

side stood here in the dark, with their charts and graphs, blaming Democrats for high gas prices.

If only we would allow drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf, they said, the oil companies would expand exploration and produce oil in record amounts. Well, we opened up the OCS for the first time in 20 years, and now the oil companies are free to explore and drill without restriction.

But the oil companies are reducing exploration. That's right. We opened up the OCS to the oil companies and they responded by cutting back on exploration.

Where is the outrage from my colleagues on the other side?

Congress did its part. So when gas prices inevitably go back up, I hope they will focus their "Drill Baby Drill" chants directly on the oil companies.

IRAN IS THE WORLD THREAT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Israel and Hamas are at war. But make no mistake about it, it's the little fellow from Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and his radical religious cronies of hate that are the ones that are behind this troubling turmoil in the lands of the Middle East.

For years Iran has supported the twin tribes of terror, Hamas and Hezbollah, by supplying arms and equipment and training. In 2006 Iran used the hired guns of Hezbollah in Lebanon to war with Israel.

Hamas has proudly proclaimed that it's had its soldiers of terror trained in Iran. Now Hamas is firing long-range Iranian missiles from Gaza into civilian areas of Israel. And the bandit group, Hezbollah, is getting blamed for new missile attacks into northern Israel.

As the nations of the world, especially Egypt, attempt to broker a cease-fire between Hamas and Israel, they would do well to deal with the real culprit in this war, Iran.

Until the world recognizes that President Ahmadinejad is determined to destroy Israel by any means necessary, there will never be peace in the Middle East. Iran has made its intentions clear to the world. World leaders need to make it clear to Iran that murder in the name of hate, will not be tolerated on the world stage.

And that's just the way it is.

OUR ECONOMY IS IN A SHAMBLES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. After 8 years of disastrous Bush-led trickle-down deregulation, anything-goes economic policies, our economy is in a shambles. Unemployment, foreclosures, they're skyrocketing.

We need to rebuild the foundations of our economy, putting Americans back

to work and putting our economy on a path to recovery.

I congratulate the President-elect with his sense of urgency. Shovel-ready infrastructure projects, he's put that on everybody's mind. That's excellent, tremendous public support. Unfortunately, the package is a little short on infrastructure and shovel-ready, and very long on tax cuts, the same policies that failed us during the Bush years. Five times as much for tax cuts.

Will \$8 a pay period additional in their take-home put Americans back to work? It's good for Americans. They're suffering. But will that rebuild our economy, put people back to work?

Will a look back for the banks so they can get tax benefits, they can reclaim taxes they paid in the past, while taking TARP money and not telling us what they do with it, will that put Americans back to work?

We need more investment in infrastructure and less emphasis on the tax cuts.

RECOGNIZING SOUTH CAROLINA JAG CORPS

(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 the South Carolina National Guard. In 2008 they achieved the highest number of judge advocate generals serving in the Nation, according to Scott Bell, National Guard historian. This significant milestone is a tribute to the South Carolina Bar and to the professional leadership of Colonel Barry Bernstein, state judge advocate for the South Carolina National Guard. Twenty-four of the State's 27 JAGs have been awarded Global War on Terrorism campaign medals.

As a former staff judge advocate, I understand and appreciate and know firsthand the work that our JAG Corps has done to provide legal counsel to our military leadership and to our brave men and women in uniform. There is an important part of the defense of American families by defeating terrorists overseas. I saw this when I visited the 218th Brigade JAG during quarterly visits in the last year at Camp Phoenix in Afghanistan.

I commend Colonel Bernstein and Adjutant General Stan Spears for their leadership and all the members of the South Carolina JAG Corps on this achievement.

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

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN WILL INVEST IN AMERICA'S FUTURE AND CREATE JOBS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, the deepening effects of the economic crisis

have made their way to the kitchen table of every American home, leaving families worried about their financial future. That's why we need immediate passage of an economic recovery plan to avoid a deeper economic downturn and restore jobs. In addition to giving the economy a short-term boost, we must spur economic growth and competitiveness for the long-term stability of this country.

This economic recovery package is an opportunity to invest in tomorrow by making major changes to our Nation's approach to energy, health care, education and infrastructure. Addressing our Nation's infrastructure challenge will create jobs in the troubled construction and manufacturing sectors, while helping to spur long-term economic growth. Highway projects could create 630,000 jobs, while green school construction and maintenance and repair initiatives for schools could create 250,000 jobs.

Madam Speaker, we must work quickly and in strong bipartisan fashion to create and save 3 million jobs.

CONSUMER AUTO RELIEF ACT

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Consumer Auto Relief Act, or CAR Act, a bill that I plan to introduce later today. This bill will provide a variety of incentives to the purchasers of new cars, and will incentivize lenders to loan the money to finance these new automobile purchases.

This legislation is about giving American consumers much needed tax relief. It's about stimulating consumer credit markets. It's about restoring consumer confidence. It's about jump-starting our stalled economy, and it should be a part of the new economic stimulus package.

I ask the House to support this bill.

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT AND THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for two important bills that we will consider later today. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act both advance the fight to ensure equal pay for women in the workforce.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women make 78 cents for every dollar earned for similar work by their male counterparts. This form of discrimination is unacceptable, and it not just a women's issue, it is a family issue. The Institute of Women's Policy Research found that this wage disparity will cost an individual woman anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million over a lifetime in

lost wages. We can easily imagine the impact on a woman's life, as well as her children's.

I am proud to support these important measures which make the American promise of opportunity more accessible to women and to their families.

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THE STATE AND LOCAL SALES TAX DEDUCTION EXPANSION ACT

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, on the day following the President-elect's call for a new \$1 trillion spending package free from earmarks, House Democrats are bringing to the floor two bills that represent little more than an earmark for the trial bar.

Given the current state of the economy, it is inconceivable that Congress move forward with more ways to restrict the ability of honest employers to run their businesses. Instead, we need to focus our attention on stimulating the economy without earmarks for special interest groups. Congress can do this by providing tax cuts to spur investment on alternative energy—or how about first-time home purchases?—and implement common-sense tax changes like the State and Local Sales Tax Deduction Expansion Act, which I am introducing today.

These ideas will stimulate the economy immediately without hurting small businesses. It will be helping small businesses. Let's reject earmarks for the trial bar. Let's pass tax relief for working Americans and spur job growth.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

RECOGNIZING ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST ATTACKS FROM GAZA

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 34) recognizing Israel's right to defend itself against attacks from Gaza, reaffirming the United States' strong support for Israel, and supporting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 34

Whereas Hamas was founded with the stated goal of destroying the State of Israel;

Whereas Hamas has been designated by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization;

Whereas Hamas has refused to comply with the Quartet's (the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations) requirements that Hamas recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, and agree to accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians;

Whereas in June 2006, Hamas illegally crossed into Israel, attacked Israeli forces, and kidnapped Corporal Gilad Shalit, whom they continue to hold today;

Whereas Hamas has launched thousands of rockets and mortars against Israeli population centers since 2001, and has launched more than 6,000 such rockets and mortars since Israel withdrew its civilian population and its military from Gaza in 2005;

Whereas Hamas has increased the range and payload of its rockets, reportedly with support from Iran and others, putting hundreds of thousands of Israelis in danger of rocket attacks from Gaza;

Whereas Hamas locates elements of its terrorist infrastructure in civilian population centers, thus using innocent civilians as human shields;

Whereas Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in a statement on December 27, 2008, that "We strongly condemn the repeated rocket and mortar attacks against Israel and hold Hamas responsible for breaking the cease-fire and for the renewal of violence there";

Whