge, and peace;

Whereas celebrants of Diwali believe that the rows of lamps symbolize the light within the individual that rids the soul of the darkness of ignorance;

Whereas Diwali falls on the last day of the last month in the lunar calendar and is celebrated as a day of thanksgiving and the beginning of the new year for many Hindus;

Whereas for Hindus, Diwali is a celebration of the victory of good over evil;

Whereas for Sikhs, Diwali is feted as the day that the sixth founding Sikh Guru, or revered teacher, Guru Hargobind, was released from captivity by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir; and

Whereas for Jains, Diwali marks the anniversary of the attainment of moksha, or liberation, by Mahavira, the last of the Tirthankaras (the great teachers of Jain dharma), at the end of his life in 527 B.C.: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali; and

(2) in observance of Diwali, the festival of lights, expresses its deepest respect for Indian Americans and the Indian diaspora throughout the world on this significant occasion.

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Commerce Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 368 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 368) expressing the sense of the Senate that, at the 20th Regular Meeting of the International Commission on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the United States should pursue a moratorium on the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery to ensure control of the fishery and further facilitate recovery of the stock, pursue strengthened conservation and management measures to facilitate the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna, and seek a review of compliance by all Nations with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' conservation and management recommendation for Atlantic bluefin tuna and other species, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 368) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 368

Whereas Atlantic bluefin tuna are a valuable commercial and recreational fishery of the United States and many other countries;

Whereas the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas entered into force on March 21, 1969;

Whereas the Convention established the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas to coordinate international research and develop, implement, and enforce compliance of the conservation and management recommendations on the Atlantic bluefin tuna and other highly migratory species in the Atlantic Ocean and the adjacent seas, including the Mediterranean Sea;

Whereas in 1974, the Commission adopted its first conservation and management recommendation to ensure the sustainability of Atlantic bluefin tuna throughout the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, while allowing for the maximum sustainable catch for food and other purposes;

Whereas in 1981, for management purposes, the Commission adopted a working hypothesis of 2 Atlantic bluefin tuna stocks, with 1 occurring west of 45 degrees west longitude (hereinafter referred to as the ''western Atlantic stock'') and the other occurring east of 45 degrees west longitude (hereinafter referred to as the ''eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean stock'');

Whereas, despite scientific recommendations intended to maintain bluefin tuna populations at levels that will permit the maximum sustainable yield and ensure the future of the stocks, the total allowable catch quotas have been consistently set at levels significantly higher than the recommended levels for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean stock;

Whereas despite the establishment by the Commission of fishing quotas based on total allowable catch levels for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery that exceed scientific recommendations, compliance with such quotas by parties to the Convention that harvest that stock has been extremely poor, most recently with harvests exceeding such total allowable catch levels by more than 50 percent for each of the last 4 years;

Whereas insufficient data reporting in combination with unreliable national catch statistics has frequently undermined efforts by the Commission to assign quota overharvests to specific countries;

Whereas the failure of many Commission members fishing east of 45 degrees west longitude to comply with other Commission recommendations to conserve and control the overfished eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock has been an ongoing problem;

Whereas the Commission's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics noted in its 2006 report that the fishing mortality rate for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean stock may be more than 3 times the level that would permit the stock to stabilize at the maximum sustainable catch level, and continuing to fish at the level of recent years ''is expected to drive the spawning biomass to a very low level'' giving ''rise to a high risk of fishery and stock collapse'';

Whereas the Standing Committee has recommended that the annual harvest levels for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna be reduced from 32,000 metric tons to approximately 15,000 metric tons to halt decline of the resource and initiate rebuilding, and the United States supported this recommendation at the 2006 Commission meeting;

Whereas in 2006, the Commission adopted the ''Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean'' containing a wide range of management, monitoring, and control measures designed to facilitate the recovery of the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock;

Whereas the Recovery Plan is inadequate and allows overfishing and stock decline to continue, and initial information indicates that implementation of the plan in 2007 by many eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna harvesting countries has been poor;

Whereas since 1981, the Commission has adopted additional and more restrictive conservation and management recommendations for the western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock, and these recommendations have been implemented by Nations fishing west of 45 degrees west longitude, including the United States;

Whereas despite adopting, fully implementing, and complying with a science-based rebuilding program for the western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock by countries fishing west of 45 degrees west longitude, catches and catch rates remain very low;

Whereas many scientists believe that mixing occurs between the western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock and the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean stock, and as such, poor management and noncompliance with recommendations for one stock are likely to have an adverse effect on the other stock; and

Whereas additional research on stock mixing will improve the understanding of the relationship between eastern and western bluefin tuna stocks and other fisheries, which will assist in the conservation, recovery, and management of the species throughout its range: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States delegation to the 20th Regular Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, should—

(1) seek the adoption of a harvesting moratorium, which includes appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance, on the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery of sufficient duration to begin the process of stock recovery and allow for the

development and implementation of an effective program of monitoring and control on the fishery when the moratorium ends;

(2) seek to strengthen the conservation and management of the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna by making recommendations to halt the decline of the stock and begin to rebuild it;

(3) reevaluate the implementation, effectiveness, and relevance of the Commission recommendation entitled ''Recommendation by ICCAT to Establish a Multi-Annual Recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean'' (Recommendation 06–05), and seek from Commission members that have failed to fully implement the terms of the recommendations detailed justification for their lack of compliance;

(4) pursue a review and assessment of compliance with conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission and in effect for the 2006 eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery, occurring east of 45 degrees west longitude, and other fisheries that are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, including data collection and reporting requirements;

(5) seek to address noncompliance by parties to the Convention with such measures through appropriate actions, including, as appropriate, deducting a portion of a future quota for a party to compensate for such party exceeding its quota in prior years; and

(6) pursue additional research on the relationship between the western Atlantic and eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stocks and the extent to which the populations intermingle.

RECOGNIZING AND THANKING MILITARY FAMILIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 378, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 378) recognizing and thanking all military families for the tremendous sacrifices and contributions they have made to the Nation.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 378) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 378

Whereas there are currently more than 3,000,000 immediate family members of individuals serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas these family members bear the most immediate and profound burden of the absence of their loved ones during the performance of their duties;

Whereas these families have been the bedrock of support and strength for our Nation's Armed Forces for over 230 years;

Whereas military families serve this country with an equal amount of dedication and patriotism as their loved ones who are fighting for the United States;

Whereas the families of servicemembers—whether in the regular components of the Armed Forces, the Reserve, or the National Guard—feel enormous amounts of pride, love, and trepidation during the absence of their loved ones;

Whereas it is essential that the Nation recognize the contributions made by military families and celebrate their strength; and

Whereas the Senate stands in humble respect of the sacrifice made by our military families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the families of members of the Armed Forces and recognizes that they too share in the burden of protecting the Nation;

(2) urges the people of the United States to join with the Senate in thanking military families for their tremendous sacrifice on behalf of the Nation; and

(3) recognizes with great appreciation the contributions made by military families in providing the essential personal support that our Nation's warriors need.

FEED AMERICA THURSDAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 379, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 379) designating Thursday, November 15, 2007, as ''Feed America Thursday.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to speak regarding an effort that, in recent years, has received the support of many of us in the Senate. ''Feed America Thursday'' is an effort, promoted by a number of charitable organizations, aimed at fostering our Nation's spirit of selflessness and sacrifice in order to help those in need.

According to the Department of Agriculture's most recent numbers, roughly 35 million Americans, including 12 million children, live in households that do not have an adequate supply of food. As I have said in the past, it is simply inexcusable that, in the most prosperous nation on Earth, so many children go to bed hungry at night. While there are often disputes as to how we should address these problems, I believe there are steps that every American can take to help those in need.

The leaders and participants in ''Feed America Thursday'' encourage all Americans to sacrifice two meals on the Thursday before Thanksgiving Day and to donate the money they would have used for food to a charity or religious organization of their choice. The charities and churches, in turn, are encouraged to use these funds to feed the hungry.

Today, as I have in previous Congresses, I introduced a resolution that would designate this Thursday, November 15, 2007, as ''Feed America Thursday.'' I urge my Senate colleagues and every American to join me in feeding the hungry and affirming the values that make our Nation great.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 379) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 379

Whereas Thanksgiving Day celebrates the spirit of selfless giving and an appreciation for family and friends;

Whereas the spirit of Thanksgiving Day is a virtue upon which the Nation was founded;

Whereas, according to the Department of Agriculture, roughly 35,000,000 people in the United States, including 12,000,000 children, continue to live in households that do not have an adequate supply of food; and

Whereas selfless sacrifice breeds a genuine spirit of thanksgiving, both affirming and restoring fundamental principles in our society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates Thursday, November 15, 2007, as ''Feed America Thursday''; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to sacrifice 2 meals on Thursday, November 15, 2007, and to donate the money that they would have spent on food to a religious or charitable organization of their choice for the purpose of feeding the hungry.

RECOGNIZING HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL USA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 380, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 380) recognizing Hostelling International USA for 75 years of service to intercultural understanding and to youth travel.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I offer today a resolution recognizing Hostelling International USA for 75 years of service to intercultural understanding and to youth travel.

Hostelling USA was established in 1934 to promote hostelling in the United States. Since it is founding, it has hosted over 22 million visitors in its 70 hostels across the country, including Alaska.

Hostelling is a unique and affordable way travelers can see our country, while making lifelong friends and contacts.

I congratulate Hostelling International USA for 75 years of service and hope my colleagues will join me in passing this resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 380) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 380

Whereas travel promotes awareness and knowledge of peoples, places, and cultures;

Whereas hostelling is educational travel, local and global, using hostels and other programs to facilitate interaction among travelers and with local communities;

Whereas hostels are simple, safe, shared accommodations that promote community and cooperation among users and introduce young people of limited means to travel;

Whereas Hostelling International USA (HI-USA) is a nonprofit educational organization established in 1934 as American Youth Hostels to promote hostelling in the United States;

Whereas, since its founding, HI-USA has provided in its hostels more than 22,000,000 overnight stays to visitors from the United States and more than 150 countries worldwide;

Whereas today HI-USA has a network of 70 hostels in areas of cultural, historic, and recreational interest, often in partnership with public, private, and other nonprofit organizations, that annually hosts nearly 1,000,000 overnights stays by both domestic and foreign travelers;

Whereas HI-USA today offers programs through its hostels and local chapters that promote the appreciation of local culture and environment, while facilitating the discovery of both world and self, to more than 65,000 participants annually;

Whereas HI-USA has made a unique and notable contribution to intercultural understanding in the United States and worldwide, especially among youth: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates Hostelling International USA on its 75 years of service; and

(2) commends Hostelling International USA for its contributions to intercultural exchange and its leadership in the field of youth travel.

COMMEMORATING THE LIVES OF THE MARYKNOLL SISTERS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 381 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 381) remembering and commemorating the lives and work of Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, who were executed by members of the Armed Forces of El Salvador on December 2, 1980.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to be added as a cosponsor of this measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am grateful to my colleagues for joining me in passing a resolution which remembers the lives of four American women who continue to be a source of great inspiration.

Mr. President, on December 2, 1980, two Maryknoll Sisters, Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Team lay missionary Jean Donovan were brutally violated and murdered by members of the Salvadoran National Guard. We do not wish to revisit the events of those difficult times in Central America with this resolution. We wish to remember and honor the love and dedication these women of faith showed to those they came to serve.

Two years ago, on the December 2 anniversary of the brutal deaths of these four American women, several 25th anniversary events were held in the United States including one at Milwaukee's Saint Therese Church in my home State of Wisconsin. I was pleased that the House passed a resolution honoring the lives of the four missionaries in the year of the 25th anniversary. Unfortunately, one or more members of this body anonymously blocked the Senate from passing a similar resolution to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the murder of these nuns. Along with my cosponsors, I am pleased that the Senate is now appropriately honoring these women with the passage of this resolution.

Mr. President, remembering these women is a very personal and moving thing for those who actually knew them, but it is also truly powerful for those who have only learned of them after their deaths. I had the opportunity several years ago to meet many of their family members and have become well aware of one of the churchwomen, Sister Ita Ford, through my chief of staff and her aunt, Jean Reardon Baumann, who was a dear friend of Ita's from their childhood together in Brooklyn, New York.

I would like to share with my colleagues a letter Sister Ita Ford wrote to her niece in August of 1980:

Dear Jennifer, the odds that this note will arrive for your birthday are poor, but know I'm with you in spirit as you celebrate 16 big ones. I hope it's a special day for you. I want to say something to you and I wish I were there to talk to you because sometimes letters don't get across all the meaning and feeling. But, I'll give it a try anyway.

First of all, I love you and care about you and how you are. I'm sure you know that. That holds if you're an angel or a goof-off, a genius or a jerk. A lot of that is up to you, and what you decide to do with your life. What I want to say . . . some of it isn't too jolly birthday talk, but it's real. . . . Yesterday I stood looking down at a 16-year-old who had been killed a few hours earlier. I know a lot of kids even younger who are dead. This is a terrible time in El Salvador for youth. A lot of idealism and commitment is getting snuffed out here now. The reasons why so many people are being killed are quite complicated, yet there are some clear, simple strands. One is that many people have found a meaning to life, to sacrifice, to struggle, and even to death. And whether their life span is 16 years, 60 or 90, for them, their life has had a purpose. In many ways, they are fortunate people.

Brooklyn is not passing through the drama of El Salvador, but some things hold true wherever one is, and at whatever age. What I'm saying is, I hope you come to find that which gives life a deep meaning for you . . . something worth living for, maybe even worth dying for . . . something that energizes you, enthuses you, enables you to keep moving ahead. I can't tell you what it might be—that's for you to find, to choose, to love. I can just encourage you to start looking, and support you in the search. Maybe this sounds weird and off-the-wall, and maybe, no one else will talk to you like this, but then, too, I'm seeing and living things that others around you aren't. . . . I want to say to you: don't waste the gifts and opportunities you have to make yourself and other people happy. . . . I hope this doesn't sound like some kind of a sermon because I don't mean it that way. Rather, it's something you learn here, and I want to share it with you. In fact, it's my birthday present to you. If it doesn't make sense right at this moment, keep this and read it sometime from now. Maybe it will be clearer . . .

A very happy birthday to you and much, much love,

ITA.

From that one letter alone, I am sure that others will understand the kind of people these women were, and the impact they continue to have on us all.

I also want to thank, in particular, my friend from Massachusetts Congressman JIM MCGOVERN and his staff who have led the efforts in Congress to appropriately remember these four courageous American women who dedicated their lives to their faith and to the service of others.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 381) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 381

Whereas on December 2, 1980, four churchwomen from the United States, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, were violated and executed by members of the National Guard of El Salvador;

Whereas in 1980, Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford were working in the parish of the Church of San Juan Bautista in Chalatenango, El Salvador, providing food, transportation, and other assistance to refugees, and Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan were working in the parish of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in La Libertad, El Salvador, providing assistance and support to refugees and other victims of violence;

Whereas these four churchwomen from the United States dedicated their lives to working with the poor of El Salvador, especially women and children left homeless, displaced, and destitute by the civil war in El Salvador;

Whereas these four churchwomen from the United States were among the more than 70,000 civilians who were murdered during the course of the civil war in El Salvador;

Whereas on May 23 and May 24, 1984, five members of the National Guard of El Salvador, Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman, Daniel Canales Ramirez, Carlos Joaquin Contreras Palacios, Francisco Orlando Contreras Recinos, and Jose Roberto Moreno Canjura, were found guilty by the El

Salvador courts of the executions of these four churchwomen from the United States and were sentenced to 30 years in prison, marking the first time in El Salvador history in which a member of the Armed Forces of El Salvador was convicted of murder by an El Salvador judge;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador was established under the terms of the historic January 1992 Peace Accords that ended 12 years of civil war in El Salvador and was charged to investigate and report to the El Salvador people on human rights crimes committed by all sides during the course of the civil war;

Whereas in March 1993, the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador found that the execution of these four churchwomen from the United States was planned, that Subsergeant Luis Antonio Colindres Aleman carried out orders from a superior to execute them, that then Colonel Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, then Director-General of the National Guard and his cousin, Lieutenant Colonel Oscar Edgardo Casanova Vejar, then Commander of the Zacatecoluca military detachment where the murders were committed, and other military personnel knew that members of the National Guard had committed the murders pursuant to orders of a superior, and that the subsequent coverup of the facts adversely affected the judicial investigation into the murders of the churchwomen;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador determined that General Jose Guillermo Garcia, then Minister of Defense, made no serious effort to conduct a thorough investigation of responsibility for the murders of these four churchwomen from the United States;

Whereas the families of these four churchwomen from the United States continue their efforts to determine the full truth surrounding the murders of their loved ones, appreciate the cooperation of United States Government agencies in disclosing and providing documents relevant to the murders of the churchwomen, and pursue requests to release to the family members the few remaining undisclosed documents and reports pertaining to the case;

Whereas the families of these four churchwomen from the United States appreciate the ability of those harmed by violence to bring suit against El Salvador military officers in United States courts under the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 (28 U.S.C. 1350 note);

Whereas the lives of these four churchwomen from the United States have, for the past 27 years, served as inspiration for and continue to inspire Salvadorans, Americans, and people throughout the world to answer the call to service and to pursue lives dedicated to addressing the needs and aspirations of the poor, the vulnerable, and the disadvantaged, especially among women and children;

Whereas the lives of these four churchwomen from the United States have also inspired numerous books, plays, films, music, religious events, and cultural events;

Whereas schools, libraries, research centers, spiritual centers, health clinics, women's and children's programs in the United States and in El Salvador have been named after or dedicated to Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

Whereas the Maryknoll Sisters, headquartered in Ossining, New York, the Ursuline Sisters, headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, numerous religious task forces in the United States, and the Salvadoran and international religious communities based in El Salvador annually commemorate the lives and martyrdom of these four churchwomen from the United States;

Whereas the historic January 1992 Peace Accords ended 12 years of civil war in El Salvador and have allowed the Government and the people of El Salvador to achieve significant progress in creating and strengthening democratic, political, economic, and social institutions in El Salvador; and

Whereas December 2, 2007, marks the 27th anniversary of the deaths of these four spiritual, courageous, and generous churchwomen from the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) remembers and commemorates the lives and work of Sisters Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel and lay missionary Jean Donovan;

(2) extends sympathy and support for the families, friends, and religious communities of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(3) continues to find inspiration in the lives and work of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(4) calls upon the people of the United States and religious congregations to participate in local, national, and international events commemorating the 27th anniversary of the martyrdom of these four churchwomen from the United States;

(5) recognizes that while progress has been made in El Salvador during the post-civil war period, the work begun by these four churchwomen from the United States remains unfinished and social and economic hardships persist among many sectors of El Salvador society; and

(6) calls upon the President, the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the heads of other United States Government agencies to continue to support and collaborate with the Government of El Salvador and with private sector, nongovernmental, regional, international, and religious organizations in their efforts to reduce poverty and hunger and to promote educational opportunity, health care, and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

WORLD DIABETES DAY

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 382 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 382) supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I was pleased to introduce a Senate resolution recognizing November 14 as World Diabetes Day. I am also pleased to be joined by my colleagues, Senators PETE DOMENICI and FRANK LAUTENBERG. Established in 1991 by the World Health Organization and the International Diabetes Federation, this day has been recognized annually as World Diabetes Day.

Through World Diabetes Day, advocates worldwide can coordinate diabetes awareness activities and create a sense of urgency about this devastating disease. In almost every nation, diabetes is on the rise. In the United States, diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death by disease. Globally, diabetes is fourth.

Diabetes currently affects 246 million people worldwide and is projected to affect 380 million by 2025. Last year, the United Nations passed landmark Resolution 61/225 recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating, and costly disease.

Each year, over 3.7 million people die due to diabetes. An even greater number die from cardiovascular disease exacerbated by diabetes-related lipid disorders. Every 10 seconds, two people develop diabetes and one person dies from diabetes-related causes.

The prevalence of diabetes is increasing in Michigan—from 5.3 percent to 7.9 percent over the past 10 years. There are 1.3 million Michiganians who have diabetes or are prediabetic. Michigan has the seventh highest rate of diabetes in the Nation, and diabetes costs our State's economy $6 billion a year in health costs and lost productivity. Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in Michigan and the fourth leading cause of death among African-American females in Michigan.

This year, the World Diabetes Day campaign will focus on the message that no child should die of diabetes.'' I take this goal very seriously. As a member of the Agriculture Committee, I am committed to ensuring our children have healthy options in their school meals. And I am working with Senator DOMENICI on reauthorizing the Special Diabetes Program.

We can no longer ignore the growing incidence of diabetes. Instead, let us draw worldwide attention to prevention, access, and treatment.

Finally, I am pleased to have letters of support from diabetes advocacy organizations. I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

INTERNATIONAL DIABETES FEDERATION,
Brussels, Belgium, November 11, 2007.

Hon. DEBBIE STABENOW,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. PETE DOMENICI,
Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR U.S. SENATOR STABENOW AND U.S. SENATOR DOMENICI: The International Diabetes Federation (IDF), an over 50–year old worldwide alliance of over 200 diabetes associations in more than 160 countries, is pleased to endorse H. Con. Res. 211, your resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day.

Established by the World Health Organization and International Diabetes Federation in 1991, World Diabetes Day has been commemorated annually on November 14th. World Diabetes Day has succeeded in elevating and coordinating diabetes advocacy globally. Further, it is especially meaningful for the international diabetes advocacy community that on December 20, 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a landmark Resolution recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating and costly disease.

Cities and nations all over the world are holding events to celebrate World Diabetes

Day. For example, in Egypt, the well-known Bibliotheca Alexandrina (Library of Alexandria) will light up in blue on November 14th. And, La Federación Mexicana de Diabetes (Mexican Diabetes Federation) has planned a series of events throughout Mexico to mark this year's World Diabetes Day, including a diabetes awareness week in Jalisco, walks in Mexico City and Guanajuato, and activities for children and adolescents in Chihuahua.

Senators Stabenow and Domenici, we share your particular enthusiasm that the 2007 Campaign's theme focuses on raising awareness of diabetes in children and adolescents, who face unique challenges when diagnosed with diabetes. The campaign aims, among other objectives, to firmly establish the message that ''no child should die of diabetes''.

Thank you for your leadership on this important global health awareness campaign, Senators Stabenow and Domenici.

Sincerely,

MARTIN SILINK.

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION,
November 14, 2007.

Sen. DEBBIE STABENOW,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.
Sen. PETE DOMENICI,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of the 20.8 million children and adults living with diabetes in the Unites States, the American Diabetes Association is pleased to endorse your resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day. This important day has succeeded in elevating and coordinating diabetes education and advocacy around the world and we applaud your leadership in bringing congressional attention to it.

Established by the World Health Organization and International Diabetes Federation in 1991, World Diabetes Day has been commemorated annually on November 14th. On December 20, 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a landmark Resolution recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating and costly disease, and designating World Diabetes Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting this year.

As you know, Diabetes is a lifelong chronic disease that has become a health problem of epidemic proportions around the globe. More than 240 million people worldwide are living with diabetes. This number is expected to exceed 350 million in less than 20 years if action is not taken. Diabetes is the fifth highest cause of disease-related death, killing more than 2.9 million people from diabetes-related complications annually, greater than 600 people each day in our own country. In fact, every 10 seconds a person dies of diabetes-related causes—including heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease and amputations.

Children are not spared from this global epidemic, with its debilitating and life-threatening complications. The theme of this year's World Diabetes Day campaign is 'Diabetes in Children and Adolescents.' Type 1 diabetes is growing by 3% per year in children and adolescents, and at an alarming 5% per year among pre-school children. Type 2 diabetes was once seen as a disease of adults. Today, this type of diabetes is growing at alarming rates in children and adolescents. In the United States, it is estimated that type 2 diabetes represents between 8 and 45% of new-onset diabetes cases in children depending on geographic location. Early diagnosis and early education are crucial to reducing complications and saving lives.

Senator Stabenow and Senator Domenici, we share your enthusiasm that the 2007 Campaign's theme focuses on raising awareness of diabetes in children and adolescents, who face unique challenges when diagnosed with diabetes. Passage of this resolution will send a powerful message about the seriousness of this disease and help to alleviate the human, economic and social burden of diabetes.

Thank you, again, for your leadership on this important global health awareness campaign. In this, and in other diabetes issues, the American Diabetes Association stands ready to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

HUNTER LIMBAUGH,
Chair, National Advocacy Committee.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 382) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 382

Whereas the World Health Organization and the International Diabetes Federation established World Diabetes Day in 1991 with the aim of coordinating diabetes advocacy worldwide;

Whereas World Diabetes Day is celebrated annually on November 14;

Whereas, on December 20, 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a landmark resolution recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating, and costly disease;

Whereas the resolution designates World Diabetes Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting in 2007 in order to raise global awareness of diabetes;

Whereas the theme of the 2007 United Nations World Diabetes Day campaign focuses on raising awareness of diabetes in children and adolescents, who face unique challenges when diagnosed with diabetes;

Whereas the United Nations campaign aims, among other objectives, to firmly establish the message that no child should die of diabetes;

Whereas the global diabetes epidemic has devastating effects on families, societies, and national economies;

Whereas diabetes is the 4th leading cause of death by disease in the world, and is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States;

Whereas diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, kidney failure, amputation, heart attack, and stroke;

Whereas in almost every country the incidence of diabetes is increasing, growing from an estimated 30,000,000 people worldwide in 1985 to an estimated 245,000,000 people in 2007, and to 380,000,000 by 2025, as reported by the International Diabetes Federation;

Whereas diabetes is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases;

Whereas diabetes can strike children at any age, and when diagnosed in young people the risk of developing life-threatening complications at an early age increases and life expectancy is shortened by, on average, 10 to 20 years;

Whereas new figures from the International Diabetes Federation's Diabetes Atlas suggest that more than 70,000 children develop type 1 diabetes each year and 440,000 children worldwide under the age of 14 now live with type 1 diabetes;

Whereas recent data indicate that 1 out of every 3 children born in the United States will develop diabetes during their lifetime, including 1 out of every 2 children from ethnic minority groups;

Whereas in low- and middle-income countries, many children with diabetes die because they are diagnosed late or misdiagnosed or because insulin is unaffordable, unavailable, or in short supply;

Whereas the incidence of type 2 diabetes, which was previously rare in children, is rising at alarming rates, with more than 200 children a day developing this form of diabetes;

Whereas obesity is a major contributor to type 2 diabetes;

Whereas according to the International Obesity Task Force of the International Association for the Study of Obesity, 155,000,000 school-age children worldwide are overweight, representing at least 1 out of every 10 school-age children;

Whereas at least 30,000,000 of those overweight children are classified as obese, accounting for at least 2 percent of the world's children between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age;

Whereas research has shown conclusively that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or significantly delayed through healthy weight maintenance and regular physical activity;

Whereas adopting a lifestyle high in physical activity and adopting a low-sugar, low-fat diet can successfully prevent the onset of obesity and diabetes among school-age children;

Whereas diabetes is costly, with the world estimated to spend at least $232,000,000,000 in 2007 and over $302,500,000,000 by 2025 to treat and prevent diabetes and its complications;

Whereas world treatment costs for diabetes are growing more quickly than the world population;

Whereas diabetes threatens to subvert global economic advancement by both straining government budgets worldwide (with the cost of diabetes-related disability payments, pensions, social and medical service costs, and lost revenue) and burdening private health insurers and employers with spiraling health care costs;

Whereas by 2025 the largest increases in diabetes prevalence will take place in developing countries, whose economies are less able to support increased expenditures to provide for those with the disease and engage in effective prevention efforts; and

Whereas the economic impact of diabetes threatens to undermine the achievement of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals for developing countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2007

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, November 15; that on Thursday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour deemed expired, the time for the two leaders reserved for their use later in the day; that there then be a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and the time equally divided and controlled, with Senator FEINGOLD recognized first for up to 15 minutes; that then the Republicans control the next 30 minutes; that

following that time, the majority control the final 15 minutes of morning business; that at the close of morning business, the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 2419, the farm bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. As a reminder to Members, cloture was filed on the Harkin substitute amendment on H.R. 2419. All germane amendments must be timely filed by 1 p.m. tomorrow; however, Members do not need to refile any germane amendments already filed.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. I now ask that following the remarks of Senator DOLE, the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Pending the arrival of Senator DOLE, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HUNGER AND NUTRITION

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, in America—the land of prosperity and plenty, some people have the misconception that hunger plagues only faraway, undeveloped nations. The reality is that hunger is a silent enemy lurking within 1 in 10 U.S. households.

In my home State of North Carolina alone, nearly 1 million of our 8.8 million residents are struggling with food insecurity issues. In recent years, once-thriving North Carolina towns have been economically crippled by the shutting of textile mills and furniture factories. People have lost their jobs and sometimes their ability to put food on the table.

I know this scenario is not unique to North Carolina, as many American manufacturing jobs have moved overseas. While many folks are finding new employment, these days a steady income does not necessarily provide for three square meals a day. Hunger and food insecurity are far too prevalent, but I think Washington Post columnist David Broder hit the nail on the head when he wrote:

> America has some problems that defy solution. This one does not. It just needs caring people and a caring government, working together.

I certainly agree. The battle to end hunger in our country is a campaign that cannot be won in months or even a few years, but it is a victory within reach.

To this end, I strongly support what the nutrition title of the farm bill strives to accomplish. I commend my colleagues on the Senate Agriculture Committee for putting together a package that helps address the hunger and nutrition needs of Americans of all ages. For example, with regard to the Food Stamp Program, this bill seeks to responsibly address concerns of fraud, waste, and abuse in the system and help ensure that it serves those who truly need assistance.

I am also pleased that the nutrition title expands the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to all 50 States. This program encourages healthy eating habits in schoolchildren and helps combat childhood obesity. According to a recent Duke University report, in the last 25 years, the rate of obesity has doubled for children ages 6 to 11, and has tripled for teens.

Today, about 10 percent of 2- to 5-year-olds and 15 percent of 6- to 19-year-olds are overweight. In North Carolina, where childhood obesity rates have been higher than national averages, I am very proud that nearly 1.4 million children are enrolled this school year in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. This certainly is a positive way to help combat the childhood obesity problem.

Furthermore, I am pleased this bill will allow schools participating in the School Lunch Program to use geographic preference when purchasing fruits and vegetables. This is especially good news in North Carolina where our farmers produce a wide variety of nutritious fruits and vegetables.

I also welcome a provision in the nutrition title that makes permanent the exclusion of combat zone pay from eligibility determinations in the Food and Nutrition Program. More than 157,700 servicemembers from North Carolina have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, and their families, who are sacrificing greatly, should not become ineligible because the head of household receives extra income for serving in harm's way.

Additionally, I am pleased that the nutrition title expands the use of electronic benefit transfer at farmers' markets. As in other States, in North Carolina's rural areas the poverty rate tends to be higher, and there is limited access to grocery stores that participate in the Food and Nutrition Program. Our State prides itself on having some of the finest farmers' markets around, and allowing the use of EBT will provide needier individuals access to these healthy, homegrown foods.

Likewise, this bill also increases funding for the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which helps low-income seniors, and it continues and extends the Commodity Supplemental Food Program to more low-income individuals.

While I am encouraged by these hunger and nutrition components, there is still more we can and should accomplish in this farm bill to help those in need.

One area where I have focused my efforts is gleaning, where excess crops that would otherwise be thrown out are taken from farms, packinghouses, and warehouses, and distributed to the needy.

It is staggering—really staggering—that each year in this country 96 billion pounds of good, nutritious food, including that at the farm and retail level, is left over or thrown away. Gleaning helps eliminate this waste. It helps the farmer because he does not have to haul off or plow under crops that do not meet exact specifications of grocery chains. And it certainly helps the hungry by giving them nutritious, fresh foods.

Last month, in Harnett County, NC, I gleaned sweet potatoes with volunteers from the hunger relief organization the Society of St. Andrew. One of the single largest concerns for groups such as this wonderful organization is transportation—how to actually get food from the farm, for example, to those in need. According to the Society of St. Andrew, the increase in fuel costs has made food transport particularly challenging. They say today it costs 30 percent more to hire a truck to move food than it did 2 years ago.

To help address this problem, I am putting forward my bill, the Hunger Relief Trucking Tax Credit, as an amendment to this legislation. My measure would change the Tax Code to give transportation companies tax incentives for volunteering trucks to transfer gleaned food. Specifically, my bill would create a 25-cent tax credit for each mile that food is transported for hunger relief efforts by a donated truck and driver. This bill would provide a little extra encouragement for trucking companies to donate space in their vehicles to help more food reach more hungry people.

Additionally, I am proud to join my colleague Senator LAUTENBERG as a cosponsor of an amendment that helps fight hunger in our communities by combining food rescue with job training, thus teaching unemployed and homeless adults the skills needed to work in the food service industry.

The FEED Program, which stands for Food Employment Empowerment and Development, will support community kitchens around the country with much needed resources to help collect rescued food and provide meals to the hungry. Successful FEED-type programs already exist. For example, in Charlotte, NC, the Community Culinary School recruits students from social service agencies, homeless shelters, halfway houses, and work release programs. And just around the corner from the U.S. Capitol, students are hard at work in the DC Central Kitchen's culinary job training class. This is a model program, which began in 1990, and it is always, to me, a great privilege to visit the kitchen and meet with the individuals who have faced adversity but are now on track for a career in the food service industry.

While I do have a number of concerns about the farm bill and its impact on North Carolina agriculture, I welcome this bill's hunger and nutrition focus. Particularly with Thanksgiving just 1 week away, let us remember our 35 million fellow Americans who are struggling to have enough to eat. With the addition of the Hunger Relief Trucking Tax Credit and the FEED Program provision, this farm bill can go even further to responsibly lend a helping hand to those in need.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:17 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 15, 2007, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

In April 1957, 40 officials from the Washington area established an organization to exchange ideas and work together on regional issues such as transportation, the environment, and public safety. This organization would become known as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments—or COG.

Over the years, COG has facilitated regional responses to such important initiatives as cleaning up the Potomac River, creating more affordable housing for metropolitan residents, and the development and coordination of regional public safety. In addition to helping galvanize the region's response to the September 11 attacks, COG continues to facilitate the region's ongoing emergency preparedness programs.

During its 50 years of existence, COG's activities have touched every aspect of the lives of the citizens of the National Capital region. I rise today to congratulate COG for 50 years of successful and effective collaboration and for the work it continues to do to improve the lives of our citizens.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS

SPEECH OF

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 744, recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans. These veterans have served with courage, pride, and honor to protect this country and the freedoms we hold dear.

As we approach Veterans Day, it is imperative that we all remember and honor those who have sacrificed their lives and families for the safety and security of this Nation.

I am very pleased that Congress has passed my legislation that honors Private First Class Charles George, a Native American veteran that served in the Korean War. Pfc. George was a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and was raised in the Birdtown community of the Qualla Boundary. He attended Cherokee Schools before enlisting in the U.S. Army and being sent to fight in the Korean War. Pfc. George left his home to fight for our Nation, but the young man did not return to our mountains.

On November 30th, 1952, while fighting in Korea, Private First Class George was killed in action. He died saving the lives of those around him. He was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions during the Korean War.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Asheville, North Carolina will be renamed the "Charles George Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center" at the end of this month to honor his actions and valor.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Native American veterans for their valiant service on behalf of our Nation.

HONORING JOHN P. CASEY FOR RECEIVING THE WILLIAM CRAWFORD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize John P. Casey, President of Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut, who has been honored by the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce with its William Crawford Distinguished Service Award.

Each year, the William Crawford Distinguished Service Award is awarded to an individual in eastern Connecticut who exemplifies the spirit of service to their neighbors and who has worked to improve the quality of life in eastern Connecticut. Any who know him should have no doubt that John Casey meets the criteria for this award.

As President of one of the largest employers in the region, John Casey is, by definition, a pillar of the communities of southeastern Connecticut. However, John's impact goes far beyond his role as a corporate executive. Throughout the years he has risen through the ranks at Electric Boat, he has demonstrated a unique brand of leadership which recognizes that more can be achieved when all elements of the workforce are summoned tackle a challenge. This approach is helping to streamline the submarine construction process and reduce the costs to the taxpayer—both critical milestones to increasing our submarine production rate.

John is also a fighter for the causes important to eastern Connecticut. In 2005, he was a key figure in the fight to save Submarine Base New London. His arguments in favor of the synergy that is achieved by locating the "Submarine Capital of the World" next to the nation's premier builder of submarines helped keep the base open. His voice rose above many others in convincing key decision makers that the Sub Base was too vital an asset to Connecticut and our Nation to lose.

John Casey is a true leader in eastern Connecticut, and one I have had the honor and pleasure to work closely with over the past year. I commend the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce for recognizing his great work on behalf of his employees, the region and our Nation, and I ask my colleagues to join with me in honoring him.

IN HONOR OF THE GARFIELD PARK CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Garfield Park Christian Church which celebrates its centennial anniversary in the City of Santa Cruz, California this November. Commonly known as the "circle church" the surrounding neighborhoods were designed as a series of concentric circles built around the original tabernacle, making the church and the neighborhood forever linked.

Nestled into the heart of the Westside of Santa Cruz, not only does the Church celebrate a hundred years in our community but the neighborhoods surrounding the building do as well. Today the church grounds are a common meeting place for children, families and pet lovers. The church provides not only a place of worship but a cultural and community center for the surrounding homes and neighborhoods. It is estimated that over five hundred people use the facilities for events, meetings and gatherings each week.

Built in 1890, the church was designed to be a religious center to the unique surrounding neighborhoods that were built in circles around the church and serve as its congregation. When their original tabernacle burnt down in 1935, the spirit of the church did not falter. The loss was turned into a gift when for more than twenty years the site of the original tabernacle was leased to the city to be a park and playground, the original "Garfield Park." Today the Garfield Park Christian Church sanctuary and gym stand on the site of the old Tabernacle, tying the new buildings to their original beginnings.

Although Garfield Park Church does have a legacy of being a place of worship among its congregation, it is also devoted to keeping alive compassion and strength of community in its surrounding residents. Two other congregations meet in the building each week along with the building being home to the annual Hindu Navratri festival and other events. By opening its doors and hearts to so many groups, meetings and people, the Garfield Park Church displays its commitment to open compassion and unity.

With this anniversary the church will adopt a new name in celebration of their centennial celebration. Moving forward they are adopting "A New Vision for a New Century" and a new name "The Circle Church, Disciples of Christ," as they look forward to the next hundred years.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to recognize an organization that is so deeply rooted in community involvement and unity. I am excited for this year's celebration and look forward to many more years of gathering in the circle neighborhoods of Santa Cruz.

H.R. 3920, THE TRADE AND GLOBALIZATION ACT OF 2007

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3920, the Trade and Globalization Act of 2007, and commend the Ways and Means, and Education and Labor committees for their hard work on this legislation.

The health of the American economy depends in large part on trade with foreign markets. As globalization, technology, and trade agreements continue to remove barriers to free trade, we must work to ensure that our workers, farmers and small businesses do not suffer unfairly for this economic growth. This legislation moves the Trade Adjustment Assistance, TAA, program in a new direction with that sentiment in mind.

The current TAA program was created in a different era, and fails to address the realities of trade in the 21st century. The Trade and Globalization Act expands eligibility for TAA training programs, temporary income support and healthcare assistance to include manufacturing workers who currently are ineligible for benefits for technical reasons, and to service workers who are increasingly losing their jobs to outsourcing. It also significantly increases funding for these programs, without adding to the deficit, or raising taxes on American families. An updated TAA program will allow all trade-displaced workers to acquire the skills they need to reenter the workforce, and the flexibility to choose their most effective path.

Workers facing the loss of a good job face significant challenges beyond the loss of income. To help families prepare for their transition, this bill requires employers to provide adequate notice to their employees before a layoff, and provides an incentive for states to reform their unemployment insurance programs to realize the needs of low-income, part-time and female members of the workforce.

Additionally, this bill recognizes that trade can have significant impacts for entire regions of our country, and that American businesses are critical to helping workers adapt to the global economy. That is why this legislation provides incentives for firms to redevelop and hire workers in those communities disproportionately affected by international trade.

We owe our prosperity to our greatest national asset-our American workers. I urge you to join me in passing this much needed legislation that will assist these workers who keep America's economy strong.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, on November 9, I was on jury call in my district and missed several votes. I would have voted had I been here: rollcall No. 1077, ordering the previous question on H. Res. 809, "yea"; rollcall No. 1078, H. Res. 809, "yea"; rollcall No. 1079, approving the Journal, "yea"; rollcall No. 1080, motion to adjourn, "nay"; rollcall No. 1081, H.R. 3996, Temporary Tax Relief Act, "yea."

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHILDCARE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2007

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY New York. Madam Speaker, today, on behalf of myself, Rep. YVETTE CLARKE, and Rep. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, I introduce the Childcare Affordability Act of 2007, which will create an above-the-line tax deduction for working parents of up to $13,000 in childcare expenses for one child and a maximum of $26,000 for two or more children. This deduction is based on the average cost of childcare in urban areas, which is $13,000 per year—more than one quarter of the typical family's income. This bill will also make the current Dependent Care Tax Credit fully refundable and expand the qualified actual expenses—now capped at $3,000 per child with a maximum of $6,000 to $13,000 for one child, with a $26,000 maximum for two or more children. This change more accurately reflects the current costs of childcare for working families, who will now be able to choose whichever option provides them with the greatest tax relief.

Greater tax relief is an important and necessary step toward improving the lives of America's working families. The rising cost of child care is squeezing working families and the amount of assistance the Federal government currently provides to ease the burden of these expenses is inadequate. We can and should do more to support our working families. Quality childcare is essential to healthy child development. This bill will help America's families provide high-quality care for their children, which will pay off in the future by increasing productivity and economic growth, and stemming the tide of rising inequality in the United States. With this initiative, we can ease the burden on working families, while making an essential investment in the future prosperity of our Nation.

IN HONOR OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNITY SERVICE OF THE BRAEN FAMILY

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Braen family for its tremendous service to its community. Currently in its fifth generation of family management of its quarry and construction business, the Braen family has long typified the "good neighbor."

In addition to the commitment that the individual members of the Braen family pursue in charity work and community service, the company has initiated a program to promote volunteerism with its own employees. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed. And, tonight, the Braen family and the Braen family of companies—Stone Industries, Inc.; Van Orden Sand & Gravel; Braen Supply, Inc.; and Braen Aggregates, LLC—will be honored by the Northern New Jersey Council of the Boy Scouts of America for exemplifying that high standard.

The Braen family also dedicates itself to community-friendly business practices that not only add to the value of the local economy but also to the quality of life Braen employees, customers, and others enjoy. They have always strived to meet environmental standards long before the standards are in place, thinking first of the health, welfare, and comfort of their employees and neighbors first. They have been honored for their good work, including as New Jersey Family Business of the Year.

So, tonight, as the Boy Scouts honor the Braen family for the support they have shown Scouts and Scouting, I rise to share in their tribute and to thank the Braen family for its contribution to making north Jersey such a fine place to live, work, and raise a family.

VETERANS DAY PRAYER

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, as greatful Americans prepare for providing deserved tributes for our courageous veterans, I have fortunately been provided a profound poem from Clinton B. Campbell of Beauford, SC.

MY VETERAN'S DAY PRAYER

Lord, when the pull of my bed
lures me to stay another hour, please remind
me of taps being played for the fallen,
of the tears that reach my cheek
after each name is read, the ones I know personally
and the ones old-timers
talk about in awe.

After the crowd stumbles
through The Pledge of Allegiance
I want to be there
and listen with all my heart
while the winner of this year's
essay contest quiets the crowd
reminding us of why
we are paying our respects.

When the closing prayer is read
I want to look around in honor
at my fellow vets,
the men and the women
in their timeworn uniforms.
Let me see them as they were,
splendidly marching forward
with the courage that allows us to
have a choice of whether
we come here today or not.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CARMEL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein, Illinois, for being named a 2007 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School.

Nearly 1500 students, ages 13 to 18, attend Carmel Catholic High School. Carmel Catholic is one of only 5 high schools nationwide to win the Blue Ribbon School award 4 times. With a great devotion to learning and academic achievement, Carmel is a faith-based community that attributes their success to the dedication and hard work of their teachers. As a result, these students consistently score above state and national averages on standardized tests in all subject areas. In addition, it is the only high school in Illinois and one of three private high schools in the nation to be recognized.

Carmel Catholic is among 287 schools from across the nation chosen by the Secretary of Education to receive this acknowledgement. These schools have distinguished themselves by embodying the goals of reaching high standards and closing the achievement gap. Schools selected for this honor either have students from all subgroups that have demonstrated significant improvement or have students that achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on statewide tests.

This is a great honor for the 10th district and I congratulate the principal, Fr. Robert C. Carroll, the students, and teachers at Carmel Catholic High School for this achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, it gives me tremendous pleasure to share news of a special Golden Anniversary occurring in my home district in California. The City of Pacifica, a jewel along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, celebrates 50 years of incorporation as an independent municipality on Nov. 22 of this year. In 1957, people along the Coast decided that they were tired of being second-class San Mateo County residents. The seaside villages and valley communities stretching from the Daly City border south to the Devil's Slide were fearful of being used as a dumping ground by their more prosperous and established neighbors. In fact, the City of San Bruno actually wanted to annex parts of the area for landfill purposes, a notion incomprehensible today.

Madam Speaker, those fiercely strong-minded Coastsiders held meetings, hired consultants, used graduate students to prepare surveys, canvassed their neighbors, and, in short, did everything they could to assess the possibility of incorporating as a city. There was an active resistance, as well, with a strong contingent of people who wanted things to stay the same. Let me say, Madame Speaker, with no small amount of pride, that the people who live in this special area have long been known to be politically active, inquisitive and resourceful. It actually took two separate elections before a majority, of only about 500 votes to be precise, decided to incorporate.

But once the decision was made, Madame Speaker, the people in this gorgeous geographical area of California embarked on a public adventure that created one of the truly unique cities in America, if not the world. Ahead of its time in many ways, the new city was christened ''Pacifica'' to highlight the ocean next to it as well as the 80-foot statue by sculptor Ralph Stackpole that represented the people of the Pacific Rim at the Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island in 1939 and 1940. The very first mayor was a woman, Jean Fassler, starting a city tradition of politically active women sitting on the council. While Pacifica made international news in 1992 for having an All-Women City Council, it is often overlooked that the city has never actually had an All-Men elected body.

Madam Speaker, let me paint a picture of the history of this region. In 1769, a group of explorers led by Don Gaspar de Portola viewed San Francisco Bay from a point now known as Sweeney Ridge, which is within the eastern boundary of Pacifica and is part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, a part of the National Parks Service system with a tremendous influence on Pacifica's natural beauty. Panoramic views of the Bay Area greet hikers who make the climb up Sweeney Ridge. The Portola Discovery Site has been designated as a National Landmark. It is my great pleasure to have had a leading role in expanding the Golden Gate National Recreation Area to include this beautiful site, along with other open spaces in the region.

Starting in 1785, crops were planted in San Pedro Valley at an outpost of Mission Dolores. In 1839, Don Francisco Sanchez was given a Mexican Land Grant with boundaries similar to the present City boundary lines. In 1846 he moved into the Sanchez Adobe, which is currently maintained as a San Mateo County Museum and park on Linda Mar Boulevard.

This coastal area remained for years primarily an agricultural Eden until the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Land speculators, stimulated by the construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad, subdivided and developed a series of small coastside communities with the hope of creating a suburban population for San Francisco. The vision then was to establish a tourist and commuter heaven along the Pacific Ocean. The Little Brown Church, Anderson's Store and San Pedro School (which later became City Hall) date from this period. In 1908, Henry Harrison McCloskey, an attorney for the Ocean Shore Railroad, built a castle-like home which still dominates a hill above Sharp Park. Mrs. Honora Sharp donated 410 acres to the City and County of San Francisco to develop a recreation area, which became the Sharp Park Golf Course and the Rifle and Archery Range.

Subdivisions were eventually created, although long after the demise of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1921, to meet the needs of young families of returning World War II veterans. In less than a decade from its 1957 incorporation, the population had grown to 35,000 people. It has taken four more decades to increase that number by 5,000. This statistic alone points to one of the special qualities of Pacifica.

Pacifica is made up of 10 communities, including Edgemar, Pacific Manor, Manor Village, Westview, Sharp Park, Fairway Park, Vallemar, Rockaway Beach, Linda Mar and Pedro Point. Residents continue to identify with the specific personalities of their neighborhoods while maintaining a certain pride in being from Pacifica.

Green and white became the City colors and the fuchsia was designated as the City flower. ''Wisdom in Progress'' became the City slogan, although ''Scenic Pacifica,'' later suggested by Carl McCarthy, is more widely used. In 1970, Balaguer, Spain, the birthplace of Portola, became the Sister City of Pacifica.

Madam Speaker, I want to share the news that in recent years Pacifica has completed a number of notable projects such as: the Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant—April 2001; Friendship Playground—June 2001; New Pacifica Police Station—November 2002; Pacifica State Beach Improvement Project; Rockaway to Crespi Multi-use Trail and Crespi to Pedro Point Multi-use Trail—October 2004; Pacifica Skatepark—December 2005; Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant Photovoltaic Project—July 2006; Esplanade 500 Block Blufftop Enhancement Project and the San Pedro Creek Flood Control Project and Fish Ladder renovation. These projects bring attention to the most successful aspect of Pacifica's existence-this is a city far ahead of its time in the way it capitalizes on maintaining strong environmental and ecological priorities.

Madam Speaker, it is my great privilege to have represented the good citizens of Pacifica for more than half of the city's existence. It has also been my great honor to assist the city in achieving many of its goals, most recently the construction of the $300 million Devil's Slide Tunnels transportation project.

The natural beauty of Pacifica, with its lovely cool climate, delightful valleys and hills and most of all, its innovative, talented, active and wonderful residents, helps it stand out as one of my favorite places in the world. I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in wishing the City of Pacifica and its inhabitants a Happy 50th Anniversary and a successful journey through the 21st Century.

SAUDI ARABIA IS HUB OF WORLD TERROR

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I believe that Congress should continue to encourage an open and robust debate about the threat from radical jihadists. I found the following report in the Sunday Times of particular interest. I would like to share it with my colleagues.

[From the Sunday Times, Nov. 4, 2007]

SAUDI ARABIA IS HUB OF WORLD TERROR: THE DESERT KINGDOM SUPPLIES THE CASH AND THE KILLERS

(By Nick Fielding and Sarah Baxter)

It was an occasion for tears and celebration as the Knights of Martyrdom proclaimed on video: ''Our brother Turki fell during the rays of dawn, covered in blood after he was hit by the bullets of the infidels, following in the path of his brother.'' The flowery language could not disguise the brutal truth that a Saudi family had lost two sons fighting for Al-Qaeda in Iraq.

The elder brother, Khaled, had been a deputy commander of a crack jihadist ''special forces'' unit. After his ''glorious'' death, Turki took his place.

''He was deeply affected by the martyrdom of his brother,'' the Knights said. ''He became more ambitious and more passionate about defending the land of Islam and dying as a martyr, like his brother.''

Turki's fervent wish was granted earlier this year, but another Saudi national who travelled to Iraq had second thoughts. He was a graduate from a respectable family of teachers and professors who was recruited in a Saudi Arabian mosque and sent to Iraq with $1,000 in travel expenses and the telephone number of a smuggler who could get him across the Syrian border.

In Iraq he was ordered to blow himself up in a tanker on a bridge in Ramadi, but he panicked before he could press the detonator. He was arrested by Iraqi police. In a second lorry, another foreign fighter followed orders and died.

King Abdullah was surprised during his two-day state visit to Britain last week by the barrage of criticism directed at the Saudi kingdom. Officials were in ''considerable shock'', one former British diplomat said.

Back home the king is regarded as a modest reformer who has cracked down on homegrown terrorism and loosened a few relatively minor restrictions on his subjects' personal freedom.

With oil prices surging, Saudi Arabia is growing in prosperity and embracing some modern trappings. Bibles and crucifixes are still banned, but internet access is spreading and there are plans for ''Mile High Tower'', the world's tallest skyscraper, in Jeddah. As a key ally of the West, the king had every reason to expect a warm welcome.

Yet wealthy Saudis remain the chief financiers of worldwide terror networks. ''If I could somehow snap my fingers and cut off the funding from one country, it would be Saudi Arabia,'' said Stuart Levey. the U.S. Treasury official in charge of tracking tenor financing.

Extremist clerics provide a stream of recruits to some of the world's nastiest trouble spots.

An analysis by NBC News suggested that the Saudis make up 55% of foreign fighters in Iraq. They are also among the most uncompromising and militant.

Half the foreign fighters held by the U.S. at Camp Cropper near Baghdad are Saudis. They are kept in yellow jumpsuits in a separate, windowless compound after they attempted to impose sharia on the other detainees and preached an extreme form of Wahhabist Islam.

In recent months, Saudi religious scholars have caused consternation in Iraq and Iran by issuing fatwas calling for the destruction of the great Shi'ite shrines in Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, some of which have already been bombed. And while prominent members of the ruling al-Saud dynasty regularly express their abhorrence of terrorism, leading figures within the kingdom who advocate extremism are tolerated.

Sheikh Saleh al-Luhaidan, the chief justice, who oversees terrorist trials, was recorded on tape in a mosque in 2004, encouraging young men to fight in Iraq. ''Entering Iraq has become risky now,'' he cautioned. ''It requires avoiding those evil satellites and those drone aircraft, which own every corner of the skies over Iraq. If someone knows that he is capable of entering Iraq in order to join the fight, and if his intention is to raise up the word of God, then he is free to do so.''

The Bush administration is split over how to deal with the Saudi threat, with the State Department warning against pressure that might lead the royal family to fall and be replaced by more dangerous extremists.

''The urban legend is that George Bush and Dick Cheney are close to the Saudis because of oil and their past ties with them, but they're pretty disillusioned with them,'' said Stephen Schwartz, of the Centre for Islamic Pluralism in Washington. ''The problem is that the Saudis have been part of American policy for so long that it's not easy to work out a solution.''

According to Levey, not one person identified by America or the United Nations as a terrorist financier has been prosecuted by Saudi authorities. A fortnight ago exasperated U.S. Treasury officials named three Saudi citizens as terrorist financiers. ''In order to deter other would-be donors, it is important to hold these terrorists publicly accountable.'' Levey said.

All three had worked in the Philippines, where they are alleged to have helped to finance the Abu Sayyaf group, an Al-Qaeda affiliate. One, Muham-mad Sughayr, was said to be the main link between Abu Sayyaf and wealthy Gulf donors.

Sughayr was arrested in the Philippines in 2005 and swiftly deported to Saudi Arabia after pressure from the Saudi embassy in Manila. There is no evidence that he was prosecuted on his return home.

This year the Saudis arrested 10 people thought to be terrorist financiers, but the excitement faded when their defense lawyers claimed that they were political dissidents and human rights groups took up their cause.

Matthew Levitt, a former intelligence analyst at the US Treasury and counter-terrorism expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, believes the Saudis could do more. He said: ''It is important for the Saudis to hold people publicly accountable. Key financiers have built up considerable personal wealth and are loath to put that at risk. There is some evidence that individuals who have been outed have curtailed their financial activities.''

In the past the Saudis openly supported Islamic militants. Osama Bin Laden was originally treated as a favourite son of the regime and feted as a hero for fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. Huge charitable organisations such as the International Islamic Relief Organisation and the al-Haramain Foundation—accused in American court documents of having links to extremist groups—flourished, sometimes with patronage from senior Saudi royals.

The 1991 Gulf war was a wake-up call for the Saudis. Bin Laden began making vitriolic attacks on the Saudi royal family for cooperating with the U.S. and demanded the expulsion of foreign troops from Arabia. His citizenship was revoked in 1994. The 1996 attack on the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, which killed 19 U.S. servicemen and one Saudi, was a warning that he could strike within the kingdom.

As long as foreigners were the principal targets, the Saudis turned a blind eye to terror. Even the September 11 attacks of 2001, in which 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudis, could not shake their complacency. Despite promises to crack down on radical imams, Saudi mosques continued to preach hatred of America.

The mood began to change in 2003 and 2004, when Al-Qaeda mounted a series of terrorist attacks within the kingdom that threatened to become an insurgency. ''They finally acknowledged at the highest levels that they had a problem and it was coming for them,'' said Rachel Bronson, the author of Thicker than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia.

Assassination attempts against security officials caused some of the royals to fear for their own safety. In May 2004 Islamic terrorists struck two oil industry installations and a foreigners' housing compound in Khobar, taking 50 hostages and killing 22 of them.

The Saudi authorities began to cooperate more with the FBI, clamp down on extremist charities. monitor mosques and keep a watchful eye on fighters returning from Iraq.

Only last month Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul-Aziz al-Sheikh, the kingdom's leading cleric, criticised gullible Saudis for becoming ''convenient knights for whoever wants to exploit their zeal, even to the point of turning them into walking bombs''.

And last week in London, King Abdullah warned young British Muslims not to become involved with extremists.

Yet the Saudis' ambivalence towards terrorism has not gone away. Money for foreign fighters and terror groups still pours out of the kingdom, but it now tends to be carried in cash by couriers rather than sent through the wires, where it can be stopped and identified more easily.

A National Commission for Relief and Charity Work Abroad, a nongovernmental organisation that was intended to regulate private aid abroad to guard against terrorist financing, has still not been created three years after it was trumpeted by the Saudi embassy in Washington.

Hundreds of Islamic militants have been arrested but many have been released after undergoing reeducation programmes led by Muslim clerics.

According to the daily Alwa-tan, the interior ministry has given 115m riyals (£14.7m) to detainees and their families to help them to repay debts, to assist families with health care and housing, to pay for weddings and to buy a car on their release. The most needy prisoners' families receive 2,000–3,000 riyals (£286 to £384) a month.

Ali Sa'd AI-Mussa, a lecturer at King Khaled University in Abha, protested: ''I'm afraid that holding [extremist] views leads to earning a prize or, worse, a steady income.''

Former detainees from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba are also benefiting. To celebrate the Muslim holiday of Eid, 55 prisoners were temporarily released last month and given the equivalent of £1,300 each to spend with their families.

School textbooks still teach the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. A notorious antiSemitic forgery, and preach hatred towards Christians, Jews and other religions, including Shi'ite Muslims, who are considered heretics.

Ali al-Ahmed, director of the Washington-based Institute for Gulf Affairs, said: ''The Saudi education system has over 5m children using these books. If only one in 1,000 take these teachings to heart and seek to act on them violently, there will be 5,000 terrorists.''

In frustration, Arlen Specter. the Republican senator for Pennsylvania, introduced the Saudi Arabia Accountability Act 10 days ago, calling for strong encouragement of the Saudi government to ''end its support for institutions that fund, train, incite, encourage or in any other way aid and abet terrorism''.

The act, however, is expected to die when it reaches the Senate foreign relations committee: the Bush administration is counting on Saudi Arabia to help stabilise Iraq, curtail Iran's nuclear and regional ambitions and give a push to the Israeli and Palestinian peace process at a conference due to be held this month in Annapolis, Maryland.

''Do we really want to take on the Saudis at the moment?'' asks Bronson. ''We've got enough problems as it is.''

SIKHS OBSERVE ANNIVERSARY OF DELHI MASSACRES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, on November 3, Sikhs from up and down the East Coast gathered here in Washington to protest the 23rd anniversary of the Delhi massacres. Over 20,000 Sikhs were killed in that massacre, which followed the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Sikh police officers were locked in their barracks to keep them from interfering with the massacre. State TV and radio called for "blood for blood," inciting the people to kill more Sikhs.

This was a massive atrocity by the Indian regime against the Sikhs. It made it clear that the Indian government had no intention of treating the Sikhs like people in a free and democratic country ought to be treated. Instead, they chose to inflict mass terror on their Sikh citizens. This is not the way a democratic government acts, Madam Speaker. It is the action of a terrorist regime. India should be declared a terrorist regime for acts like this, for creating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, and for its ongoing subversion of Pakistan by sponsoring cross-border terrorism in Sindh, as reported in the January 2, 2002 Washington Times.

Sikhs in attendance at the demonstration raised slogans in support of Khalistan as well as slogans in opposition to the massacre. As you know, the Sikhs declared their independence from India on October 7, 1987. Khalistan is their country, but it remains occupied by over half a million Indian forces. I would like to know why "the world's largest democracy" insists on maintaining authoritarian control of Khalistan instead of allowing the people there to have a free and fair vote on its status. This congress should put itself on record in support of such a vote, as well as the plebiscite that was promised to the Kashmiri people in 1948 and has never occurred. Nagalim, too, seeks its independence from India. The Nagas should also be granted the right to vote on their status. What would be wrong with that, if India is the democracy it says it is? And if India is the democracy it says it is, then why are so many peoples trying to get out from under its rule?

In addition to demanding that India allow the right to self-determination (which is the essence of democracy), we should demand that basic human rights be observed in "the world's largest democracy." The Delhi massacre is just one example of how basic human rights are ignored there. The murders of over 250,000 Sikhs, over 90,000 Kashmiri Muslims, more 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat, more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, and tens of thousands of other minorities, including Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and others speak loudly on the lack of human rights in India. So does the fact that Amnesty International has not been allowed into Punjab since 1984. This situation cannot continue.

We should cut off our aid and trade with India until it allows basic human rights, including but not limited to the right to self-determination, to all people under its rule.

Madam Speaker, the Council of Khalistan issued an excellent and informative press release on the Delhi massacres and the demonstration that was held this month. I recommend it to all my colleagues and I would like to place it in the RECORD at this time.

SIKHS REMEMBER DELHI MASSACRES WITH VERY SUCCESSFUL DEMONSTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 13, 2007.—Sikhs from around the East Coast gathered by the Gandhi statue at the Indian Embassy in Washington, DC on November 3 to commemorate the Delhi massacres of November 1984 in which over 20,000 Sikhs were murdered while the police were locked in their barracks and the state-run television and radio called for more Sikh blood.

The rally was attended by Sikhs from Philadelphia, including Dr. Bakhshish Singh Sandhu, S. Karj Singh, and S. Dharam Singh, as well as Sikhs from New Jersey, Baltimore, Maryland, Virginia, Washington DC, and other locations. New York Sikhs led by Sardar Avtar Singh Pannu also participated. The attendees spoke, carried signs, and chanted slogans. Slogans included ''Khalistan Zindabad'' (''Long live Khalistan''), ''India free Khalistan'', ''India stop killing minorities'', ''India free Kashmir'', ''India free Christian Nagaland'', and others.

The Delhi massacres were a brutal chapter in India's repression of the Sikhs, according to Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, which is leading the demonstration. ''This brutal, government-inspired massacre clarified that there is no place in India for Sikhs,'' Dr. Aulakh said. On October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India, naming its new country Khalistan. In the twenty years since then, India has continued its illegal occupation of Khalistan and stepped up the repression of the Sikhs while the Sikh Nation has continued to work to achieve its birthright.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did.

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians since 1948, over 89,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, Dalits, and others. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs ''worse than a genocide.''

Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, and then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated. He was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family.

The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him. Ghotna has never been brought to trial for the Jathedar Kaunke murder. No one has been brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra.

According to a report by the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners in India without charge or trial. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984! Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. We demand the immediate release of all these political prisoners.

''Only a sovereign, independent Khalistan will end the repression and lift the standard of living for the people of Punjab,'' said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. ''Democracies don't commit genocide. As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh','' Dr. Aulakh noted. ''We must continue to press for our God-given birthright of freedom,'' he said. ''Without political power, religions cannot flourish and nations perish.''

A TRIBUTE TO JEFFERSON AWARD WINNER RUSSELL EWELL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I wish to recognize the achievements of a very special man within my home district in California. Russell Ewell, who has recently been honored with a Jefferson Award, is much deserving of the accolade, which spotlights outstanding public service.

Mr. Ewell brought the community E-Soccer, a unique athletic outreach program affiliated with the Hope Technology School, where his wife is the Executive Director. The unqualified success of E-Soccer in bringing together typical and special needs children of all ages on a soccer field is a testament to Russ Ewell's visionary concept.

Children are encouraged and enabled to develop skills, confidence and self-esteem through the sport of soccer. They also make lasting friendships. This wonderful program serves over 250 children on Saturday mornings in communities throughout the Bay Area. It is free and benefits from an all-volunteer staff. Showcasing the growing scope of E-Soccer is the fact that a team of nine coaches from the program recently visited Nairobi, Kenya, to train volunteers there on how to establish their own E-Soccer activities. There are plans for further outreach projects in other countries.

Madam Speaker, Russell Ewell established the E-Soccer program in April 2000 specifically for children with special needs in Foster City. His inspiration came from his two sons with special needs. Their younger sister, Jadyn, is not a special needs child. Russ wanted Jonathan, who has Down Syndrome, and Jordan, who is autistic, to be able to interact with typical children, benefiting from the athletic coordination practiced in soccer. He also wanted families with special needs children to have an opportunity to enjoy an athletic experience that is both positive and uplifting. To that end, he worked with soccer coaches, special needs educators and physical therapists on developing a program like no

other; a sports program that doesn't isolate typical and special needs children, but integrates them seamlessly into group activities. Both communities benefit from the interaction. Russ has seen that success in his own children as well as the many families who have participated. What began with 5 children has grown into a blossoming effort with 250 young soccer players.

Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and appreciation that I bring Russell Ewell's E-Soccer program to the attention of my colleagues in the House of Representatives. He has created a shining example of how one man's idea can alter the lives of many for the better.

INTRODUCTION OF H. RES. 816 CONGRATULATING THE COLORADO ROCKIES ON WINNING THE NATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP AND PLAYING IN THE 2007 WORLD SERIES

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution congratulating the Colorado Rockies on their National League Championship and first-ever franchise appearance in the World Series. The Rockies defied the odds this year by making it to the World Series, capturing the best hopes of Coloradans and giving us all a reason to cheer for their success. Despite a tough loss to a great team in the Boston Red Sox, we remain proud of the Rockies' efforts and astonished at their meteoric rise to the top of the National League.

Toward the close of the season, the Rockies were the underdogs in the National League pennant race. The challenge of making the playoffs seemed as large and daunting as the mountain range for which the Rockies were named, but the team maintained an optimism and competitive spirit that kept them alive long after commentators had written them off. Winning 21 of their last 22 games prior to the World Series—an unprecedented feat in baseball history—the Rockies rolled over expectations and swept the Arizona Diamondbacks in the NLCS.

The World Series proved to be a bigger challenge than the Rockies could surmount, and they lost in four games to a very talented Red Sox team. Despite the losses, the Rockies carried themselves with dignity and true sportsmanship, giving Coloradans something to be proud of. As the father of two young athletes I can say that the way the Rockies carried themselves is a tremendous example for our young people. We would have loved to have seen the Rockies bring home a victory this year, but, as the Red Sox' Manny Ramirez said during the ALCS, there's always next year. I know I am not alone in looking forward to watching some great Rockies baseball in the future.

I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating the Colorado Rockies on a great season and in thanking them for serving as great examples of professional athletes practicing sportsmanship.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF MIKE BIONDI

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of my good friend, Mike Biondi, and I offer my deepest condolences to his family after his passing last night at the age of 50. Mike's sudden and tragic passing came as a great shock to me, as I had planned to see him early next week, and I hope that we can do as good of a job remembering Mike as he did living an outstanding life that had a positive impact on so many across the country.

Mike was a founding partner at Wasserstein Perella & Co., and rose to become chairman and CEO. I had the honor of working with Mike at Wasserstein, and I am privileged to have been able to call him a friend. Mike took me under his wing during my time at Wasserstein and became my mentor.

While working as an investment banker at Wasserstein Perella & Co., Mike helped establish Chicago-based Exelon Corporation, one of the Nation's largest electric utilities. Mike could literally take credit for helping to keep Chicagoans warm during our coldest winters.

Mike joined First Boston's mergers and acquisitions team after serving as an attorney at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom. He spent the past 4 years at Lazard LLC, where he served as cochairman of investment banking. No matter where he worked, Mike was held in high esteem and widely recognized for his intellectual acumen, wisdom and integrity.

Mike graduated from Dartmouth University where he played on the baseball team. He also received graduate degrees from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and Wharton business school. Mike continued to be active with the Dartmouth community and cochaired the Dartmouth College Fund Committee with his wife Cynthia.

No matter where he went—Dartmouth, Penn, Lazard, Wasserstein—Mike had a profound effect on people. He was not just my mentor or the mentor for others at his firms, but he was also a role model for the people whose lives he touched and a mentor to students both during his time on campus and as an alumnus.

Madam Speaker, Mike was a titan in his field, and a tremendous human being. He is survived by his wife Cynthia, his four sons, Michael Jr., James, William, and Cameron, and his two brothers, Frank and Robert. I extend my deepest condolences and gratitude to his family. We will all miss Mike, and I know that I will never forget the lessons he taught me both in business and in life.

DOING MORE THAN TALKING ABOUT PHYSICAL FITNESS

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, we are all well acquainted with the Mark Twain quote, ''Everyone talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it.'' I think the 21st century equivalent of Mr. Twain's words might be, ''Everyone talks about physical fitness but far too few do anything about it.''

There is strong evidence that increased physical fitness not only benefits the individual, but our society and our economy as well. Increased physical fitness not only reduces the risk of heart disease but it also reduces the risk of developing diabetes and can help control Type II Diabetes.

Additionally, physical fitness can help older adults build stronger bones and develop muscle; thereby lessening the severity of any fall. Physical fitness also increases worker productivity, contributes to lower workplace absenteeism and improves mental health. A physically fit society also lowers Federal spending to combat diseases like heart disease or hypertension that affect so many of our Medicaid patients.

The importance of physical activity as a benefit to all was recently highlighted by a new study on the economic burden of chronic disease, authored by the Milken Institute. Its findings are stark—the incidence and costs of chronic disease are rising rapidly. If nothing is done to increase the level of fitness in the Nation, the costs of treating the associated diseases will grow by 42 percent over the next decade.

According to the Milken Institute study, we need to move our health care system to one that provides incentives for prevention, wellness and focuses on achieving a healthy body weight. It is evident that an increased amount of physical fitness contributes materially to these goals. Furthermore, as Members of Congress, we should be looking at how to best effectively improve physical fitness.

One way is to remove any inequities under Federal law that prevents the promotion of physical fitness. Two inequities currently exist. First, gym memberships that employees provide for off-site facilities are taxable to the employee as a benefit while those in-house are not—a clear disincentive for both companies and individuals to work fitness into the work day. Second, flexible spending accounts can not be used for physical fitness equipment or activities. Thus, we have a situation where you can use a flexible spending account on medicines to treat illnesses such as diabetes but the funds can not be used to increase the opportunity to exercise, which often controls and sometimes can prevent disease.

In both cases, legislation is currently pending before the Ways and Means Committee to correct these inequities. I urge the members of the Committee and its leadership to consider them expeditiously and to disprove Mark Twain's reworked adage.

BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK, FOUNDER OF SIKHISM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, this month marks the 538th birthday of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion. As you may know, Guru Nanak was born in 1469 in what is now West Punjab. Every year, Sikhs from around the world gather in Nankana Sahib, where

Guru Nanak was born, to honor him. Let me take this opportunity to honor Guru Nanak also and to congratulate the Sikhs of the world on this important occasion.

Guru Nanak stood up to tyranny. He worked to liberate his people from the tyranny of the Moghul ruler Babar. Today, Sikhs suffer under oppression from Hindu rulers who have murdered over a quarter of a million of them and hold more than 52,000 as political prisoners. They also killed over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 90,000 Muslims in Kashmir, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and other minorities. This oppression is no more acceptable than the oppression of Guru Nanak's time.

Sikhs can honor Guru Nanak by standing up to India to secure their own freedom and helping the other minorities secure theirs too. Freedom is the longing of every human heart. God intends for everyone to be free.

We are the primary power in today's world, Madam Speaker. We can use our influence to support the cause of freedom in South Asia. By doing so, we can honor Guru Nanak and all those who have worked for freedom around the world.

The time has come to let India know that if it is going to proclaim itself a democracy, it must act like one. That means allowing everyone, including minorities, to exercise their most basic human rights. Freedom is the birthright of all people. If India will not do so, it should be placed back on the list of nations that do not respect religious freedom, as it was at one time, and the appropriate sanctions should be imposed. In addition, unless India is willing to live up to its democratic principles, we should stop our aid to India in all forms.

Acting like a democracy also means recognizing the right of self-determination. Self-determination is the essence of democracy. Where is the vote on the status of Kashmir that India promised a mere 59 years ago? Does it take 59 years to set up a free and fair vote? Khalistan, the Sikh homeland, declared itself independent 20 years ago. Where is the vote on its status? And what of the Nagas and all the people simply seeking the freedom to rule themselves? The United States carries a lot of weight in the world. If we are serious about spreading democracy, we should work to bring about self-determination for all the peoples and nations of the subcontinent. That would help all people shake off oppression and live in dignity and prosperity, and it is the right thing to do.

Madam Speaker, I would like to place the Council of Khalistan's open letter regarding the birthday of Guru Nanak into the RECORD.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE KHALSA PANTH ON THE PARKASH DEVAS OF GURU NANAK

DEAR KHALSA PANTH: As you know, this month marks the birthday (Parkash Devas) of the first Sikh Guru; Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh religion. Congratulations to the Sikh Nation on this momentous occasion.

This year marks the 538th anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak. He was born in 1469 and departed this world for his heavenly abode in 1539. Guru Nanak was the founder of the Sikh religion. (''Mary Sikha Jagat Witch Nanak Nirmal Panth Chalaya.'') On November 24 in Nankana Sahib, now in West Punjab, Sikhs from around the world will celebrate this occasion. Last year, over 10,000 showed up for the celebration. Crowds enthusiastically raised slogans of ''Khalistan Zindabad!'' The Sangat showed great devotion and reverence on this pious occasion.

Guru Nanak confronted Babar, the Moghul ruler of the time and called him a Jabbar (oppressor) and spoke out against the tyranny of the rulers of that time. He was even imprisoned by Babar, along with his followers. Today, Sikhs face similar oppression by the Hindu rulers of India.

Just as Guru Nanak spoke out against the Moghul tyrant Babar, we must work to free our Sikh brothers and sisters from the oppression of the Brahmins. It is incumbent on us to achieve freedom for Khalistan, as is our birthright. As former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Professor Darshan Singh has said, ''If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh.''

India has murdered over 250,000 of our Sikh brothers and sisters, as well as more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 90,000 Kashmiri Muslims, and tens of thousands of other minorities. More than 52,000 Sikhs (and tens of thousands of other minorities) are being held as political prisoners. In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government had paid over 41,000 cash bounties for killing Sikhs.

A MASR report quotes the Punjab Civil Magistracy as writing ''if we add up the figures of the last few years the number of innocent persons killed would run into lakhs [hundreds of thousands.]'' The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs ''worse than a genocide.'' Guru Nanak did not tolerate oppression; he struggled against it wherever it reared its ugly head. We must be good followers of Guru Nanak by doing the same today. India is also destroying Sikhs economically. The Indian government fixes the price for fertilizer very high and the price for produce very low so Sikh farmers can't even get the cost of production for their crops. This year it fixed the wheat price at Rs 750 per quintal. Even Badal demanded Rs 1000 per quintal. If Punjab farmers could sell their produce across the border in Pakistan and the Middle East, they could easily get close to Rs 1,500 per quintal and would be able to make a living.

India diverts Punajb's river water, its natural resource, to neighboring Haryana and Rajasthan without any compensation. India seeks to destroy the Sikh Nation religiously, economically, and politically. Guru Nanak would not permit them to do so. We must show the spirit of Guru Nanak and reclaim our sovereignty.

Guru Nanak travelled extensively, to the Middle East, where he visited Baghdad, and throughout India, along with his two companions, one Hindu, one Muslim. He spread his message of truthfulness, respect for the rights of individuals, earning an honest living, sharing with the needy, and praying to Almighty God. He was revered by Hindus and Muslims alike. When he left this world, his body was not found. The sheet covering his body was torn in two. The Hindus cremated it and the Muslims buried it, each according to their customs. Overcoming oppression in today's world will earn the Sikhs of today similar respect. We must not accept India's tyrannical rule over our homeland.

Guru Nanak is remembered as Baba Nanak Shah Faqir, Hindu Da Guru, Mussleman Da Pir. He preached the equality of the entire human race, including gender equality. To this day, these are cornerstones of the Sikh religion. But our Sikh brethren in Punjab, Khalistan do not get to experience equality. Instead, they are subjected to the worst kind of oppression by the Indian regime.

India is on the verge of disintegration. Kashmir is about to separate from India. As L.K. Advani said, ''If Kashmir goes, India goes.'' History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. Currently, there are 17 freedom movements within India's borders. It has 18 official languages. Montenegro, which has less than a million people, has become a sovereign country and a member of the United Nations. Now it is the time for the Sikh Nation of Punjab, Khalistan to become independent. The sooner the better.

Guru Nanak gave the Sikhs our identity. We can honor him by reclaiming the freedom that is our birthright: ''Raj Bina Na Dharam Chaley Hain, Dharam Bina Sab Dale Male Hain.'' (''Without political power, a religion cannot flourish and without religion, people are oppressed and persecuted.'') Let us stand up for the ideals of Guru Nanak and defend the integrity of the Sikh religion and the Sikh Nation.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH
President,
Council of Khalistan.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A MODELING AND SIMULATION GRANT PROGRAM AT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will establish a grant program at the U.S. Department of Education to encourage and enhance the study of Modeling and Simulation at institutions of higher education.

Modeling and Simulation has become an essential component in ensuring that we meet both the defense and domestic challenges of the 21st century. Modeling and Simulation technology allows us to easily and effectively sharpen the tools, procedures, and decisions needed to address difficult and complex problems.

Earlier this year, this body passed by voice vote House Resolution 487, introduced by my Virginia colleague Congressman RANDY FORBES of Virginia, which recognized Modeling and Simulation as a national critical technology.

This critical technology allows us to build and develop computer models of complex systems—whether a car, an airplane, an entire battlefield, or even a major city's evacuation plan—to see how certain actions will affect the end result. These simulations help us develop better and practical analogies of real world situations. Modeling and Simulation is a rapidly expanding field and we must ensure that the United States maintains its competitive edge in this field by expanding Modeling and Simulation programs at our institutions of higher education.

The bill that I am introducing today will ensure that this national critical technology is expanded at our Nation's colleges and universities. Specifically, the bill will establish a grant program for colleges and universities to enhance and improve already established Modeling and Simulation programs. Colleges and universities without Modeling and Simulation

programs can also use the grant to establish their own program. The bill will also create a task force at the Department of Education to support the development of the Modeling and Simulation field, including helping to further define the study and identify the best practices of Modeling and Simulation.

I am proud to represent the people and businesses of the Third Congressional District of Virginia who are leading the way in the Modeling and Simulation field. Numerous colleges and universities in the Hampton Roads area, such as Hampton University, Norfolk State University, and Old Dominion University, have Modeling and Simulation programs. Old Dominion University is one of the few universities that has both an undergraduate degree program and a graduate degree program in Modeling and Simulation. ODU's Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center in Suffolk, Virginia is a premier facility that is second to none.

The grant program established by this legislation will go a long way in helping universities that have Modeling and Simulation programs expand and enhance their programs, as well as helping universities without a Modeling and Simulation program establish their own program. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor and support this important legislation to ensure that the United States maintains its competitive advantage in the critical national technology field of Modeling and Simulation.

GERALDINE GENNET

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, I commend Geraldine Gennet for her outstanding service and dedication to the House of Representatives.

In her 11 years as General Counsel of the House, Geraldine set a standard for professionalism and non-partisanship that will inform the work of the new General Counsel and all future holders of that position.

She created an Office of General Counsel that is respected by all Members of the House and widely recognized for its excellence throughout the legal community. I wish Geraldine continued success and happiness in her new endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO RONALD AND JENNIFER MILNE

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ronald and Jennifer Milne, residents of Perry, Iowa, on recently becoming United States citizens.

Both Ronald and Jennifer are originally from Scotland. Ronald was naturalized on June 29, 2007, in Des Moines, while Jennifer was later naturalized on September 17, 2007 in West Branch, Iowa. The long journey to U.S. citizenship began in the late 1980's when their son was attending Dartmouth College and later married an American woman. Their daughter also came to America and eventually married an American. After Ronald and Jennifer made several trips to the United States to visit their children, they decided they wanted to be close to their family and move to America.

After years of filling out forms, interviews with the American Embassy, waiting for the processing of their papers, passing the American History test, and paying naturalization fees, Ronald and Jennifer's citizenship was finally granted.

The Milne's love for their family and for this country is extremely admirable, and I commend Ronald and Jennifer for all their hard work and commitment to becoming citizens of our country. I am extremely honored to represent the Milnes in the U.S. Congress and I know that I can speak for all of my colleagues here in officially welcoming them as American citizens. I wish Ronald, Jennifer and their family all the best as Americans and Iowans.

HONORING MARY BERGAN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary accomplishments of Ms. Mary Bergan, who has dutifully served and enriched the California Federation of Teachers and the labor movement for over 35 years. Her work has affected the lives of teachers and their students throughout the 9th Congressional District, and the great State of California.

Ms. Mary Bergan has been involved in community politics, volunteerism, and education for her entire adult life. After graduating from the prestigious University of California, Berkeley in 1965 with a B.A. in English, Mary promptly joined the Peace Corps. For 3 years Mary lived in Malaysia teaching English language and literature and coaching athletics. In this way, Mary has always been acutely aware of the importance of both healthy minds and bodies for her students. When Mary returned to the United States she became a teacher, and immediately started organizing for the California Federation of Teachers, CFT.

For more than three decades her passion and activism has rightly placed her in leadership positions throughout the State of California, both within her profession as an educator and within the greater Democratic Party. In 1976, while Jerry Brown was Governor of California, Ms. Bergan was chosen as a delegate to the Democratic National Conventions. Shortly after, in the 1980's, Mary was elected as the chair of the Labor Caucus of the California Democratic Party. She continued her role as a delegate at the Democratic National Conventions in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2004.

In 1991 Mary took her leadership skills, compassion, and dedicated experience to task. She was elected by her peers as president of the CFT. Only a year later, in 1992, Mary was elected vice president of the American Federation of Teachers, AFT, a national position of both great prestige and great responsibility. Not satisfied merely holding a title or position, Mary has participated in and continues to serve in numerous capacities within the AFT. She is a member of the Teachers Program and Policy Council, where she serves primarily on the council's working group on early childhood education. She is also a member of the organizing committee, the Task Force on Health Care Reform, and the State Federations Advisory Committee.

When she was elected president of the CFT Ms. Bergen pledged "to renew the organization's commitment to excellence in education, to reinforce its efforts to increase education funding and to raise the organization's profile in the media and public eye." This is exactly what Mary has done, and continues to do. She is an outspoken advocate of our children and the conditions of our teachers.

Mary has always been quick to respond to the political issues of the day which most affect education, and she continues to be famously truthful and clear in those responses. Mary does not play with words, she does not play games with her positions on issues, and she does not play with the futures of our children and teachers. Mary has long known that the better the conditions are for our teachers, the better our schools will be. Ultimately, taking care of our teachers affords our students the greatest opportunities for success in their own lives.

A true servant educator in every sense, Mary Bergan has immeasurably contributed to our community, our State, and our Nation. On behalf of California's 9th Congressional District, I thank and applaud Mary Bergan for the more than 35 years of unwavering service and inspiration.

RECOGNIZING NEWARK'S NORTH WARD CENTER'S ANNUAL GENO BARONI BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker. I rise today to recognize the annual celebration at the North Ward Center in Newark, New Jersey honoring the birthday of its inspiration, Monsignor Geno Baroni, on November 15, 2007. Msgr. Baroni—Geno to those of us who knew and loved him—was a most remarkable man, and though he passed from this life more than two decades ago, his memory and his mission remain strong.

Following riots at the end of the 1960s, Msgr. Baroni convinced Stephen Adubato, Sr. to leave the Newark public schools and organize the North Ward Educational and Cultural Center. In 1970, the center began providing information on services available to the residents of Newark's north ward, with a particular emphasis on higher education opportunities for students.

Built on the principles of community, opportunity, responsibility, and equity, the North Ward Center remains true to its mission "to provide educational, cultural, and meaningful social services to low and moderate income families who reside in the greater Newark community. The center plays a major role in helping families overcome barriers to self-sufficiency, works to improve the health and well-being of those families, and helps revitalize their community, thereby improving the quality of life for all residents."

Over the decades, the North Ward Center expanded to include the Newark Business Training Institute, the North Ward Child Development Center, the Robert Treat Academy, and Casa Israel, a state-of-the-art wellness and medical center. The initiatives and services of these five institutions are widely recognized as among the finest, and the center has received many accolades over the years. Yet, true to the standards of its heart—Geno Baroni—the center has never wavered from its mission and founding principles, and it continues to celebrate the diversity of its people. The North Ward Center hosts ''the society of Italians who celebrate St. Patrick's Day'' with prominent Italian-Americans honoring Irish-Americans, an annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. remembrance, and a Puerto Rican scholarship dinner recognizing four outstanding north ward students.

Geno Baroni was a many-faceted man, a gifted and passionate leader, a builder, a doer, and thoroughly committed to Christ's message of social justice. The North Ward Center reflects this charismatic man and his life's work. Msgr. Geno Baroni's impression on the lives of those of us privileged to know him and those whose lives he touched through his work is indeed profound. As the North Ward Center honors this extraordinary man by celebrating his birthday, the final words in the Shaker hymn Lord of the Dance seem most fitting: ''. . . they buried my body and they thought I'd gone, but I am the dance and the dance goes on.''

TRIBUTE TO THE SUN DIAL CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sun Dial Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on their 100th anniversary. The chapter has been organized in Ames, IA since October 7, 1907.

The Sun Dial Chapter is named in honor of one of the original members, Hattie Willey, who had a sun dial that belonged to a family ancestor who was a pastor of the Plymouth Colony. A duplicate of that original sun dial was marked in 1914 and is displayed in the Ames Cemetery.

Ada Hayden, one of the most notable members of the Sun Dial Chapter, received her doctorate from Iowa State University in 1918 and was the first woman to do so. Many founders of the chapter left a boundless impression on the community and the state of Iowa. These distinguished names include Adams, Agg, Knapp, Kellogg, Marston, Stanton, Tilden and Willey.

The early goals of the organization remain the same today. They include promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism. During the years of war and depression, Sun Dial collected money, clothing and other necessary items to give to the poor and send to the soldiers serving abroad. Today the chapter contributes to National Daughters of the American Revolution projects and gives an award annually to an outstanding ROTC student at Iowa State University.

Again, I congratulate the Sun Dial Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on this historic anniversary. It is an honor to represent this historic chapter and her members in Congress, and I wish them an equally storied future.

HONORING JOYCE M. TAYLOR

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary accomplishments of Ms. Joyce M. Taylor. As she retires from an illustrious and dedicated career in the communications industry, we have the opportunity to reflect on her achievements and thank her for her years of service.

Joyce was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She graduated from the University of Oklahoma at Norman with a bachelor's degree in journalism. From this early beginning, Joyce began her long career, traveling and working throughout the Nation, assuming leadership positions in some of our most influential communications companies.

Ms. Taylor first served as the public relations manager in Oklahoma City for Southwestern Bell Telephone. After that, she held a number of communications positions, which included assuming responsibilities in advertising, employee information, news relations, public policy development and federal relations. Her capacities have taken her from Oklahoma City to St. Louis to Washington, D.C. Finally, she came to California, during an important merger between SBC and Pacific Telesis.

At the time of the merger, Ms. Taylor was serving as the executive director of external affairs for SBC Communications, Inc. Her work during this delicate moment in the communications industry directly helped earn the support from many Bay Area community and consumer organizations for the merger. This resulted in Ms. Taylor's appointment as AT&T's Senior Vice President for External Affairs-Northern California.

During all of this time, and throughout her professional endeavors, Joyce has always contributed to her community. Joyce has used her extraordinary talents to contribute to a number of worthy causes. From the arts to education, from industry to our neighborhoods, Joyce has always given back. It is our great fortune that the 9th Congressional District and the greater Northern California Area became her community as she grew in her capacities at AT&T.

In April 1997, Joyce Taylor was appointed to oversee regulatory, legislative, governmental and external affairs activities for AT&T in Northern California. Continuing her natural enthusiasm and belief in charity and the growth of communities, Joyce has become integrally involved in many boards and organizations in the Greater Bay Area.

Joyce serves on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Council, the Bay Area Economic Forum, First Tee of San Jose, the San Francisco School Alliance Foundation, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, the Tech Museum of Innovation, United Way of the Bay Area, and Women's Forum West. In addition, Ms. Taylor is a member of the Northwestern Regional Board of Operation Hope.

Dedicated to the arts and education, Ms. Taylor also serves on the Board of Trustees of the San Francisco Ballet and as a member of the Executive Campaign Advisory Board of the United Negro College Fund.

It certainly is not difficult to see how this remarkable woman has become such an invaluable part of our community.

On behalf of California's 9th Congressional District, I would like to thank and applaud our beloved Joyce M. Taylor on the occasion of her retirement. I am sure that her contributions to our community, and the value that she brings to the young leaders following in her example, are only just beginning.

HONORING ROBERT E. BONNELL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robert E. Bonnell of Toledo, Ohio. Toledo has been called a community of families. Bob Bonnell, an esteemed citizen of that community, seemed to have been born to create and embody ''Fireman Freddie, a friendly, caring, and wise man, who assumed a larger meaning as a loving father for all our community's children. Bob's vocation as a teacher and firefighter saved countless lives as children learned how to save themselves and the lives of their loved ones. They learned new lessons from a Santalike man who cared for them as he would his own children.

Robert E. Bonnell remains a legend in the Toledo Community for his dedication to his community as a firefighter and to the education of the youth of Toledo about the value of safety. Mr. Bonnell became the department's first ''Fireman Freddy'' in 1973. It happened soon after the idea of a fire safety program—and the birth of Fireman Freddy—originated in 1972 when Mr. Bonnell was a ladder truck driver at Station 6 at Starr and Euclid avenues, where he seemed to have a special rapport with school groups who came to tour the firehouse. He was asked to start the educational program and thought it would be a six-month assignment. But Mr. Bonnell hadn't stopped his two-schools-a-day, five-day-a-week visits since January 1973, he told The Blade in an interview in December 1980, just before he retired.

''To tell you the truth,'' Mr. Bonnell said in a 1974 Toledo Blade article, ''children understand more than you think they do. I never have to talk down to them. I just talk to them in the same way that I talk to adults. For some reason, it works.'' By the time he retired, Mr. Bonnell talked to more than 125,000 elementary students in Toledo public and Catholic schools and the Washington Local school district about fire prevention and fire safety.

Robert E. Bonnell at age 80, passed away Monday, October 29, 2007 in St. Charles Mercy Hospital of congestive heart failure. He will be fondly remembered by the residents who recall being taught by the fireman about fire safety when they were in the fourth and sixth grades.

Mr. Bonnell joined the Toledo Fire Department in 1956 and then served for 25 years, most of them as the department's ''Fireman Freddie'' until his retirement in 1981. During

his early retirement he worked as a funeral attendant for the Eggleston Meinert Pavley Funeral Home in Oregon. ''He was a good old country boy, and he liked kids,'' retired Toledo Deputy Fire Chief Robert Schwanzl said. ''He was a storyteller and he had a special knack for telling stories and talking to children. And he was very dependable.''

Born in Weston, West Virginia, on February 22, 1927, to Onal and Genevieve (Beamer) Bonnell, Mr. Bonnell, graduated from Lewis County High School in 1945, when he enlisted in the Army. During the last months of World War II, he was a staff sergeant in Germany. After his honorable discharge in 1947, he returned to West Virginia and later that year married his high school sweetheart, JoAnne Teter. A short time later, the couple settled in Toledo.

In his free time, Mr. Bonnell, who in retirement lived in Northwood and most recently in Walbridge, enjoyed collecting cuff links, of which he had 4,000, and marbles, of which he had more than 50,000. He also liked visiting garage sales, hunting, and fishing. He loved spending time with his family and being ''Pudding Papa'' to his great-grandson.

''Dad had a zest for life,'' his son, Gregory, said ''He loved people, loved his family, and he loved to have a good time. [And] he was a hard worker and a dedicated individual.'' Mr. Bonnell was a funeral attendant for the Eggleston Meinert Pavley Funeral Home in Oregon during his early retirement years.

His memberships included the Arthur Daly American Legion Post, the National Rifle Association, Paragon Lotus Lodge F&AM, Zenobia Shrine (Stewards, Hillbillies and Wood County) VFW Post #2510 and 40–8 Society of the American Legion, and the Scottish Rite, all in Toledo. In 1988, he received the Meritorious Service Award from the Scottish Rite where he had life membership.

Surviving are his loving wife, JoAnne, with whom he just celebrated 60 years of marriage (June 28, 1947); children, Gregory (Mary) Bonnell and Beverly (Kevin) Sawyer; grandchildren, Angie and Brianne Sawyer, Rob, Mike, Adam and Brian Bonnell and great-grandchildren, Kleiston and Ria. Bob was preceded in death by his parents, his two brothers and a sister.

He will be missed by the Sisters of Notre Dame especially Sister Mary Theresa. He will be sorely missed and fondly remembered by all the lives he touched in our Toledo community. The world was made a better place by the life of Bob Bonnell. May his works inspire others who follow in his golden steps.

TRIBUTE TO VAN HARDEN AND BONNIE LUCAS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Van Harden and Bonnie Lucas of the ''Van and Bonnie in the Morning'' radio show. Van and Bonnie are Iowa radio icons and winners of multiple Marconi Awards, including the 2007 ''Personality of the Year'' among medium-sized market radio stations.

Van Harden was raised in Adel, Iowa, where he developed a deep love for small Iowa communities and dreamt of being on the radio when he grew up. His dream became a reality after graduating from Drake University in 1973, where he majored in broadcast journalism and got his first on-air job with KDLS–AM in Perry, Iowa. After jobs in Tulsa, Oklahoma at KWEN–FM and KRNT–AM in Des Moines, he became the host of the morning program at 1040 WHO–AM in Des Moines in 1986.

Van's current co-host, Bonnie Lucas of Monroe, Iowa, has been with the WHO morning program for 13 years. Bonnie's first job in radio began in 1979 at KRNT, where she was a former co-worker of Van's. In the seven and a half years Bonnie spent at KRNT, she worked in the traffic department, served as secretary to the General Manager, worked as the Assistant Sales Manager and finally went into sales for KRNT. After Bonnie started her own small fitness center business and worked for a communications company, she tried out for Van's co-host position in August 1994 and has been with the program ever since.

Van and Bonnie are up every morning by 3:30 a.m. and on the air at 4:59 a.m. Their creativity, family-friendly humor and enthusiasm have made WHO's morning show the most listened to in the state. They do a phenomenal job at connecting with Iowans and starting their day off with a smile.

Van and Bonnie provide a valuable service to the state of Iowa, and I am honored to recognize this most recent accomplishment. I wish Van, Bonnie and all of their coworkers at WHO the best of luck and continued success.

HONORING JOE MORGAN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the legendary Joe Morgan as the Board of Directors of Alameda County Youth Development, Inc. (ACYD) come together in the 9th Congressional District to pay tribute to Mr. Morgan and celebrate his impressive legacy.

Many are aware of Joe Morgan's incredible athletic accomplishments. His life has served as an inspiration to our youth, especially in communities of color, where Mr. Morgan's example has served as a symbol of the power of perseverance in overcoming obstacles and living up to one's great potential.

Even though Mr. Morgan has made significant contributions to our world in his capacities as a role model through sports, his contributions to our community as a steward of our youth programs and charitable causes has created an equally positive impact on thousands of people. Mr. Morgan has been one of the most generous and committed supporters of youth programs in Oakland, California for over four decades.

Joe Morgan was born in Bonham, Texas in 1944. At the age of 10, he moved to Oakland with his family, and has called the East Bay his home ever since. Mr. Morgan is a true product and member of the Oakland family. He attended Brookfield Elementary, Elmhurst Junior High, and graduated with recognition for his academic and athletic prowess from Oakland's Castlemont High School in 1961. Mr. Morgan went on to receive an Associate's Degree from Merritt College in 1963.

After graduating from Merritt College, Joe Morgan quickly rose to prominence as he launched one of the greatest careers in Major League Baseball. In 1963, Mr. Morgan signed his first professional contract with the Houston Colt 45's. A year later, he emerged as a key member of the Houston Astros, eventually going on to be named the National League Rookie of the Year in 1965. He remained with the Astros until 1972, when he was traded to the Cincinnati Reds, one of the all-time great teams that was given the moniker ''The Big Red Machine'' after the franchise strung together a series of World Series Championships during the 1970s, an accomplishment that continues to be recognized as one of the great achievements in American sports history.

After completing a successful career in professional baseball that eventually led to Mr. Morgan being inducted in the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame, he returned to school. This act of personal determination exemplified his unwavering dedication to education and personal growth. Mr. Morgan received a B.S. in Physical Education from California State University, Hayward, just as he had promised his mother he would do many years ago.

These tremendous accomplishments, however, were just one aspect of Mr. Morgan's capacities as an extraordinary person. Fame and fortune were not satisfying for Mr. Morgan if he was not able to use his experience and energy to give back to his community. Mr. Morgan has always displayed incredible dedication to his family, an unwavering love for children, and a personal concern with those around him and his community. Mr. Morgan continues to actively support the Young America Baseball Program and the Oakland Unified School District Sports Program, doing what he can to ensure that those institutions have the resources necessary to serve the youth of our community.

Harnessing so much compassion for his community, Mr. Morgan was compelled to create the Joe Morgan Youth Foundation. His Foundation provides many much needed services for our youth, including scholarships, financial support programs, and innovative community initiatives.

This year, in recognition of his extraordinary life, accomplishments, and dedication to our community, ACYD has presented Mr. Morgan with its first George P. Scotlan Outstanding Citizen Award. Mr. Morgan is certainly one of Oakland's most outstanding citizens, and an excellent choice for such a prestigious honor.

On behalf of the residents of California's 9th Congressional District, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Morgan as he receives due recognition for his contributions. The community of Oakland, especially those impassioned about the well being and future of our youth, salute Joe Morgan today, and we look forward to witnessing his lasting and positive impact on the lives of our children.

RECOGNIZING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRMINGHAM AREA SENIORS COORDINATING COUNCIL

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the Birmingham Area Seniors Coordinating Council as they celebrate their 30th Anniversary today.

The Birmingham Area Seniors Coordinating Council was formed in 1978 to improve the coordination of senior citizen programs and services, and to provide a central source of information and referral in the Birmingham Public Schools community.

Today, the Council has nearly 1,700 members who value independence, lifelong learning, and community involvement. Not only do Council members enjoy the benefits of an active senior center program, but they are also volunteers who deliver services to their aging neighbors. These services are vital to enabling seniors to remain in their own homes, and to live with independence and dignity. Each year, more than 500 senior volunteers provide outreach service to other older adults in the community, evidencing their motto of ''Seniors Serving Seniors.''

The Council offers a variety of educational classes, recreational programs, social activities, and travel opportunities to help older adults stay healthy and happy. In addition, the Council's many outreach services to the elderly are accomplished with a small staff and hundreds of senior volunteers in partnership with many local and state agencies and organizations.

The generosity of the Birmingham Public Schools, the City of Birmingham, the Villages of Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, and Franklin, local service clubs, agencies, foundations, churches, businesses and hundreds of caring individuals to fund this unique delivery of services that have been the staple of the Council for the past 30 years.

Madam Speaker, today I commend the Birmingham Area Seniors Coordinating Council. I am proud to recognize the achievements and service of the Council over the past 30 years, and wish them even more success over the next 30 years.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD DECLARE LUNG CANCER A PUBLIC HEALTH PRIORITY

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK A. LoBIONDO

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 335, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to lung cancer as a public health priority and the recommendations of the Lung Cancer Progress Review Group of the National Cancer Institute. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rep. LOIS CAPPS for introducing this important resolution and for her continued efforts on behalf of those affected by lung cancer.

As many of us know all too well, lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women in the United States. While overall advancements in cancer research, treatment, and detection in recent years provide great hope, there is still much to do, especially in the field of lung cancer. The 5–year survival rates have risen significantly for breast, prostate, and colon cancer, but unfortunately, the gains for lung cancer remain modest at best.

For my family and me, these statistics are all too real. In April 2006, my father-in-law, Joseph L. Ercole, was diagnosed with non-small cell adenoma carcinoma stage III–b and 9 months later, on February 11, 2007, he died from lung cancer. While his story is not unique, it brought to my attention the need to shine a spotlight on this disease. Clearly, a coordinated and comprehensive research effort, like those used to tackle other cancers, is needed to achieve significant increases in lung cancer survivability rates and prevent other families from suffering the same loss.

H. Res. 335, like S. Res. 87 passed by the Senate in August, clearly states our goals—to have lung cancer declared a public health priority and to reduce the lung cancer mortality rate by 50 percent by 2015—and a pathway to achieve it. Working together these goals can become reality.

I urge my colleagues in the House to join us in this fight and pass H. Res. 335

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3996, TEMPORARY TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MELVIN L. WATT

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3996, which will address one of the most unfair provisions in the tax code that imposes an alternative minimum tax on so many of my constituents to whom it was never intended to apply. To some of my constituents, including the retired couple that lives across the street from me, this is among the most critical issues they face.

There is one specific tax provision being extended in this bill that I want to address specifically, the extension of the New Markets Tax Credit, NMTC, program. This tax program is critical to the revitalization of struggling communities and census tracts in our country that are in critical need of help.

There is one critical problem with the NMTC program that needs to be addressed. The Financial Services Committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, which I chair, held a hearing on October 30 entitled ''Preserving and Expanding Minority Banks,'' to review unique challenges facing minority- and women-owned financial institutions. A real concern revealed at this hearing was that minority-owned financial institutions have not been receiving allocations of credits under the NMTC program. Over the life of the program, only six minority banks have received allocations under the NMTC program and in the last round of allocations, of 61 recipients, only one minority bank was awarded new markets tax credits. This represented just $120 million of a total of $3.9 billion in tax credits awarded.

I believe that facilitating greater access to the NMTC program for minority and women-owned financial institutions will improve the program and help ensure the revitalization of low-income urban and rural areas. I appreciate the agreement of Chairman RANGEL and Subcommittee Chairman NEAL to work with me, and perhaps to have a joint hearing with our Financial Services Subcommittee, to explore effective ways to increase participation in the NMTC program for minority- and women-owned financial institutions.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD DIABETES DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 211, commemorating World Diabetes Day on November 14, 2007.

The search for a cure for diabetes is a cause close to my heart. Both my parents were afflicted with the disease, which now strikes 246 million people worldwide. Without early screening, prevention and awareness, this number is expected to rise to 380 million by 2025. In the United States, diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death. Across the world, diabetes is the fourth leading cause of death, with 80 percent of diabetes cases now being found in the developing world. The case for diabetes awareness is so compelling that President Bush recently declared November 2007 to be National Diabetes Month. I would like to add his recent remarks on the subject to the RECORD.

It is clear that action must be taken to slow the pace of what can only be described as an epidemic of diabetes. This year, the theme of the World Diabetes Day Campaign focuses on raising awareness of diabetes in children and adolescents. More than 200 children get diabetes every day, making it one of those most chronic diseases of childhood. Additionally, this demographic faces unique challenges when diagnosed with diabetes, as the disease can interfere with the normal developmental tasks of childhood and adolescence, which include succeeding in school and transitioning to adulthood. Through raising awareness, the World Diabetes Day Campaign focuses on improving early screening to catch early incidences of diabetes in children and promoting healthy lifestyles to prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

I am proud to lend my support to H. Con. Res. 211. Together we can limit the incidence of this debilitating disease by spreading the message of awareness, treatment and prevention. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH, 2007—A PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Diabetes is a debilitating disease that affects millions of Americans of all ages and all walks of life. National Diabetes Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about risk factors, prevention, and treatment of this serious disease.

Diabetes is a chronic illness that leaves the body unable to produce or properly use insulin to maintain healthy blood glucose levels. The two most common forms of the disease that affect our citizens are Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes, once known as juvenile diabetes, is usually diagnosed in children and young adults who are unable to produce insulin and require daily medication. Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease, is often attributed to lifestyle risk factors and can be controlled by a modified diet, regular physical activity, and medication. Americans can take steps to control the disease and lower the risk of complications such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease by maintaining healthy eating and exercise habits, and consulting with a doctor about diabetes testing.

My Administration is committed to providing better care for people living with diabetes and furthering efforts to find a cure. We have supported research initiatives and education programs that encourage healthy living, and we have also modified Medicare coverage to include diabetes screenings. This year, the National Institutes of Health estimates that more than $1 billion will be spent on diabetes research. By working together, we can help identify problems early, manage them before they grow worse, and help ensure more Americans live longer, healthier lives.

Throughout National Diabetes Month, we recognize the medical professionals, scientists, researchers, and all those whose efforts have made a positive difference in the fight against diabetes. By raising public awareness, we can help combat the effects of diabetes in our society and bring hope to children and families living with this disease.

Now, therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2007 as National Diabetes Month. I call upon all Americans to learn more about the risk factors and symptoms associated with diabetes and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 760, which recognizes October as Children's Health Month and supports the goals and ideals of this annual designation.

I was proud to introduce this resolution with Representative KATHY CASTOR. As cochairmen of the Congressional Children's Health Care Caucus, we are committed to building bipartisan support for efforts to facilitate access to care for the uninsured, seek cures for debilitating diseases and chronic conditions, and promote preventive health and wellness measures for America's children.

This resolution recognizes the importance of raising awareness of children's health needs and commends the health care professionals who provide for them. It also reaffirms our Nation's commitment to improving children's health and encourages State officials, nonprofit organizations and businesses to join the House in supporting these objectives.

I am grateful for the enthusiastic backing this resolution enjoys from more than 100 Members spanning both sides of the aisle, and I urge all of my colleagues to support its passage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, yesterday I was on an official leave of absence for a medical appointment. Had I been present and voting, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 1082, H.R. 3315, which I cosponsored, to provide that the great hall of the Capitol Visitor Center be known as Emancipation Hall; "yea" on rollcall No. 1083, H.R. 1593, which I cosponsored, the Second Chance Act; "yea" on rollcall No. 1084, H.R. 3403, the 911 Modernization and Public Safety Act, and "yea" on rollcall No. 1085, H.R. 3461, Safeguarding America's Families by Enhancing and Reorganizing New and Efficient Technologies Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Speaker, I regrettably missed Rollcall vote No. 1085 (H.R. 3461) and Rollcall vote No. 1084 (H.R. 3403). Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 1085: "yes," Rollcall No. 1084: "yes."

DANDY-WALKER SYNDROME AND HYDROCEPHALUS

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 163, expressing the sense of the Congress in support of further research and activities to increase public awareness, professional education, diagnosis, and treatment of Dandy-Walker Syndrome and hydrocephalus.

In 2005 while awaiting the birth of their first child Ryan, Andrea and Eric Cole of Kensington, Maryland learned that he would be born with a rare birth defect called Dandy-Walker Syndrome and a condition called hydrocephalus. Ryan was born on May 3, 2005, 3 months premature and weighing 1 pound 15 ounces, at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, D.C. He would spend a total of 156 days in the hospital during his first year of life.

Today, the Cole family leads the fight against Dandy-Walker Syndrome and is the inspiration behind my efforts against this terrible birth defect. On learning that no national organization existed to advocate on behalf of individuals with Dandy-Walker Syndrome, Eric and Andrea took the necessary steps to found the only national non-profit organization for Dandy-Walker Syndrome, and located it in Maryland's Eighth Congressional District, which I represent. Today, the Dandy-Walker Alliance remains the only non-profit organization committed to educational and informational activities, programs and publications and supporting non-partisan research and events to increase public awareness of Dandy-Walker Syndrome. The Dandy-Walker Alliance supports all efforts to determine the cause(s) of, to find the cure for and to ameliorate the effects of Dandy-Walker Syndrome.

Dandy-Walker Syndrome is a congenital malformation of the cerebellum that can cause developmental delay, is frequently associated with hydrocephalus that can lead to an enlarged head circumference, and can cause neurological damage possibly leading to death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that Dandy-Walker Syndrome may affect as many as 1 in 5,000 live born infants of which approximately 70 to 90 percent will develop hydrocephalus. Treatment for individuals with Dandy-Walker generally consists of treating the associated problems rather than the syndrome itself. Hydrocephalus is treated today the same way that it was in 1952, by inserting a shunt into the brain to drain off excess fluid.

In addition to what the Coles are doing with the Dandy-Walker Alliance, a filmmaker from Colorado with a nephew affected by Dandy-Walker is completing the first-ever documentary on Dandy-Walker Syndrome called "Dandy Kids," which will premiere in January 2008. A couple in Florida was also inspired to film a commercial with their three-year-old son affected by Dandy-Walker and hydrocephalus to help promote the need for blood donations since the brain surgeries to treat his hydrocephalus often require transfusions.

Dandy-Walker Syndrome involves many complex issues. That is why the Director of the National Institutes of Health should continue the current collaboration, with respect to Dandy-Walker Syndrome, among the National Human Genome Research Institute, the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke and the Office of Rare Diseases.

Further research into the epidemiology, diagnosis, pathophysiology, disease burden, and improved treatment of Dandy-Walker Syndrome should be conducted and supported. The National Institutes of Health should take the lead in sponsoring an annual workshop to increase awareness and set national research priorities for Dandy-Walker Syndrome and hydrocephalus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should also form a coordinating committee for Dandy-Walker Syndrome and hydrocephalus research, which would annually report to the public its findings on the progress in the epidemiology, pathophysiology, disease burden, treatment improvements, diagnoses, and awareness for Dandy-Walker Syndrome and hydrocephalus.

Finally, public awareness and professional education regarding Dandy-Walker research

should increase through partnerships between the Federal Government and patient advocacy organizations, such as the Dandy-Walker Alliance and the Hydrocephalus Association.

Madam Speaker, let's tell families like the Coles that they are not alone in their fight against Dandy-Walker Syndrome. Certainly we can lend a hand in helping to further raise awareness of Dandy-Walker Syndrome and to act on behalf of disabled members in society who cannot advocate for themselves. I think we all agree that partnerships between the Federal Government and advocacy groups are important to the American people. That is why I urge my colleagues from both parties to join me in co-sponsoring House Concurrent Resolution 163 to raise awareness for Dandy-Walker Syndrome and hydrocephalus.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, yesterday I missed Rollcall vote No. 1082, on passage of H.R. 3315. I strongly support this legislation, which would provide that the great hall of the new Capitol Visitor Center shall be known as Emancipation Hall, and I would have voted "yes" on passage had I been present.

VETERANS DAY PRAYER

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, as grateful Americans provide deserved tributes for our courageous veterans, I have fortunately been provided a profound poem from Clinton B. Campbell of Beaufort, South Carolina.

[From the Journal of New Jersey Poets]

MY VETERANS DAY PRAYER

(By Clinton B. Campbell)

Lord, when the pull of my bed lures me to stay another hour,
please remind me of taps being played for the fallen,
of the tears that reach my cheek after each name is read,
the ones I knew personally and the ones old-timers talk about in awe.
After the crowd stumbles through the Pledge of Allegiance
I want to be there and listen with all my heart
while the winner of this year's essay contest quiets the crowd
reminding us of why we are paying our respects.
When the closing prayer is read I want to look around in honor at my fellow vets,
the men and the women in their timeworn uniforms.
Let me see them as they were, splendidly marching forward
with the courage that allows us to have a choice of whether we come here today or not.

DIRECTING PROVISION OF GRANTS FOR INTERNET CRIME PREVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4134, the Internet Crime Prevention Education Program Act.

In recent years, the Internet has grown to be a thriving educational resource. Adults and children alike have become dependent upon the Internet to provide an abundance of information at their fingertips. However, this wonderful educational resource may also expose young people to new dangers, such as the 750,000 online predators children may encounter every time they surf the web. In fact, one in five children received an online sexual solicitation last year alone.

The prevalence of online predators is a frightening reality and it is clear to me that something must be done. For this reason, it is essential that we provide our schools and law enforcement agents with the necessary tools to teach children how to protect themselves from these Internet dangers.

The bill before us today provides grants for Internet crime prevention education and takes us one step closer to making the Internet a safer place for kids. It is important that we support programs like i-SAFE, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting youth online through developing the resources to teach internet safety. The competitive grant program created by H.R. 4134 will provide funds to organizations dedicated to Internet crime prevention education. Through education and awareness, we can ensure a more hospitable web environment, so that children may be free to utilize the benefits of the Internet without being exposed to its dangers.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to support the legislation before us and I call on this body to vote in favor of Internet crime prevention.

IN TRIBUTE TO HAROLD SAMUEL NELSON

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, every Member of the House of Representatives has a cherished friend and mentor back home. That dear friend is what keeps a member grounded to the realities of his or her district which can sometimes become obscure in the heat of legislative debate. With the passing of that friend, a huge void is created which often cannot be filled.

Harold Samuel Nelson was born on June 18, 1918, and left this mortal world on May 29, 2006. It has now been more than a year that I, and many others, no longer have the benefit of his wisdom and advice. I now rise to honor him and how he lived his life.

Throughout his long life, Mr. Nelson engaged in a number of different professions: farmer, philanthropist, and attorney. In 1952, he married Helen Ridgway, and they made their lives on a dairy farm in New Braunfels where they raised their daughters, JoMerre and Elizabeth. On September 19, 2001, Elizabeth blessed the Nelson family with their first grandson, Samuel Wilder Nelson who will carry forward the proud tradition of the Nelson name.

After his experiences with other dairy organizations, Mr. Nelson formed Associated Milk Producers Inc., AMPI, so that dairy farmers could market milk and dairy products. Under his management, AMPI grew to encompass the better part of our Nation with over 40,000 members. He persuaded small dairy farmers to work together and thereafter, he was referred to as the "grandfather of the dairy industry." He saw that organizing would strengthen each dairy farmer individually.

In the late 1960s, Mr. Nelson convinced livestock farmers to cooperate to eradicate the screwworm, a dreaded livestock parasite. He helped organize and elicit funds to implement a novel strategy. Sterilized screwworm flies would be released at a rate of 150 million per week until they ceased to exist. His efforts resulted in a never before seen level of coordination among dairy farmers throughout the Americas to end the blight of the screwworm.

Later in his life, Mr. Nelson set his energies and talents to honoring his mother's commitment to education. He established the Clara Freshour Nelson Foundation so that students, hundreds by now, could afford tuition for a fine arts education.

I had the privilege of giving words of remembrance at Mr. Nelson's service. It was a sad day for everyone gathered in the church who had to confront our sorrow in missing his physical presence, love, support and wise counsel.

While acknowledging that no one had any control over Mr. Nelson leaving our physical presence, we had complete control of keeping him spiritually alive within us by living the "life lessons" he had taught us.

Mr. Nelson taught through example. He was generous to a fault. Not merely financially generous, but generous with his time, energy and empathy. Simply put, if it was important to you, it was important to him. He was forthright and made no excuses for who he was and what he believed in. He "told it like it was" and could size up a person or business transaction with clarity and precision.

His greatest love was love of family; as a loving son, caring brother, devoted father and doting grandfather. Yet he was known to share his love with his "extended family", from dear friends Paul Alagia and Jose "Pepe" Gonzalez to name a couple, to those devoted caretakers that were near him as his days grew shorter: Alice, Ada, Brenda, Quolonda, Beverly, Rhonda and Emily.

He was the consummate gentleman; he tipped his hat, stood when a lady walked into a room; simple gestures of something greater which was a genuine respect. He was a voracious reader, loved poetry and he could play the piano and violin. He encouraged and supported students in the study and appreciation of music.

Imbued with a powerful social conscience, he was a "yellow dog Democrat" who firmly declared that "you had to be a Democrat to believe in the Beatitudes".

Mr. Nelson was part of what is referred today as "the Greatest Generation". Tom

Brokaw in his book was describing Harold S. Nelson when he wrote: ''The World War II generation did what was expected of them. But they never talked about it. It was part of their code.''

The character of Mr. Nelson was formed on the anvil of adversity. His innate sense of justice and fairness made him ''a man ahead of his time.'' Yet, I believe he shared the same philosophy expressed by the late and former Congressman Carl Elliott who upon receiving the JFK Profile in Courage Award for fighting segregation at great personal cost said: ''There are those who said I was ahead of my time, but they were wrong. I believe that I was always behind the times that ought to be.''

Harold S. Nelson taught us about fundamental values and behavior: that your word was your bond, your handshake was a contract, you conducted business ''standing and facing''. As Paul Alagia said ''Harold never ran out on a friend.'' Again, just like Congressman Carl Elliott, Mr. Nelson ''never swapped an old friend for a new one''. With the advent of computers and all the new technological gadgets designed to help us get through an ever increasingly complex world, Mr. Nelson's approach was ''Give me a Big Chief tablet and a pencil.''

An observer of modern American life recently lamented: ''We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life, not life to years.''

May Mr. Nelson's greatest ''life lesson to us spare us this dilemma. So when the world overwhelms us, the pace too hectic, let us heed Mr. Nelson's advice ''give me a Big Chief tablet and a pencil''. Let us return to the basic goodness of life: honesty, integrity and compassion.

Harold Samuel Nelson (known and loved as Daddy, Grandpa, Harold and Mr. Nelson) would have even helped us grieve. He would have told us not to be sad, then cry with us; he would have told us to march on, then he would have taken the first step, and lastly, knowing his love for poetry, he would have read ''When I Must Leave You'' by Helen S. Rice:

When I must leave you
For a Little while
Please do not grieve
And shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you
Through the years,
But start out bravely
With a gallant smile; And for my sake
And in my name
Live on and do
All things the same,
Feed not your loneliness
On empty days,
But fill each waking hour
In useful ways,
Reach out your hand
In comfort and in cheer
And I will comfort you
And hold you near; And never, never
Be afraid to die,
For I am waiting for you in the sky.

Harold Samuel Nelson lives on in our hearts and souls.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably detained yesterday attending a funeral. I missed rollcall vote Nos. 1082 through 1085. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on all four votes.

REMEMBERING UKRAINE'S HISTORY

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to record painful events in Ukraine's past. Throughout Ukraine's more than millennium-long history, it has often been attacked and occupied due to its geo-political location, fertile lands and rich natural resources. Because the Ukrainian nation continuously fought to ward off the enemies and preserve its freedom, many occupying powers resorted to oppression in order to maintain their control of Ukraine. It is widely held that one of the most brutal policies designed to subjugate Ukraine was carried out by the Stalinist regime of the former Soviet Union.

History records that in order to suppress the numerous rebellions of the Ukrainian peasantry to the collectivization and Russification policies aggressively implemented by the Communists, Stalin set out to destroy the entire nation. His government imposed draconian grain quotas and enforced their fulfillment with brutality seldom seen in history. Secret police and specially created brigades were instructed to confiscate everything down to the last grain. They also confiscated money and any valuables in order to deprive people of any means for survival. Severe and swift punishments—often death—were delivered for any attempt to steal even a miniscule amount of grain or other foodstuffs. The Royal Consulate of Italy reported in 1933: ''through barbaric requisitions . . . the Moscow government has effectively engineered not so much a scarcity . . . but rather a complete absence of every means of subsistence throughout the Ukrainian countryside.'' Stalin also sealed off the Ukrainian border to prevent migration. In 1932, a directive was issued to arrest anyone who tried to leave Ukraine without proper documentation. According to Russian scholar Ivnitsky, 219,460 individuals were arrested per this directive and 186,588 of them were sent back to their villages to die.

Eyewitness accounts provide vivid and gruesome details. Here is what one witness described to the House Select Committee on Communist Aggression in 1954: ''The farmers with faces and legs swollen from the hunger of the famine were invading the town and were dying in masses in the streets. The administration of the town was unable to bury the dead farmers in time, and there was a repulsive odor in the air during all this time. The police, or rather militia patrols, driving along the streets, collected the corpses. They also took those completely exhausted by starvation who arrived in town to ask for 'a little bit of bread', put them on the mound of corpses saying, 'you'll get there, don't worry.' I saw this all myself, and quite often.''

It is hard and painful to comprehend that these actions were not known to the world, in part because of the denial of the famine-genocide by Soviet authorities and refusal of offers of international aid. The tragic events of 1932–1933 in Ukraine remained hidden for many decades. The world is still largely unaware of the cruelty with which the totalitarian Stalinist regime killed 7–10 million innocent people in an effort to break a people who strove for freedom and independence. The Ukrainian American community has done much to change this situation. On the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Ukrainian famine-genocide, we remind the world of the honors that the Ukrainian nation survived and honor the memory of the innocent victims of the inhumane policies of the Stalinist regime. Remembering the events of the past helps to ensure that this type of tragedy does not recur anywhere in the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, October 13, 2007, I inadvertently missed three votes. Had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows:

(1) Rollcall No. 1083: ''Yes'' On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass the resolution.

(2) Rollcall No. 1084: ''Yes'' On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass the resolution.

(3) Rollcall No. 1085: ''Yes'' On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass the resolution.

HONORING CLARE AND MARYELLEN BERRYHILL

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of Clare and Maryellen Berryhill for their tremendous dedication to promoting agriculture in the Central Valley. The Berryhills are being honored at The Greater Yosemite Council Boy Scouts of America's Annual Distinguished Citizens Dinner on October 24, 2007 in Modesto, CA.

Clare Berryhill was born and raised in the Central Valley. He was a third generation farmer and winegrape grower. Mr. Berryhill attended Modesto Junior College and the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he majored in agriculture. Clare Berryhill and Maryellen Rossel, of Modesto, were married in 1949.

While managing their ranch in Ceres, CA, both became very involved in the community. Mr. Berryhill operated a fruit dehydrating business, and in 1960 he was named Young Farmer in Stanislaus County. He was the first president of the California Winegrape Growers Association. He was also one of many generations in the family to serve on the Ceres Unified School Board of Trustees. During this

time Mrs. Berryhill helped to manage the farm, taught music at Denair High School and was involved in the Parent Teacher Association.

In 1969, Mr. Berryhill's involvement turned to politics. He was asked to run for the California Assembly and won. His victory was a crucial one and he was even congratulated, in person, by then Governor Ronald Reagan. He served as an Assemblyman from 1969 to 1970. Later, he was elected into office as a California State senator, where in 1976 he successfully authored landmark legislation to establish the annual ''Grape Crush Report''. This is a reporting process that became essential to the economic wellbeing of the winegrape and wine industries. Also, as State senator, he was able to have enough land donated to Modesto Junior College to expand the campus. He served as a State senator from 1972 to 1976.

One last service to the California government came after Mr. Berryhill's retirement. He was asked by Governor George Deukmejian to serve as California Director (Secretary) of Agriculture. At the time, California was battling African bees, Mexican fruit flies, gypsy moths, apple maggots and a contamination scare with cheese, watermelons, and grapes. With his previous leadership experience and his knowledge of agriculture, Mr. Berryhill was able to help develop an agriculture policy in California that continues to stand today. Due to his efforts in resolving these problems, he was featured in ''People'' magazine.

Mrs. Berryhill and their five children Betsy, Tom, Lynne, Janie, and Bill supported Mr. Berryhill in all of his campaigns. They volunteered by walking precincts, playing musical instruments and traveling throughout the districts in the Berryhill Band Wagon. Mr. and Mrs. Berryhill enjoyed their family, community, politics, art and the land. They traveled between three homes in their retirement: a cattle ranch in Montana, a home in San Carlos, Mexico, and their original ranch in Ceres, California. Clare Berryhill passed away in March of 1996 and Maryellen Berryhill passed away in July of this year. They have left a legacy that is not easily matched. They are survived by their five children, eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor Clare and Maryellen Berryhill for the impact that they had on agriculture in the Central Valley and the State of California. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring their lives and wishing the best for their family.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, November 13, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 3315, H.R. 1593, H.R. 3403, and H.R. 3461 and wish the RECORD to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1082 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3315, to provide that the great hall of the Capitol Visitor Center shall be known as Emancipation Hall, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1083 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1084 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3403, 911 Modernization and Public Safety Act of 2007, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1085 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3461, Safeguarding America's Families by Enhancing and Reorganizing New and Efficient Technologies Act of 2007, I would have voted ''aye.''

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WOODRUFF

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor John Woodruff, an Olympic Gold Medalist who passed away last week at the age of 92. Woodruff, a native of Connellsville, Pennsylvania, was one of the most remarkable athletes in the world and will always be remembered for his astonishing come-from-behind victory in the 800 meter run at the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

John Woodruff is also remembered as one of the great American rags-to-riches success stories. Born into a struggling family with 11 siblings, John overcame numerous obstacles on his way to becoming an American hero. He dropped out of high school to work in order to help support his family, but was denied a job. He returned to school, joined the track team and earned a scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh, becoming the first member of his family to attend college.

It was the summer of his freshman year that Woodruff qualified for the Olympic Games, outrunning the best American distance runners in the field to make it to Berlin. It was there, during the 800 meter final, that Woodruff pulled one of the riskiest moves in the history of the Olympic Games. Finding himself boxed in by several professional runners, Woodruff stopped in the middle of the race and let everyone pass him. He then ran around the other runners to take the lead, becoming the first American in 24 years to win the race.

Woodruff returned home a hero, and continued his college and track career, during which time he won numerous championships and set the American record in the 800 meter run, which lasted 12 years. He graduated from Pitt and served in World War II and Korea, after which he retired as a lieutenant colonel. He passed away on October 30th in Fountain Hills, Arizona.

John Woodruff was a true American hero who proved that with determination and hard work, any feat can be overcome. Our thoughts are with his family as they mourn their loss, and may they be comforted in knowing that John will be remembered as a leader who dedicated his life to serving his country as both an Olympian and a soldier. His legacy will live on in Connellsville, as his community honors and remembers their hero at a memorial service on Sunday.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''PRIVACY AND CYBERCRIME ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2007''

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the bipartisan ''Privacy and Cybercrime Enforcement Act of 2007,'' along with Representatives SMITH, SCOTT, FORBES, and SANCHEZ. This bill will provide new tools to federal prosecutors to combat identity theft and other computer crimes. I am pleased that Representatives SMITH, SCOTT and FORBES, who have been valuable partners in combating the growing problem of identity theft for many years, have joined me in introducing this important criminal bill.

The Privacy and Cybercrime Enforcement Act takes several important steps to protect Americans from the growing and evolving threat of identity theft and other cybercrimes. First, to better protect American consumers, our bill provides the victims of identity theft with the ability to seek restitution in federal court for the loss of time and money spent restoring their credit and remedying the harms of identity theft, so that identity theft victims can be made whole.

Second, because identity theft schemes are much more sophisticated in today's digital era, our bill also expands the scope of the federal identity theft statutes so that the law keeps up with the available technology. To address the increasing number of computer hacking crimes that involve computers located within the same state, our bill also eliminates the jurisdictional requirement that a computer's information must be stolen through an interstate or foreign communication in order to federally prosecute this crime.

Lastly, our bill strengthens consumer privacy by requiring companies to give rapid notice of breaches to law enforcement. The bill makes it a crime punishable by up to 5 years in prison to knowingly fail to report breaches to the appropriate authorities. The bill also requires agencies to prepare privacy impact assessments for proposed and final rules that pertain to the collection, maintenance, use, or disclosure of personally identifiable information from 10 or more individuals. With limited exceptions, such assessments must be made available to the public for comment.

The Privacy and Cybercrime Enforcement Act is a good, bipartisan measure to help combat the growing threat of identity theft and other cybercrimes. This balanced bill protects the privacy rights of consumers, the interests of business and the legitimate needs of law enforcement. Similarly, I hope that the other Committees of jurisdiction will take up and report out legislation that will protect consumers from ID theft through data security obligations and strong requirements that consumers be notified when the security of their personal information is compromised. Again, I thank the bipartisan coalition of Representatives who have joined me in introducing this important legislation.

THE SIKORSKY'S FALLEN HEROES COMMITTEE

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Sikorsky Fallen Heroes Committee who supports the families of Connecticut soldiers killed in the line of duty. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to see the work of this committee first hand. They have given so much to the families of our fallen service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

When families learn of their service member's death, they enter a very painful and sad period of their lives. The Sikorsky Fallen Heroes Committee has supported these families, acting as a pillar of strength for them when they needed support the most. Their dedication to these wives, mothers, fathers, daughters and sons has been truly remarkable and has been a testament to their patriotism and love of humanity.

In addition to supporting the family of fallen service members, the Sikorsky Fallen Heroes Committee has reached out to members of the community through events they hold. In June of this year, the Committee held their fourth annual softball tribute game to honor Jordan Pierson, Philip Alexander Johnson and Nicholas Madaras, three courageous young men who gave their lives in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Next June, they plan to honor six more fallen soldiers. Their commitment and dedication to the fallen is truly remarkable and is an inspiration to all of us.

The Sikorsky Fallen Heroes Committee are heroes in their own right. They are courageous people reaching out to those in need. We are honored and privileged to have people like them in the community. The unwavering dedication and support they show the families of fallen service members will always be remembered for making a difference in so many lives.

It is my hope we can all learn from the example of the Sikorsky Fallen Heroes Committee to support the families of the fallen who have also sacrificed in honor of our nation's freedom.

HONORING VIC CIBELLI

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Victor H. Cibelli, who passed away on Monday, November 12. I consider myself privileged to call him a friend, and I extend my condolences to his family on their loss.

Vic was a leader. A Navy veteran of the Korean war, he spent decades fighting for veterans as an officer in the VFW, the Jewish War Veterans, and the Combined Veterans Association of Illinois. I was fortunate to be able to rely on Vic for advice on a range of veterans' issues, and he always stood ready to help me organize an event to honor veterans or to promote their causes.

From teaching school children about citizenship and history, to organizing a service to honor the World War II warship *Dorchester*'s four chaplains who gave their lives so others could survive, or running a Patriot's Pen student writing competition, no task was too big or small for Vic to help enrich his community.

People cherished the opportunity to work with Vic, and took pleasure in coming together for a good cause at his invitation. While Vic took the work of improving the lives of veterans and their families seriously, his generosity of spirit and infectious humor made the work enjoyable for him and everyone around him.

Madam Speaker, the Veterans community and the Fifth District of Illinois have lost a great advocate and a true friend. My deepest sympathies go to Vic's widow Mary, to his children and grandchildren. We will all miss him.

HONORING VICE ADMIRAL JOHN SCOTT REDD, U.S. NAVY (RET.) FOR FORTY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize a dedicated public servant who devoted nearly four decades to protecting this great Nation. Vice Admiral John Scott Redd, U.S. Navy (Ret.), retired last week after serving as the first Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).

Admiral Redd's accomplishments are many, having served thirty-six years in the United States Navy, which culminated in his assignment as the Director of Strategic Plans and Policy on the Joint Staff. Retiring from the Navy in 1998, Admiral Redd was again called to serve in 2004, this time as the Deputy Administrator and Chief Operating Officer of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, Iraq. He went on to serve as the Executive Director of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction where he influenced Community-wide intelligence reforms and made lasting improvements to America's national security.

Under his superior leadership, the National Counterterrorism Center developed into the Nation's premier intelligence and law enforcement fusion center, bridging all elements of the Intelligence Community to develop a national common intelligence picture. Admiral Redd tore down walls between Intelligence Community members and replaced a ''need to know'' philosophy with a ''responsibility to share'' environment.

Some of the Intelligence Community's successes are known such as the thwarted terrorist attacks against the Sears Tower, a Chicago-area shopping mall, military forces at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and multiple targets in New York, D.C. and elsewhere. Others remain classified. However, in each instance, the National Counterterrorism Center played a key information sharing role which led to the successful prevention of these attacks against our citizens.

Admiral Redd is to be commended for his contributions to the Nation, but such a persevering service is not without a cost. For that I offer my personal thanks to his wife of over 37 years, Donna Redd, and their children Ann, Scott, and Adam, without whose support such service would not have been possible.

ANNIVERSARY OF MARSHALL UNIVERSITY PLANE CRASH

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, for each of us, there are a handful of moments in life that stay with us forever, moments that years later we can still recall with clarity and conviction. Moments that shook our core and move our hearts still. For the people of Huntington, West Virginia, a rainy evening in 1970 is one of those moments.

On November 14th, 1970 the Marshall University football team, coaches and supporters were returning home from their game against East Carolina University when their plane crashed into a hill just short of the Tri-State Airport. All 75 people on board were killed. In an instant the lives of everyone at Marshall and within the community of Huntington were changed.

Every November 14th, the Marshall University Student Government Association hosts a memorial ceremony to honor the victims of the crash by laying a wreath at the base of the Memorial Fountain in the center of Marshall's campus. This year marks the 37th anniversary of the plane crash. This annual ceremony draws together the families of those who died that night, as well as members of the community, the school and the football team, who attend the memorial service every year. At the end of each ceremony, the fountain is turned off until spring.

The fountain was dedicated in 1972 in front of the Memorial Student Center. The 75 points of the sculpture represent each of the 75 lives lost that rainy night. Sculptor Harry Bertoia hoped that the fountain would ''commemorate the living—rather than death—on the waters of life, rising, receding, surging so as to express upward growth, immortality and eternality.''

A year ago this December, the movie ''We Are Marshall'' premiered across the Nation, telling the story of how Marshall University and this community rose from the ashes of tragedy. It told how the Young Thundering Herd found a way to keep the football program together in the fall of 1971 and gave the community of Huntington hope in one of its darkest hours. The team that suited up that year in green and white may not have had a winning season, but by taking the field every Saturday, the players and coaches taught us that it isn't just about winning, that sometimes it's about simply showing up and playing the game.

The foundation laid by the Young Herd in 1971 paved the way for Marshall to become a football powerhouse during the 1990's and beyond. The legacy of the 1970 team lost in the crash and the team that took the field in 1971 is still with us today and is once again being honored with the ceremonial turning off of the Memorial Fountain.

The bronze plaque on the fountain bears this simple, eloquent inscription:

They shall live on in the hearts of their families and friends forever, and this memorial records their loss to the university and to the community.

We will never forget the loss of those 75 lives on that hillside in 1970. We will continue to honor their memory every time the Thundering Herd takes the field and the stadium fills with the cheers of family and friends. We Are Marshall.

THE HARMONY OF CIVILIZATIONS AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, intercultural understanding is a fundamental part of peace in the global system. The understanding of intercultural and international diversities minimizes the outbreak of serious conflicts on a fundamental level. Through teaching tolerance, and through building societies that promote unity, we can work towards creating a peaceful world.

On November 2, 2007, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed addressed the Beijing Forum at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing regarding the promotion of building tolerant civilizations. I have submitted the text to be entered into the RECORD.

THE HARMONY OF CIVILIZATIONS AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL

I send warm greetings to all participants in the 2007 Beijing Forum who have come together to study and promote harmony between peoples and civilizations.

In the ten months that I have served as Secretary-General, I have traveled to all corners of the United Nations, from Kinshasa to Kabul, from Brussels to Beirut. Everywhere I have visited, and among all the different people I have met, I have encountered one common sentiment—a universal longing for peace and an aspiration to prosperity.

But, all too often, I have discovered that people who aspire to the same things also suffer from the same prejudices. They all fear that which is different from them: the other ethnicity, the other skin colour, the other cultural or linguistic tradition and, above all, the other religion.

And yet, in today's era of global travel and instant satellite transmissions, people everywhere are encountering less of the familiar, and more of ''the other''. This reality has fed rising intercultural and inter-religious tensions, as well as growing alienation among vast segments of the world population.

Today, there is an urgent need to address this worrying trend. We need to rebuild bridges and engage in a sustained and constructive intercultural dialogue, one that stresses shared values and shared aspirations.

It is time to promote the idea that diversity is a virtue, not a threat. It is time to explain that different religions, belief systems and cultural backgrounds are essential to the richness of the human experience. And it is time to stress that our common humanity is greater—far greater—than our outward differences.

The Beijing Forum is ideally placed to contribute to this process. By bringing together scholars from across the globe, your discussion can become a source of new ideas and innovative approaches to promote understanding and tolerance.

Your exchange can also contribute to the UN's own initiative for an Alliance of Civilizations, which responds to the clear need for action by the international community to bridge divides and promote understanding. The Alliance has identified several priority areas for action, and is developing a strategy to promote better understanding between the world of politics and religion. Meetings such as yours can help guide this important work, and ensure the Alliance's ultimate success.

Together, we must seek to further the basic ideals of all the world's major religions. We must build societies that respect individual beliefs and practices. And we must nurture communities where people of all faiths and nationalities coexist in peace.

In that spirit, let me express my hope that this Forum will help foster harmony and understanding, and thereby advance our wider efforts for a peaceful and prosperous world.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF CONGRESSMAN AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of former Representative Augustus F. Hawkins. Congressman Hawkins served in this chamber for 28 years, and I offer my condolences to his family and friends after his passing this past weekend at the age of 100.

Congressman Hawkins was dedicated to public service throughout his life. Beginning in 1935 as a California State Representative, he served the people of Los Angeles for 28 years. In 1962, Augustus Hawkins made a monumental breakthrough in civil rights history, becoming the first African-American elected to Congress from the State of California.

During his tenure in the House of Representatives, Congressman Hawkins continued to lead the way for the American Civil Rights Movement. In 1970, he and several of his colleagues joined together to found the Congressional Black Caucus. Then, in just his second term in Congress, he introduced and sponsored Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This ground-breaking legislation created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and outlawed discrimination in the workplace based on race.

For over half a century, Congressman Hawkins dedicated his life to our Nation with steadfast dedication, humility, and geniality. In the hearts of the residents of Los Angeles, and anyone who was ever influenced by his presence, Augustus Hawkins' legacy of leadership and courage will remain for years to come. Congressman Hawkins is succeeded by his two stepdaughters, Barbara A. Hammond and Brenda L. Stevenson, and a stepson, Michael A. Taylor. I extend my deepest condolences and gratitude to the family of Congressman Hawkins.

IN SUPPORT OF A STRONG AND CAPABLE SUBMARINE FLEET

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, yesterday President Bush signed into law H.R. 3222, the Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008. The bill contained many important provisions to support our men and women in uniform, their families and our returning veterans. The measure includes a 3.5 percent pay raise for our troops, blocks the President's proposed fee increase for Tricare beneficiaries and provides significant funding for family advocacy programs to help military spouses and children manage the difficulties associated with deployments. We all recognize that our military's strength comes from the people who serve, and this legislation demonstrates our commitment to their health and well-being.

I am also extremely pleased that the Defense Appropriations Act includes an additional $588 million in advance procurement funding for materials that will permit the expedited construction of a second Virginia-class submarine. As co-chair of the Congressional Submarine Caucus, I know the importance of submarines to our national security. Quiet yet powerful, submarines can conduct a variety of surveillance and reconnaissance missions, protect our fleet, project U.S. force onto distant shores and support global strike operations. The ability of submarines to operate independently in unconventional locations makes them one of the most capable components of our fleet. In fact, submarines are in such high demand that the Navy can fulfill only about 60 percent of Regional Combatant Commanders' requests to use them for missions.

The Navy has estimated that we need 48 attack submarines to meet the needs of our military commanders. However, under the Navy's current 30-year shipbuilding plan, they do not expect to increase production to two subs per year until 2012, causing a perilous decline in our future sub fleet—dropping below 48 ships in FY2020–33 and hitting a low of 40 in FY2028 and FY2029. Since I came to Congress nearly 7 years ago, I have consistently advocated an increase in our build rate of Virginia-class submarines to two per year so that we have sufficient capabilities to address emerging threats. Unfortunately, the Navy has repeatedly pushed back its two-per-year target date, causing instability in the industrial base. In FY2004, the Navy expected to build two subs per year in FY2007. By FY2005, the target had moved to FY2009. That date was delayed again and again, and now stands at FY2012. Meanwhile, our defense industrial base in Southeastern New England has suffered layoffs of submarine designers and engineers, whose specialized skills would be very difficult to reconstitute if lost. Without prompt action, we risk shrinking our sub fleet to dangerously low levels, precisely when nations such as China are expanding and modernizing their navies.

The FY2008 Defense Appropriations Act demonstrates Congress's commitment to addressing this dangerous problem and will enhance our national security. On behalf of the submarine industrial base in Rhode Island, I want to thank Chairman MURTHA and Ranking

Member YOUNG for their leadership on this important issue. I would also like to thank my friend and colleague from Connecticut, Mr. COURTNEY, for his tireless advocacy and efforts to achieve this goal, as well as the co-chair of the Submarine Caucus, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. FORBES, for being such a dedicated partner in this initiative.

I am hopeful that this additional funding will prompt the Navy to adjust its shipbuilding plan to begin construction of a second submarine in next year's budget. I remain committed to that goal, and I look forward to working with the Navy and my colleagues in Congress to build a more robust and capable submarine fleet.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 1082 on Suspension—H.R. 3315—Naming Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center.

I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

IN MEMORY OF NAVY CAPTAIN AND P.O.W. COLE BLACK

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the life and memory of former Navy Captain Cole Black of Escondido, California. As a career Naval Officer, Cole's contributions to this country are impossible to quantify and the seven years he spent in captivity during the Vietnam War are an enduring testament to his character and service to America.

Last Friday, Cole was returning to Southern California after speaking to students in Oregon about his experiences as a P.O.W. when mechanical difficulties caused his plane to crash. This tragic and unexpected event came only weeks before his 75th birthday, which Cole would have celebrated on the 28th of November.

In June 1966, when he was only one week away from returning home to his family, Cole's F–8 Crusader was shot down over the skies of North Vietnam. He was captured almost instantly after ejecting from his aircraft and then forced to spend the next seven years of his life between four prison camps, including the infamous Hanoi Hilton.

Conditions in these prisons were intolerable, and the American service personnel who were held in these camps were treated inhumanely and without respect for the rules of war. Like so many others held in captivity by the North Vietnamese, Cole was confined to a 7 by 9 foot cage and fed meals of little to no sustenance—such as boiled greens and rice—only twice a day. He was also part of the Hanoi March, where prisoners were forced to march the streets of Hanoi as part of the Vietnamese propaganda effort, only to be met by people throwing rocks and other objects.

More impressive than Cole's endurance and willingness to survive his captivity was his unique perspective on the seven years he spent as a P.O.W. After his release in 1973, Cole later said that this time "changed his life for the better" and that he arrived home with a "real zest for life." Upon retiring from active military service in 1986, he attended National University and earned a master's in business and a real estate broker's license.

It was not until 1994 that Cole returned to Vietnam for a vacation with his wife Karen. While there, he visited the location of the Hanoi Hilton just as workers were tearing it down and he took the opportunity to pocket a piece of brick from the walls that once kept him confined for so many years.

Madam Speaker, President Reagan once said, "Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than a generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes once to a people. Those who have known freedom, and then lost it, have never known it again."

When President Reagan spoke these words, he was referring directly to Americans like Cole, who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for America. Not only did Cole fight to protect freedom as part of the American mission in Vietnam, but he fought tirelessly for his own freedom everyday he was in captivity. His strength and perseverance guaranteed his survival and, although he briefly lost his freedom, he was able to endure his captivity and return to a life far removed from cruelty and oppression.

Madam Speaker, my thoughts and prayers are with Cole's wife Karen and his children, two of which are currently serving in our nation's Armed Forces. His contributions and service to America will forever be remembered and I ask that my colleagues join me today in paying tribute to this great American hero.

TRIBUTE TO THE GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Greater Somerset County Chapter of the American Red Cross! On Thursday, November 15, 2007, this vibrant organization will mark its Ninetieth Anniversary.

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross Movement, provides relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Jean-Henry Dunant is credited as the original founder of the Red Cross. The International Committee of the Red Cross was formed on February 17, 1863. Operations were well underway overseas when the American Red Cross was first founded nearly twenty years later, on May 21, 1881 by Clara Barton.

The Red Cross has a long history of providing aid in emergencies. Food, shelter, and medical assistance are offered to victims of fires, floods, and other catastrophes. In addition to disaster aid, the Red Cross sponsors blood drives; conducts CPR and first aid training; teaches swimming; provides AIDS education; and serves as a link between service men and women and their families during emergency situations.

By an act of Congress on January 5, 1905, the American Red Cross was granted a charter designating it as a nationwide agency through which the American people voluntarily extend assistance to people in need. The national headquarters, located in Washington, DC, implements policies and procedures that govern Red Cross activities, provides administrative and technical supervision, and offers guidance to its national organization, composed of local chapters and geographical regions.

The Greater Somerset County Chapter, American Red Cross evolved into its current configuration after undergoing numerous transformations and mergers. The Bound Brook Chapter was chartered in April 1917 and a few weeks later, the Somerville Area Chapter also came into being.

In March 1958, Manville was incorporated into the Somerville Area Chapter, and in June 1964, the Somerville and Bound Brook chapters merged to form the Raritan Valley Chapter. In 1994, this chapter reached its current configuration when the Raritan Valley Chapter merged with the Somerset Hills Chapter to become the Greater Somerset County Chapter.

The Greater Somerset County Chapter has historically relied on the utilization of a small staff, 428 volunteers that represent 98 percent of the chapter staffing and private authorized instructors to deliver high quality programs and services to the community. For 90 years, Somerset County has been provided continued access to 24/7 emergency and disaster services, Armed Forces Emergency Services (AFES), blood donation programs, preparedness education, health and safety training and medical transportation services.

Madam Speaker, I am privileged to honor the Greater Somerset County Chapter of the American Red Cross. I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of this valuable, dynamic organization for their ninety years of service! Again, I offer my praise and thanks to their dedicated trustees, administration, support staff, and volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of those in need.

INTRODUCTION OF THE IDEA FAIRNESS RESTORATION ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the IDEA Fairness Restoration Act to help parents of students with disabilities ensure that their children have access to the free and appropriate education guaranteed by this Congress in 1975. I thank Mr. SESSIONS, who joins me in offering this bill, for his work on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, when Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, it recognized the vital importance of parent and school cooperation and collaboration in

special education. For the most part, this relationship has worked very well. But occasionally, the school system cannot or does not provide an appropriate education. In those rare cases, the Congress recognized that parents should have the ability to challenge the school's decision and advocate for a new Individual Education Plan.

As both school systems and parents build their cases, they bring expert witnesses to assess the student and testify about the quality of the education plan. In 1986, when Congress amended IDEA, it explained in the Conference Report that when parents win their case, a judge could award attorney's fees, including, and I quote, "reasonable expenses and fees of expert witnesses and the reasonable costs of any test or evaluation which is found to be necessary for the preparation of the parent or guardian's case." For years, prevailing parents were awarded expert witness fees, as Congress intended. But unfortunately, while Congress was very clear in its explanation of the bill, it did not include this provision in the legislative language. In 2006, the provision was challenged and the Supreme Court ruled that because Congress did not make its intention explicit in statute, courts could not longer award these fees.

As a result of this decision, parents can be faced with many thousands of dollars of expert witness fees in order to ensure their child gets an appropriate public education. A single expert witness can charge anywhere from $100–$300 per hour. Confronted with these costs, parents are discouraged or outright barred from bringing meritorious cases to secure the rights of their children. Low and middle income families are particularly hard hit.

Today, I introduce a bill to clarify Congress's intent and restore the expert witness fee provisions. It will allow parents to recover the high cost of expert witnesses if, and only if, they win their dispute with the school district. I want to be very clear—this bill does not impose any additional costs on school districts that comply with IDEA. The provisions apply only when a school system has been found, after an impartial hearing, to have wrongfully denied a child an appropriate education as defined in IDEA.

Madam Speaker, every student with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education under the law. This bill will level the playing field and help parents be effective advocates for their children's best interests.

THEY CANNOT DO BUSINESS LIKE THIS—PHARMACISTS NEED OUR HELP

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to call upon Democratic leadership to bring legislation to the floor that will help our independent pharmacies stay in business. The last few years have been difficult for pharmacists across the United States, and many are struggling to keep their doors open due to changes in the Medicare Part D prescription program. In my Kansas district alone, we have lost four pharmacists since this government program went into effect.

Once again, we are asking pharmacists to bear the burden of our cost-cutting measures. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 made average manufacturers price, AMP, the new basis for the Medicaid Federal upper limit on multisource, generic prescription drugs. Earlier this year, the Government Accountability Office released a report indicating that this new pricing system would reimburse pharmacists at 36 percent below what it costs them to buy the prescriptions. I ask you, how can we realistically expect anyone to do business like that?

We need to make changes quickly; otherwise, these pharmacies will no longer be around to serve customers. Here are some real life examples of Kansas pharmacists who are going to be negatively affected by this change if we do not act soon.

Many Medicaid patients in Kansas are in treatment for psychiatric conditions. Because of their mental state, they often forget to take their medications. Mike Conlin, a pharmacist in Topeka, has initiated a program in his pharmacy to help his psychiatric patients remember to take their medications by having his staff put the meds in a unit dosage device. This device allows his patients to see at a glance which medications are called for at any particular time of day. Mike stated it will be difficult to offer this individual treatment on a medication that pays him nearly 36 percent less in reimbursement than it actually costs his drugstore.

In other parts of the State, a great number of our community pharmacists double as the local nursing home pharmacist. Jim Hampton, of Atwood, Kansas, is one such pharmacist. The physicians and staff of the local Atwood home, depend on Jim to advise them daily on such issues as drug-to-drug interactions, new drugs and dosage regimens. While Jim finds great satisfaction in providing these medications and advice on their usage, he must reconsider his ability to serve these geriatric and developmentally disabled patients. And his decision is purely a business decision. Jim will be forced to decide whether his business can really afford to remain viable in selling a product for a price far less than he can acquire that product. Average manufacturer pricing is forcing Jim to do just that. And the ramifications of Jim's decision are far reaching.

In Phillipsburg, Kansas, there is a young disabled mother that recently gave birth to a child with a heart condition. She was without her Medicaid card yet urgently needed medication for the newborn infant. In fact, she was without a medical card of any type showing that insurance would pay for the medication. The local pharmacist, Rob Wenzl of Wenzl Drug, provided the infant her lifesaving drug. Rob did this despite the fact the new mom had no proof of coverage. Rob is just one more of many pharmacists in rural Kansas that are being forced to consider letting go of their Medicaid patients. The personalized service that Rob enjoys providing his patients, and that personalized care the patients receive, will potentially be eliminated should average manufacturer pricing as currently written be foisted upon our pharmacists.

Those of us in Congress take our responsibility seriously to stand up for those who are in trouble. I encourage my colleagues to listen to those pharmacists in their districts and encourage Democratic leadership to bring legislation to the floor to fix this problem.

Access to local pharmacies is important to a strong healthcare system and is, therefore, important to each and every one of us.

CONGRATULATING ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2007 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor the St. Paul's Episcopal School volleyball team on winning the 2007 5A state championship.

In 1947, William S. Mann founded St. Paul's Episcopal School in Mobile, Alabama. St. Paul's began with a class of 20 kindergartners, and has grown to an enrollment of 1,613 students, making St. Paul's the largest Episcopal school in North America.

Coach Kelli Hillier led the top-ranked and defending 5A champion varsity volleyball team to their second consecutive state championship earlier this month bringing the total number of volleyball state championships to 10. Incredibly, this most recent honor brings the number of St. Paul's state championships won this year to 9. Like Coach Hillier, I am so proud of her players, and I know they worked hard for this great honor.

The St. Paul's statement of philosophy regarding its athletes states, "On the field and off, win or lose, they should be the example of honor, integrity, and respect," and these young women are certainly no exception.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the St. Paul's volleyball team on a great season and state championship. This school deserves public recognition for this great honor, and I extend my congratulations to each member of the team and coaching staff:

ST. PAUL'S 2007 VOLLEYBALL TEAM ROSTER

Names: Katherine White; Grace Copeland; Annie Gonzales; Lenore Lahti; Jennifer Percy; Nancy Taylor; Neal Tisher; Courtenay Martindale; Catherine Rebarchak; Sarah Kitzmann; Johnnie Borries; Robin Jackson.

Coaching Staff: Head Coach Kelli Hillier and Assistant Coaches Jill Campbell and Sharon Mosley.

HONORING HUNTER E. STOLL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Hunter E. Stoll, 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 255, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Hunter has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Hunter 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 Hunter E. Stoll for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING THE BAYSIDE ACADEMY VOLLEYBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE 2007 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor the Bayside Academy volleyball team on winning the 2007 2A State Volleyball Championship.

Coach Ann Schilling along with Assistant Coach Brenda Allen led the Bayside Academy varsity volleyball team to the state championship earlier this month, making it the first team in Alabama history to win six consecutive titles. Incredibly, Bayside Academy has won nine of the last 10 state championships in 2A and 16 titles overall.

Founded in 1970 by Baldwin County families, Bayside has an enrollment of 730 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 and ranks as one of the state's premier independent schools.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Bayside Academy Volleyball Team on a great season and state championship. This school deserves public recognition for this great honor, and I extend my congratulations to each member of the team and coaching staff.

BAYSIDE ACADEMY'S 2007 VOLLEYBALL TEAM ROSTER

Names: Maggie Niemeyer; Shelby Builta; Lizzie Williams; Reynolds Pittman; Emily Allen; Taylor Givens; Gigi Eyre; Caroline Todd; Sarah Mosteller; Lauren Reibe; Patricia Sirmon; Savannah Simmons.

Coahing Staff: Head Coach Ann Schilling; Assistant Coach Brenda Allen.

RECOGNITION OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE MONTH

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to acknowledge National American Indian Heritage Month and to call attention to the dire situation that many of our Native American brothers and sisters continue to live in today. In the world's richest nation on earth, many Native American people struggle to obtain the most basic of services made available to the rest of the nation, effectively threatening the health and well-being of future generations. For this reason, I continually support legislation that strengthens the self-determination of Native American people living both on and off Indian reservations.

According to the National Congress of American Indians and the National Indian Health Board, the Native American infant mortality rate is 150 percent greater than that of Caucasian infants, suicide among Native Americans is 2½ times higher than the national average, Native Americans are 2.6 times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes, and the life expectancy rate for Native Americans is 5 years less than the rest of the U.S. population. There is an urgent need for sufficient and effective healthcare for Native American people and yet the President has proposed zeroing out Urban Indian Health Programs and reducing funding to Indian Health Facilities by $25 million. In addition, inadequate legal services and weakening education support continue to hinder Native American people from achieving self-sufficiency and upward mobility.

As a new Appropriations Committee member, I am committed to strengthening the funding sources for Native American programs, specifically those programs in the areas of healthcare, education, and the justice system. I have fought for the full funding for the Community Health Partnership of Santa Clara County's Healthy Women, Healthy Choices project, which aims to increase health status of medically underserved mid-life women by providing comprehensive health education and promoting adoption of healthier behaviors through community workshops and provider trainings. I have also fought to continue the funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Urban Indian Health Program, which works to eradicate the mental health, substance abuse, and chronic disease disparities plaguing urban Indian people. These valuable programs provide the holistic and culturally sensitive care needed to effectively support this very vulnerable population.

In addition, I have cosponsored numerous health care bills developed specifically to address the needs of Native American people including the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2007. Introduced by Representative FRANK PALLONE, H.R. 1328 seeks to create comprehensive behavioral health, prevention, treatment, and aftercare services for Native American peoples. By passing policies such as these, Congress can help turn around the Native American health care crisis and improve the well-being of future generations.

Since joining the Appropriations committee, I have also argued for the continued funding of the O'Malley Education program. As a former educator, I know and understand the positive influence that a properly funded school system can have on the performance of its students. Authorized in 1934, the Johnson O'Malley Act was passed to ensure that the federal government supports the unique and specialized educational needs of Native American children. Providing funding for basic education-related items such as eyeglasses, school supplies, learning materials, and scholastic testing fees, the O'Malley Education program helps Native American children achieve academic success. The program provides critical supplemental funding not covered by any other Federal, State, or local agency. It is an essential component that is supporting the efforts of the educational school system and improving the educational attainment of Native American children.

Preservation of indigenous languages is another significant challenge impacting Native America and one that Congress can help support. According to the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), Native American languages are being lost at a rate so rapid that by the year 2050 only twenty indigenous languages will remain viable. Allowing the loss of these indigenous languages would not only be devastating to Native American people, but would be a true disservice to the world. For this reason, I have supported legislation such as H. Con. Res. 11, the English Plus Resolution, introduced by Representative JOE SERRANO, which calls on the Federal Government to support and assist Native American groups working to preserve and prevent the extinction of their languages and cultures.

Legal services for Native American people also require continued Congressional attention. To ensure the sustainability of Indian legal services, we must continue to provide the tribal justice system with adequate federal financial support. For this reason, I have proposed appropriations funding for the California Indian Legal Services' Tribal Court Development Project (TCD). Funding the TCD project would strengthen existing tribal courts in California and foster the development of new tribal courts. TCD would improve capacity and resource-building, increase State-wide institution-building and information-sharing, and enhance legal services offered by the California tribal justice system. I have also urged the Appropriations Committee to fund the National Congress of American Indians and the California Indian Legal Services' Alcohol and Substance Abuse Demonstration Projects, the Tribal Courts Assistance Program, and the Tribal Prison Construction Program. Together, these initiatives work to strengthen State and local law enforcement efforts and provide much needed funding directed at improving resources, services, and infrastructure available in the tribal justice system.

In addition to bringing these issues to light, I have also cosponsored H.J. Res. 3, introduced by Representative Jo Ann Davis, which calls on the Federal Government to recognize and apologize for the ill-conceived policies it has implemented against Native American peoples throughout our Nation's history, and H.R. 3585, introduced by Representative JOE BACA, which formally honors the achievements and contributions of Native American people, calls for the development of a model educational curriculum, which recognizes such achievements, and encourages the American people to celebrate National American Indian Heritage Day.

As we embark on the 2007 National American Indian Heritage Month, I am hopeful that my colleagues and I will have the opportunity to pass the proposed legislation and confirm Congress' commitment to support Native American peoples and uphold Native American cultures and languages.

HONORING JULIAN GIBSON-CORNELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Julian Gibson-Cornell, 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 75, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Julian has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Julian 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 Julian Gibson-Cornell for

his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR AS OFFERED BY LINDA DICKENS OF GRAND BAY, AL

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, last week one of my constituents, Linda Dickens, submitted a letter to Mobile's Press-Register offering a heartfelt tribute to her father, P.H. Murray.

As we pause this week to salute the men and women who have served in America's Armed Forces and honor the courage and sacrifice of those who continue to serve today, I found her letter especially poignant.

Today, Madam Speaker, I rise to ask that this op-ed piece be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in its entirety, for I found Ms. Dickens' letter an appropriate way to say thank you to the men and women who have done so much to protect this nation:

SALUTE TO A SPECIAL VETERAN

Veterans Day will not be the same this year because my special World War II veteran will not be here with me to celebrate. He was my father, P.H. Murray, who passed away Sept. 30, one day after his 84th birthday.

He was a great American hero to our family. His American flag is still flying outside his home, as it did every day he lived. He went off to war as a boy at the age of 18 and came back a man. He brought back memories, good and bad, that would last a lifetime.

He was proud to have served under Gen. George Patton in the Battle of the Bulge.

He was quite a joker when he was young, and when he was awakened in the middle of the night to see his commanding officer, the first time he thought, ''What have I done?'' It was a good thing, because the officer had learned Daddy had been a burner at the shipyard before the war, and they needed men to help burn plows to put on the front of the tanks so they could go over the hedge rows, which made the tanks turn over and easy targets for Germans to shoot. This made him very proud that he had done something special for his country.

For years as a child I never understood how Daddy could squat on the floor for hours at a time without moving. It was because for 19 months he didn't see a chair or a bed.

He never talked to us much when we were little. If only I had known the nightmares my mom hid from us that he was having about the war. He had so many memories bottled up in him.

He was a great father and provider and was always there for us five kids. He taught us to work hard, prepare for the future and always value what the men of WWII had done for our great country. He was proud that he had helped with our freedom and that we were all able to go to college.

He was a very smart man, even though he didn't go to college because of his children. He was a quiet man until the last few years, when he opened up about the war. He began to tell us stories about the war.

Some were funny, and others you could tell took a toll on his heart. This is when I really came to realize what the war had done for us.

I had taken history courses about the war, but they were nothing like the personal stories Daddy told. He said we never learned the real history of the war in a history book. Many young people don't realize what veterans did to keep our country free.

Daddy lost his two childhood friends in the war. One was killed and the other so shell-shocked that he could never come home to live. I remember the trips to see ''Mr. Jim'' at the Veterans Home in Biloxi. Daddy never forgot about him, even though he felt sad that he was not able to come home to his family.

Daddy taught us love, how important family is and that it doesn't matter what you have, it is what you do with it. Never forget we are free, and never forget the men who fought and the ones who gave their lives so we could be free.

He was proud of his WWII hat, which he wore proudly each day. He was buried with it. It made him feel proud and honored when someone asked him where he served.

I give all the veterans of this great country a ''five-star salute,'' as my father would say when you did something good. Daddy, I give you a ''five-star salute'' for all you did for me and our country. I will miss you this Veterans Day and all the other days of my life. Thanks for a job well done.

Linda Dickens, Grand Bay.

HONORING DR. J. EUGENE GRIGSBY

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. PASTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. J. Eugene Grigsby, a talented and multi-faceted artist who has been instrumental in highlighting the importance of combining art with culture and history as a means of expression. As such, he is considered by many as ''one of America's leading artistic minds and recognized internationally as an artistic voice for the African American community.'' It was in keeping with this distinction that he was recently honored by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation at its Celebration of Leadership for the Visual and Performing Arts.

From his early days as a young art teacher in 1946 at Phoenix's segregated Carver High School, Dr. Grigsby has concentrated on conveying to his students the importance of incorporating their personal being and heritage in their works—a message he continued to demonstrate as he rose to become Professor Emeritus of Art at Arizona State University. As an internationally respected artist himself, who has mastered a number of mediums including oils, acrylics and lithographs, his works are noted for their ability to capture the spirit and dignity of his African and African-American subjects in scenes depicting their daily life.

A pioneer in today's promotion of multi-cultural art, Dr. Grigsby led the way to contemporary art instruction that goes beyond work in the studio by including the study of history and how man has chosen to express himself in differing environments. It is within this context that his celebrated book, Art and Ethnics: Background for Teaching Youth in a Pluralistic Society, has provided educators with valuable insights into art education and will continue to impact the study of art well into the future.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend, honor and thank Dr. Grigsby, one of the great American artists, for his continued service and contributions to the world of art and academic communities.

SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my full support for the Second Chance Act of 2007, a bill to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of ex-offenders into the community.

With the dramatic increase in criminal convictions involving illegal drugs since the 1980's, the Nation's prisons have become severely overcrowded. As a result, every day hundreds of men and women are released from prison into their communities for the difficult task of restarting their lives.

It is even more difficult for those who have been incarcerated for a lengthy amount of time, those with limited education, and those who lack basic job skills. These men and women need assistance transitioning back into the community. Some assistance is needed with locating housing, finding employment, getting drug treatment, and mentoring.

This bill would provide that assistance. It is crucial to provide that assistance because it will reduce recidivism, improve lives, and improve communities. At a time when communities all across our great country have been torn apart by crime and drugs, we need to do all we can to help Americans who need a second chance at life. Let's send a message to America that we care about those who need help getting on their feet.

I thank my colleague DANNY DAVIS for introducing this important bill. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF JOHN EDWARD GRENIER

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, the State of Alabama recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor him and pay tribute to his memory. Mr. John Edward Grenier was a devoted family man and one of the most respected political strategists in modern Alabama politics.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1930, John Grenier attended Jesuit High School and lettered in track, baseball, and football. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from Tulane University. He entered the United States Marine Corps and rose to the rank of captain. He served with distinction in Korea as a pilot, flying over 100 patrols in squadron VMF 312, known as the Checkerboard Squadron.

After receiving an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps, John Grenier attended New York University and received an LLM degree in taxation. He worked on Wall Street for a brief time before moving to Birmingham, Alabama, to work with Southern Natural Gas

Company. He later joined the law firm of Bradley Arant Rose & White, where he became a partner. He then joined the firm formerly known as Lange, Simpson, Robinson & Somerville and was a partner for over 35 years before retiring in 2004.

John Grenier's true passion was politics, a passion that changed the course of Alabama politics. He began his political career as chairman of the Jefferson County Young Republicans. In this capacity, he organized a political rally in Birmingham in 1960 for Richard Nixon.

John Grenier organized the modern day Alabama Republican Party and served as the state chairman in 1962. He joined the Goldwater for President Campaign and organized the delegates to the Republican National Convention in San Francisco. John Grenier was the Southern Regional Director for the campaign when Senator Goldwater swept many of the southern states, including Alabama, in his bid for President.

In 1966, Mr. Grenier was the Republican nominee against Democratic U.S. Senator John Sparkman. Even though he lost that race, John fared better than most previous Republicans in what was then a heavily Democratic state.

In 1986, John served as the campaign manager for Guy Hunt's successful bid to become the first Republican governor of Alabama since Reconstruction. He served as Governor Hunt's chief of staff and later managed Governor Hunt's successful bid for reelection.

Madam Speaker, John Grenier was a political leader, strategist and visionary. He loved life and lived it to the fullest, and his passing marks a tremendous loss for all of Alabama. He will be deeply missed by many, most especially his wife, Stella Kontos Grenier; his son, John Beaulieu Grenier; his daughter-in-law, Joy Grenier; his sister, Rosemary Grenier Rivet; his four grandchildren, John Beaulieu Grenier, Jr., Dorothy Monnish Grenier, Evans Barlow Grenier, and Carolyn Youmans Grenier; as well as countless friends he leaves behind.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

HONORING LINK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Link Elementary School of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, for being named a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School for the 2006–2007 school year. Principal Barbara Schremser, Link faculty, students and parents—you should be very proud of this remarkable accomplishment.

At a time in our Nation's history when the efficacy of our education system is often questioned, it is a great comfort to see a school that truly commits itself to finding ways to teach our children and provide hope for our Nation's future.

The No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Award is a distinction given to the public schools throughout the country whose students score within the top 10 percent on state assessments. This year, of the more than 97,000 public schools in the United States, just 287 schools were recognized with this distinct honor.

In the State of Illinois, 19 schools were members of this elite group. The Blue Ribbon School Award recognizes what we all know: the Link faculty and staff are some of the best and brightest in the Nation.

With the motto ''to think, to learn, to achieve and to care,'' Link has shown steady academic progress and achieved exceptionally high test scores. In awarding the 2006–2007 Blue Ribbon School Award, the U.S. Department of Education recognized Link's success in helping students consistently achieve at very high levels, as well as its continued commitment to narrowing the achievement gap.

As we strive to educate our current generation of children and prepare our nation's future leaders, Link Elementary School stands out as a shining example of scholastic and institutional excellence.

I am proud to represent Link Elementary School in the United States Congress and I look forward to their continued achievements.

Madam Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues please join me in congratulating the talented students and dedicated faculty and staff of Link Elementary School for receiving the Blue Ribbon School Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, on November 7, 2007, I missed four votes. Had I been present that evening, I would have voted as follows:

''No'' on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 3685, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)—vote No. 1056.

''Yea'' on final passage of H.R. 3685, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)—vote No. 1057.

''Yea'' on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Con. Res. 236, Recognizing the close relationship between the United States and the Republic of San Marino—vote No. 1058

''Yea'' on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 801: Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3688) to implement the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement—vote No. 1059.

RECOGNIZES THE GERMAN AMERICAN CLUB OF SPRING HILL, FLORIDA ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. GINNEY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, the Fifth District of Florida that I represent is made up of people from around the United States and the world. With perfect weather, low taxes and friendly residents, it is one of the fastest growing areas of the country. As you might expect, one of the cultural groups that have flocked to Florida for the last several generations are German Americans, many from my former State of New York. On Sunday, November 18, 2007, the German American Club of Spring Hill, Florida will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a dinner and dance extravaganza.

The club, founded in 1982, was organized by Friedel Rohn, along with Christa and Fritz Neumann. The first social meeting was held at the home of Friedel Rohn in January 1982 with 10 people present. The first ''official'' meeting was held in June 1982 with 22 members present. Today there are nearly 300 members and the club is still growing strong.

The first officers installed were Friedel Rohn as president, Margarethe Grabert as vice-president, Norman Armonat as treasurer and Ruth Hughes as secretary. By March of 1983, the membership had increased to 60 members. The club began hosting many functions and socials throughout the year, including its own Oktoberfest. As the years passed, more dances and social events were added to the calendar and the membership continued to increase.

In 1992, when the club celebrated its 10th anniversary, the club had grown to over 170 members. In 2002, the club's 20th anniversary was celebrated with a membership that had increased to over 235. Today the 25th anniversary will feature 285 members, with room to grow for the future. Having attended several of their club functions, I can tell you that German American Club members stayed true to their roots and know how to cook a delicious schnitzel and dance to a great polka tune.

Madam Speaker, over the past 25 years the German American Club of Spring Hill has worked to uphold the German culture, spirit, tradition and heritage. The club's members and officers have made Spring Hill and Hernando County a true home to German Americans from around the world, and are to be commended for their commitment and dedication. With the continued support of their membership and officers, I look forward to help the club celebrate their next 25 years.

INTRODUCING THE AIRPORT SECURITY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, last week, we learned that more than 30 illegal aliens gained access to the most sensitive areas at O'Hare Airport.

Without valid Social Security numbers, illegal aliens were given official badges to access the tarmac and the airplanes.

This is not the first time. It's happened before at airports around the country.

The Congress must set Federal standards for those who seek access to an airport's most sensitive areas.

You should be a U.S. national or legal permanent resident.

You should possess a valid Social Security number that actually belongs to you.

You should have that Social Security number verified through the E-Verify employer verification system.

And you should get your access badge from the Transportation Security Administration—not some rusty old van in the parking lot.

Today, I am introducing the Airport Security Enhancement Act of 2007 to make these standards the law of the land.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this critical national security effort.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, on November 8, 2007, I was absent from the House. Had I been present that day, I would have voted as follows:

''Yea'' on final passage of H.R. 3688, the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement—vote No. 1060.

''Yea'' on agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 806, Providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3222, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes—vote No. 1063.

''Yea'' on agreeing to the Conference Report for H.R. 3222, Making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes—vote No. 1064.

''Yea'' on Agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 802, Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3355) to ensure the availability and affordability of homeowners' insurance coverage for catastrophic events—vote No. 1066.

''Yea'' on the Motion to Instruct Conferees regarding H.R. 3074, the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 2008—vote No. 1067.

''Yea'' on Representative KLEIN of Florida Amendment No. 17 to H.R. 3355, the Homeowners' Defense Act of 2007—vote No. 1068.

''No'' on the following Amendments: Representative ROSKAM's Amendments 6 and 13, Representative MANULLO's Amendment and Mr. SHAYS' Amendment to H.R. 3355, the Homeowners' Defense Act of 2007—votes No. 1069, 1070, 1071, and 1072.

''No'' on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions H.R. 3355, the Homeowners' Defense Act of 2007—vote No. 1073.

''Yea'' on final passage of H.R. 3355, the Homeowners' Defense Act of 2007—vote No. 1074.

''Yea'' on Agreeing to the Senate Amendment to H.R. 3043, Making appropriations for the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes—vote No. 1075.

SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, far too often this country does too little to keep people out of the revolving door of our prison system. Rather than taking steps that will provide long-term, rehabilitative solutions that will lower recidivism rates, Congress has adopted short-term fixes like stricter sentencing standards that keep prisoners in prison longer and bring them back more frequently. Study after study has shown that this approach does not work, and yet we continue to build new prisons and fill them beyond capacity.

That is why I support H.R. 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007, which provides a new direction for our criminal justice system, one that focuses on helping prisoners turn their lives around and become contributing members of society. Specifically, H.R. 1593 allocates $110 million to support a variety of prisoner re-entry programs which include mentorship, housing, drug treatment, education and job training. All of these programs are designed to assist former inmates as they transition back into society and provide the support they need to keep them from returning to prison.

I support this bill because it will begin to reverse the misguided policy of instituting harsher laws that create longer mandatory sentences for crimes. This country sends more and more people to prison every year. A 2006 Justice Department report found that a record 7 million people, 1 in every 32 U.S. adults, were behind bars, on probation, or on parole last year. These statistics are especially troubling because not only does time spent in jail affect the prisoner; it also creates a vicious cycle that has a detrimental impact on their families. Research shows that children of incarcerated parents are three to six times more likely to exhibit violent or serious delinquent behavior than other children.

While, I believe strongly in securing appropriate prison sentences for people who break our laws, I also feel that it is important that we do everything we can to ensure that, when people get out of prison, they enter our communities as productive members of society. H.R. 1593 makes an important step toward changing our country's outlook on crime and punishment. I would like to thank my friend and colleague DANNY DAVIS for his tenacity and hard work on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably absent Tuesday afternoon, November 13, on very urgent business. Had I been present for the four votes which occurred Tuesday evening:

I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 3315, roll-call vote No. 1082.

I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 1593, roll-call vote No. 1083.

I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 3403, roll-call vote No. 1084.

I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 3461, roll-call vote No. 1085.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, on November 9, 2007, I was absent from the House. Had I been present that day, I would have voted as follows:

''Yea'' on agreeing to the Resolution, H. Res. 809, providing for the consideration of H.R. 3996, Temporary Tax Relief Act—vote No. 1078.

''Yea'' on final passage of H.R. 3996, the Temporary Tax Relief Act of 2007—vote No. 1081.

SUPPORTING WORLD DIABETES DAY

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today is World Diabetes day.

Diabetes is a serious, chronic disease afflicting over 20 million Americans. As the vice-chair of the Diabetes Caucus, I have had the opportunity to meet many people who must deal with the hardships and stress of living with diabetes 24/7. They have taught me what it means to ''go-low'' while participating in sports, to wake twice during the night to check blood sugar levels, and suffer from seizures. This is no way for anyone, especially children, to live.

Over the years, advances in medicine and technology have allowed patients to better manage their disease, but more work must be done in order to find a cure.

It is essential that Congress continue to support groundbreaking research at the NIH. We must also fight for federally funded stem-cell research, the greatest potential for finding a cure.

In honor of World Diabetes Day, I urge my colleagues to join me in the effort to help the millions who suffer from diabetes.

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, November 15, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

DECEMBER 12

10 a.m.

Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine a recently released Government Accountability Office report, focusing on funding challenges and facilities maintenance at the Smithsonian Institution.

SR–301

Daily Digest
Senate

HIGHLIGHTS

The House agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, Head Start for School Readiness Act.

The House agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 3074, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008.

The House passed H.R. 4156, Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008.

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S14353–S14423

Measures Introduced: Eight bills and five resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2349–2356, and S. Res. 378–382. **Page S14398**

Measures Reported:

S. 311, to amend the Horse Protection Act to prohibit the shipping, transporting, moving, delivering, receiving, possessing, purchasing, selling, or donation of horses and other equines to be slaughtered for human consumption. (S. Rept. No. 110–229)

H.R. 2089, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the ''Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office''.

H.R. 2276, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the ''Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3297, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 West Trenton Avenue in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Nate DeTample Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3307, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3308, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 East Main Street in Atwood, Indiana, as the ''Lance Corporal David K. Fribley Post Office''.

H.R. 3325, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, as the ''Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office''.

H.R. 3382, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 North William Street in Goldsboro, North Carolina, as the ''Philip A. Baddour, Sr. Post Office''.

H.R. 3446, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Michigan Avenue in Marshall, Michigan, as the ''Michael W. Schragg Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3518, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1430 South Highway 29 in Cantonment, Florida, as the ''Charles H. Hendrix Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3530, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 Highway 41 North in Inverness, Florida, as the ''Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Weaver Post Office Building''.

H.R. 3572, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building''.

S. 2107, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building''.

S. 2110, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the ''Larry S. Pierce Post Office''.

S. 2150, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building''.

S. 2174, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the "Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building".

S. 2290, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the "Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building". **Page S14397**

Measures Passed:

Enrollment Correction: Senate agreed to directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429. **Page S14387**

Breast Cancer Research Postage Stamp Extension: Senate passed S. 597, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years, after agreeing to the following amendments proposed thereto: **Page S14416**

Durbin (for Feinstein/Hutchison) Amendment No. 3676, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 4 years. **Page S14416**

Durbin (for Feinstein) Amendment No. 3678, to amend the title. **Page S14416**

Festival of Diwali: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 299, recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali, and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S14416–17**

Durbin (for Menendez) Amendment No. 3677, of a perfecting nature. **Page S14417**

International Commission on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 368, expressing the sense of the Senate that, at the 20th Regular Meeting of the International Commission on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the United States should pursue a moratorium on the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery to ensure control of the fishery and further facilitate recovery of the stock, pursue strengthened conservation and management measures to facilitate the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna, and seek a review of compliance by all Nations with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas' conservation and management recommendation for Atlantic bluefin tuna and other species, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Pages S14417–18**

Military Families: Senate agreed to S. Res. 378, recognizing and thanking all military families for the tremendous sacrifices and contributions they have made to the Nation. **Page S14418**

Feed America Thursday: Senate agreed to S. Res. 379, designating Thursday, November 15, 2007 as "Feed America Thursday". **Page S14418**

Hostelling International USA: Senate agreed to S. Res. 380, recognizing Hostelling International USA for 75 years of service to intercultural understanding and to youth travel. **Pages S14418–19**

Remembering and Commemorating Maryknoll Sisters: Senate agreed to S. Res. 381, remembering and commemorating the lives and work of Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and Cleveland Lay Mission Team Member Jean Donovan, who were executed by members of the Armed Forces of El Salvador on December 2, 1980. **Pages S14419–20**

World Diabetes Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 382, supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day. **Pages S14420–21**

Measures Considered:

Farm Bill Extension Act: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 2419, to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Page S14363–75, S14387–91**

Pending:

Harkin Amendment No. 3500, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S14363**

Reid (for Dorgan/Grassley) Amendment No. 3508 (to Amendment No. 3500), to strengthen payment limitations and direct the savings to increased funding for certain programs. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3509 (to Amendment No. 3508), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3510 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 3500), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3511 (to Amendment No. 3510), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

Motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Reid Amendment No. 3512. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3512 (to the instructions of the motion to commit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, with instructions), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3513 (to the instructions of the motion to recommit), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

Reid Amendment No. 3514 (to Amendment No. 3513), to change the enactment date. **Page S14363**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Harkin Amendment No. 3500 (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Friday, November 16, 2007. **Page S14387**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Friday, November 16, 2007. **Page S14387**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 10:30 a.m., on Thursday, November 15, 2007; that only certain amendments be in order, other than the pending amendments, and that they be subject to second-degree amendments that are relevant to the first-degree amendments to which they are offered; provided further, that all germane first-degree amendments be filed at the desk by 1 p.m., on Thursday, November 15, 2007, however Members do not need to refile any germane amendments already filed. **Pages S14421, S14388–89**

Head Start for School Readiness Act—Conference Report: By a unanimous vote of 95 yeas (Vote No. 409), Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, to expand access, clearing the measure for the President. **Pages S14375–87**

Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Rule XIV—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that when Senate begins the Rule XIV procedure with respect to H.R. 4156, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, that it be considered as having been initiated on Wednesday, November 14, 2007. **Page S14393**

Executive Reports of Committees: Senate received the following executive reports of a committee:

Report to accompany Tax Convention with Belgium (Treaty Doc. 110–3) (Ex. Rept. 110–2);

Report to accompany Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Denmark (Treaty Doc. 109–19) (Ex. Rept. 110–3);

Report to accompany Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Finland (Treaty Doc. 109–18) (Ex. Rept. 110–4); and

Report to accompany Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Germany (Treaty Doc. 109–20) (Ex. Rept. 110–5). **Pages S14397–98**

Messages from the House: **Page S14396**

Measures Referred: **Page S14397**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S14397**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S14397–98**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S14399–S14401**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S14401–95**

Additional Statements: **Pages S14395–96**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S14405–15**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S14415–16**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S14416**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—409) **Page S14386**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:17 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 15, 2007. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S14422.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

SHAREHOLDER RIGHTS AND PROXY ACCESS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine shareholder rights and proxy access, after receiving testimony from Christopher Cox, Chairman, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission; John J. Castellani, Business Roundtable, and Jeff Mahoney, Council of Institutional Investors, both of Washington, D.C.; Anne Simpson, International Corporate Governance Network, London, United Kingdom; and Dennis Johnson, California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), Sacramento.

FOREIGN GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine sovereign wealth fund acquisitions and other foreign government investments in the United States, focusing on assessing the economic and national security implications, after receiving testimony from David McCormick, Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs; Alan Larson, Covington and Burling, LLP, New York, New York; Edwin M. Truman, Peterson Institute for International Economics, and Patrick Mulloy, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, both of Washington, D.C.; and Gerald Lyons, Standard Chartered Bank, London, United Kingdom.

FEDERAL CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PROGRAM

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine ways to improve the Federal Climate Change Research and Information Program, after receiving testimony from John H. Marburger, III, Director, Office of Science

and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President; Jack A. Kaye, Director, Research Division, Office of Earth Science, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Donald F. Boesch, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Cambridge; Braxton C. Davis, Coastal States Organization, and Richard H. Moss, World Wildlife Fund, both of Washington, D.C.; Peter C. Frumhoff, Union of Concerned Scientists, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Lynne M. Carter, Adaptation Network, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia; and John R. Christy, University of Alabama Earth System Science Center, Huntsville.

GLOBAL NUCLEAR ENERGY PARTNERSHIP

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership relating to the United States policy on nuclear fuel management, after receiving testimony from Dennis R. Spurgeon, Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy, and Terry Wallace, Principal Associate Director for Science, Technology and Engineering, Los Alamos National Laboratory, both of the Department of Energy; Peter R. Orszag, Director, Congressional Budget Office; Neil E. Todreas, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Nuclear Science and Engineering, and Matthew Bunn, Harvard University Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, both of Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Pattabi Seshadri, Boston Consulting Group, Dallas, Texas.

FEDERAL ESTATE TAX

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the federal estate and gift tax rules, focusing on uncertainty in planning under the current law, after receiving testimony from Nevada State Senator Dean Rhoads, Tusacarora; Warren Buffett, Berkshire Hathaway, Omaha, Nebraska; Conrad Teitell, Cummings and Lockwood LLC, Stamford, Connecticut; and Eugene Sukup, Sukup Manufacturing Company, Sheffield, Iowa.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following:

S. 2324, to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) to enhance the Offices of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, with an amendment;

S. 2292, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002, to establish the Office for Bombing Prevention, to address terrorist explosive threats, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1667, to establish a pilot program for the expedited disposal of Federal real property, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1000, to enhance the Federal Telework Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2321, to amend the E–Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–347) to reauthorize appropriations;

H.R. 390, to require the establishment of a national database in the National Archives to preserve records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction and to provide grants to State and local entities to establish similar local databases, with an amendment;

H.R. 3571, to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to permit individuals who have served as employees of the Office of Compliance to serve as Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, or General Counsel of the Office, and to permit individuals appointed to such positions to serve one additional term;

S. 2174, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the ''Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building'';

H.R. 2089, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the ''Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office'';

H.R. 3297, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 West Trenton Avenue in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as the ''Nate DeTample Post Office Building'';

H.R. 3308, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 East Main Street in Atwood, Indiana, as the ''Lance Corporal David K. Fribley Post Office'';

H.R. 3530, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 Highway 41 North in Inverness, Florida, as the ''Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Weaver Post Office Building'';

H.R. 2276, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the ''Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building'';

H.R. 3325, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, as the ''Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office'';

S. 2110, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the ''Larry S. Pierce Post Office'';

H.R. 3382, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 North William

Street in Goldsboro, North Carolina, as the ''Philip A. Baddour, Sr. Post Office'';

S. 2290, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the ''Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building'';

S. 2272, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service known as the Southpark Station in Alexandria, Louisiana, as the John ''Marty'' Thiels Southpark Station, in honor and memory of Thiels, a Louisiana postal worker who was killed in the line of duty on October 4, 2007;

H.R. 3446, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Michigan Avenue in Marshall, Michigan, as the ''Michael W. Schragg Post Office Building'';

S. 2150 and H.R. 3572, bills to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4320 Blue Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri, as the ''Wallace S. Hartsfield Post Office Building'';

S. 2107 and H.R. 3307, bills to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the ''Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building'';

H.R. 3518, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1430 South Highway 29 in Cantonment, Florida, as the ''Charles H. Hendrix Post Office Building''; and

The nominations of W. Ross Ashley, III, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, and Ellen C . Williams, of Kentucky, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

MEDICAID PROVIDERS

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations concluded a hearing to examine Medicaid providers, focusing on a recent study conducted by the Government Accountability Office on unpaid taxes, the extent of the problem, and possible solutions, after receiving testimony from Gregory D. Kutz, Managing Director, Forensic Audits and Special Investigations, Government Accountability Office; Linda Stiff, Acting Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, and Kenneth R. Papaj, Commissioner, Financial Management Service, both of the Department of the Treasury; and Dennis G. Smith, Director, Centers for Medicaid and State Operations, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the following:

S. 911, to amend the Public Health Service Act to advance medical research and treatments into pediatric cancers, ensure patients and families have access to the current treatments and information regarding pediatric cancers, establish a population-based national childhood cancer database, and promote public awareness of pediatric cancers, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1551, to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to making progress toward the goal of eliminating tuberculosis, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1858, to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish grant programs to provide for education and outreach on newborn screening and coordinated followup care once newborn screening has been conducted, to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1916, to amend the Public Health Service Act to modify the program for the sanctuary system for surplus chimpanzees by terminating the authority for the removal of chimpanzees from the system for research purposes, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1382, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide the establishment of an Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1970, to establish a National Commission on Children and Disasters, a National Resource Center on Children and Disasters, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 901, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide additional authorizations of appropriations for the health centers program under section 330 of such Act, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

The nominations of Julie Fisher Cummings, of Michigan, Mark D. Gearan, of New York, Tom Osborne, of Nebraska, Alan D. Solomont, of Massachusetts, and Donna N. Williams, of Texas, all to be Members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, Charles E. F. Millard, of New York, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, and a promotion list in the Public Health Service.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law concluded a hearing to examine accountability for human rights violators in the United States, after receiving testimony from Sigal P. Mandelker, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Department of Justice; Marcy M.

Forman, Director, Office of Investigations, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security; David Scheffer, Northwestern University of School of Law Center for International Rights, Chicago, Illinois; Pamela Merchant, Center for Justice and Accountability, San Francisco, California; and Juan Romagoza Arce, La Clinica Del Pueblo, Washington, D.C.

NOMINATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Michael W. Hager, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Human Resources and Management, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following:

S. 2004, to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish epilepsy centers of excellence in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs; S. 2142, to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reimburse veterans receiving emergency treatment in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities for such treatment until such veterans are transferred to Department facilities;

S. 2160, to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a pain care initiative in health care facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

S. 2162, to improve the treatment and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and substance use disorders.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 18 public bills, H.R. 4172–4189; and 5 resolutions, H.J. Res. 64; H. Con. Res. 258; and H. Res. 823, 826–827 were introduced. **Pages H13958–59**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H13959–60**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H. Res. 824, providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3773) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to establish a procedure for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence (H. Rept. 110–449) and

H. Res. 825, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3915) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to establish licensing and registration requirements for residential mortgage originators, and to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans (H. Rept. 110–450). **Page H13958**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest Chaplain, Deacon Bob Little, St. Helena Catholic Church, St. Helena, California. **Page H13863**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a yea-and-nay vote of 221 yeas to 181 nays, with 2 voting "present", Roll No. 1094. **Pages H13863, H13888–89**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures which were debated on Tuesday, November 13th:

Expressing the sympathy and pledging the urgent support of the House of Representatives and the people of the United States for the victims of the devastating flooding in southern Mexico: H. Res. 812, amended, to express the sympathy and to pledge the urgent support of the House of Representatives and the people of the United States for the victims of the devastating flooding in southern Mexico, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 421 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 1087; **Pages H13873–74**

Support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews Act of 2007: H.R. 3320, to provide assistance for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 407 yeas to 13 nays, Roll No. 1088; and **Pages H13874–75**

Condemning the November 6, 2007, terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga: H. Res. 811, to condemn the November 6, 2007, terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 418 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 1089. **Page H13876**

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in honor of Augustus (Gus) Hawkins, former Member of Congress. **Pages H13875–76**

Head Start for School Readiness Act: The House agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, to reauthorize the Head Start Act, to improve program quality, and to expand access, by a yea-and-nay vote of 381 yeas to 36 nays, Roll No. 1090. **Pages H13876–84**

H. Res. 813, the rule providing for consideration of the conference report, was agreed to by voice vote after agreeing to order the previous question by a yea-and-nay vote of 224 yeas to 190 nays, Roll No. 1086. **Pages H13867–73**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures which were debated on Tuesday, November 13th:

PROTECT Our Children Act of 2007: H.R. 3845, amended, to establish a Special Counsel for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction within the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, to improve the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, to increase resources for regional computer forensic labs, and to make other improvements to increase the ability of law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute child predators, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 415 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 1091 and **Pages H13884–85**

Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual Predators Act of 2007: H.R. 719, amended, to require convicted sex offenders to register online identifiers, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 417 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 1092. **Page H13855**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To authorize additional appropriations for supervision of Internet access by sex offenders convicted under Federal law, and for other purposes.". **Page H13885**

Directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429: The House agreed by unanimous consent to H. Con. Res. 258, to direct the Clerk of the House of Representatives to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1429. **Page H13885**

Question of Consideration: The House agreed to consider H. Res. 817, providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, by a yea-and-nay vote of 197 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 1093. **Pages H13885–88**

Motion to Adjourn: Rejected the Lincoln Diaz-Balart motion to adjourn by a yea-and-nay vote of 150 yeas to 244 nays, Roll No. 1095. **Page H13891**

Motion to Adjourn: Rejected the Flake motion to adjourn by a yea-and-nay vote of 154 yeas to 252 nays, Roll No. 1100. **Pages H13901–02**

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008: The House agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 3074, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, by a yea-and-nay vote of 270 yeas to 147 nays, Roll No. 1102. **Pages H13896–H13901, H13902–04**

Rejected the Lewis (CA) motion to recommit the bill to the committee of conference by a yea-and-nay vote of 182 yeas to 231 nays, Roll No. 1101. **Page H13903**

H. Res. 817, the rule providing for consideration of the conference report, was agreed to by a recorded vote of 224 ayes to 194 noes, Roll No. 1098, and the House subsequently agreed to the motion to table the motion to reconsider the vote, by a recorded vote of 213 ayes to 194 noes, Roll No. 1099. Earlier, the House agreed to order the previous question by a recorded vote of 221 ayes to 195 noes, Roll No. 1096, and subsequently agreed to the motion to table the motion to reconsider the vote by a recorded vote of 221 ayes to 196 noes, Roll No. 1097. **Pages H13889–91, H13891–96**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Tuesday, November 13th:

Effective Child Pornography Prosecution Act of 2007: H.R. 4120, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for more effective prosecution of cases involving child pornography, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 409 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 1105. **Pages H13916–17**

Call of the House: On the Call of the House, 377 members reported their presence, Roll No. 1106. **Pages H13937–38**

Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008: The House passed H.R. 4156, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, by a yea-and-nay vote of 218 yeas to 203 nays with 1 voting "present", Roll No. 1108. **Pages H13917–37, H13938–43**

Rejected the Young (FL) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back to the House

forthwith with amendments, by a yea-and-nay vote of 192 yeas to 231 nays, Roll No. 1107.

Pages H13941–43

H. Res. 818, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 219 yeas to 190 nays, Roll No. 1104, after agreeing to order the previous question by a yea-and-nay vote of 209 yeas to 185 nays, Roll No. 1103.

Pages H13904–16

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow, November 15th. **Page H13943**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H13904.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Eighteen yea-and-nay votes and four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H13873, H13874, H13874–75, H13876, H13883–84, H13884, H13885, H13888, H13889, H13891, H13893, H13894, H13894–95, H13895, H13901–02, H13903, H13904, H13915, H13915–16, H13916–17, H13942–43, and H13943. There was one quorum call, Roll No. 1106, which appears on pages H13937–38.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 12 a.m.

Committee Meetings

CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a hearing on Capitol Visitor Center. Testimony was heard from Stephen T. Ayers, Acting Architect of the Capitol; Bernard Ungar, Capitol Visitor Center Project Executive, Architect of the Capitol; Terrie S. Rouse, CEO for Visitor Services, Capitol Visitor Center; Chief Phillip D. Morse, Sr., Chief of Police, U.S. Capitol Police; and Terrell Dorn, Director, Physical Infrastructure Issues, GAO.

AFRICA COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Held a hearing on Africa Command. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Defense: Ryan Henry, Principal Under Secretary, Policy; and GEN William E. Ward, USA, Command U.S. Africa Command; and Ambassador Stephen Mull, Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State.

COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2007

Committee on Education and Labor: Began mark up of H.R. 4137, College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007.

Will continue tomorrow

MERIDA INITIATIVE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Held a hearing on the Merida Initiative: Assessing Plans to Step Up our Security Cooperation with Mexico and Central America. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of State: Thoms A. Shannon, Jr., Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; and David T. Johnson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

U.S.-GREECE RELATIONS AND REGIONAL ISSUES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe held a hearing on U.S.-Greece Relations and Regional Issues. Testimony was heard from R. Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary, Political Affairs, Department of State.

TSA SECURITY TEST TIP OFF

Committee on Homeland Security: Held a hearing entitled "Cover Blown—Did TSA Tip Off Airport Screeners about Covert Testing?" Testimony was heard from Edmond S. Hawley, Assistant Secretary, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; Gregory Kutz, Managing Director, Office of Forensic Audits and Special Investigations, GAO; and a public witness.

ONLINE GAMBLING ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

Committee on the Judiciary: Held a hearing on Establishing Consistent Enforcement Policies in the Context of Online Wagers. Testimony was heard from Representatives Berkley and Goodlatte; Catherine Hanaway, U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Missouri, Department of Justice; Valerie Abend, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Critical Infrastructure Protection and Compliance, Department of the Treasury; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Held a hearing on the following bills: H.R. 2445, To amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act to recognize Alexander Creek as a Native village; H.R. 3350, Alaska Native Veterans Land Allotment Equity Act; H.R. 3351, Native American Challenge Demonstration Project Act of 2007; and H.R. 3560, Southeast Alaska Native Land Entitlement Finalization Act. Testimony was heard from Michael Nedd, Assistant Director, Minerals, Realty and Resource Protection, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior; Melissa Simpson, Deputy Under Secretary, Natural Resources and Environment, USDA; Ben

Erulkar, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Economic Development, Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce; and public witnesses.

STATE DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR GENERAL

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Held a hearing on Assessing Whistle Blower Allegations Against the State Department Inspector General. Testimony was heard from Howard J. Krongard, Inspector General, Department of State.

MERCURY DENTAL FILLINGS ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Domestic Policy held a hearing on the Environmental Risks of and Regulatory Response to Dental Mercury Amalgam. Testimony was heard from Ephrain King, Director, Office of Science and Technology, EPA; Norris Alderson, M.D., Director, Office of Science and Health Coordination, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

MILITARY ACTION IN IRAN

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs continued hearings on Iran: Reality, Options and Consequences, Part 3—Regional and Global Consequences of U.S. Military Action in Iran. Testimony was heard from COL Lawrence Wilkerson, USA (ret.), former Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to Secretary of State Colin Powell; COL Samuel B. Gardiner, USAF (ret.), former faculty member, National War College, the Naval War College, and the Air War College; Paul Pillar, former National Intelligence Officer, Near East and South Asia, 2000 to 2005 and Deputy Director, CIA Counterterrorism Center; LTG Paul K. Van Riper, USMC (ret.) former Commanding General of the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Command; and a public witness.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS MORTGAGE REFORM AND ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING ACT OF 2007

Committee on Rules: Granted by a non-record vote, a structured rule providing one hour of general debate on H.R. 3915, Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending act of 2007, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment and shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment in the nature of a substitute except for clause 10 of rule XXI.

The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in this report. The amendments made in order may be offered only in the order printed in this report, may be offered only by a Member designated in this report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in this report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment except as specified in this report, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendments except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI are waived. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule provides that, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker. Testimony was heard from Chairman Frank and Representatives Maloney of New York, Watt, Miller of North Carolina and Pryce of Ohio.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS RESTORE ACT OF 2007

Committee on Rules: Granted, by a vote of 7 to 2, a closed rule providing for further consideration of H.R. 3773, the "RESTORE Act of 2007." The rule provides for further consideration of the bill pursuant to House Resolution 746.

The rule provides that time for debate on the bill pursuant to House Resolution 746 shall be considered as expired. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for one hour, with 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary and 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. The rule provides that the further amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this rule shall be considered as adopted. Testimony was heard from Chairman Conyers and Chairman Reyes and Representatives Smith of Texas and Hoekstra.

SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTING

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Urban and Rural Entrepreneurship held a hearing on Program Harmonization in Rural America—How the Small Business Administration and the Department of Agriculture Can Work Together to Better Serve

Small Businesses. Testimony was heard from William Shear, Director, Financial Markets and Community Investments, GAO; Leon Milobar, Nebraska Office, SBA; and public witnesses.

HEALTH CARE GAPS AND INCOME SECURITY

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support held a hearing on Effects of Gap in Health Coverage on Work, Family and Opportunity. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BRIEFINGS—HOT SPOTS AND CYBER

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Met in executive session to receive a briefing on Hot Spots. The Committee was briefed by departmental witnesses.

The Committee also met in executive session to receive a briefing on Cyber. The Committee was briefed by departmental witnesses.

STATE LEADERSHIP TOWARDS LOW-CARBON ENERGY FUTURE

Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. Held a hearing entitled ''State Leadership Towards a Low-Carbon Energy Future.'' Testimony was heard from the ng Governors: Eliot Spitzer, New York and Janet Napolitano, Arizona.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the state of the United States Army, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Space, Aeronautics, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine issues facing the United States space program after retirement of the space shuttles, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine S. 2203, to reauthorize the Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to continue hearings to examine S. 2191, to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program to decrease emissions of greenhouse gases, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the anti-drug package for Mexico and Central America, 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine restoring Congressional intent and protections under the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101–336), 2 p.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, to hold joint hearings with the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on State, Local, and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration to examine the national level of preparedness of the United States to respond following a radiological dispersion device (RDD) or ''dirty bomb'' attack, focusing on the coordination with and capabilities of federal, state, and local governments to work together, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 352, to provide for media coverage of Federal court proceedings, S. 2248, to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, to modernize and streamline the provisions of that Act, S. 344, to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings, S. 1638, to adjust the salaries of Federal justices and judges, S. Res. 366, designating November 2007 as ''National Methamphetamine Awareness Month'', to increase awareness of methamphetamine abuse, S. Res. 367, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the mass movement for Soviet Jewish freedom and the 20th anniversary of the Freedom Sunday rally for Soviet Jewry on the National Mall, and the nominations of Joseph N. Laplante, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Hampshire, Reed Charles O'Connor, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Thomas D. Schroeder, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina, and Amul R. Thapar, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: business meeting to consider the nomination of Michael W. Hager, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Human Resources and Management), time to be announced, room to be announced.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

Special Committee on Aging: to hold hearings to examine nursing home transparency and improvement, focusing on federal, state, and industry initiatives to improve nursing home transparency, enforcement, and the quality of services in the country's 16,000 nursing homes, 1:30 p.m., SD–G50.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, hearing on strategic communications and countering ideological support for terrorism, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and Labor, to continue mark up of H.R. 4137, College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007, time to be announced, 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 1216, Cameron Gulbransen Kids and Cars Safety Act of 2007; and HR. 4040, Consumer Product Safety Modernization Act, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight, hearing on Diplomatic Assurances on Torture: A Case

Study of Why Some Are Accepted and Others Rejected, 3 p.m., 2237 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response, hearing entitled ''Leveraging Mutual Aid for Effective Emergency Response,'' 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, oversight hearing on Protecting the Playroom: Holding Foreign Manufacturers Accountable for Defective Products, 9:30 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 4074, San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act; H.R. 2176, To provide for and approve the settlement of certain land claims of the Bay Mills Indian Community; H.R. 4115, To provide for and approve the settlement of certain land claims of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians; H.R. 123, To authorize appropriations for the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund; H.R. 236, North Bay Water Reuse Program Act of 2007; H.R. 2085, McGee Creek Project Pipeline and Associated Facilities Conveyance Act; and H.R. 3739, To amend the Arizona Water Settlements Act to modify the requirement for the statement of findings, 11 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, hearing on One Year Later: Have TSA Airport Security Checkpoints Improved? 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, hearing on the Next Generation Border and Maritime Security Technologies: H.R. 3916, To provide for the next generation of border and maritime security technologies, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, hearing on Reducing the Regulatory Burden on Small Business: Improving the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing on Aviation and Airport Holiday Travel Preparations, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing to review Pending MGIB legislation, 1 p.m., 340 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Health, hearing on Trends in Nursing Home Ownership and Quality, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, executive, briefing on IC Clearance and Security Concerns, 4:30 p.m., H–405 Capitol.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, November 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 60 minutes), Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 2419, Farm Bill Extension Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, November 15

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Vote on the President's Veto of H.R. 3043—Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008. Consideration of H.R. 3915—Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2007 (Subject to a Rule) and H.R. 3773—RESTORE Act of 2007 (Subject to a Rule).

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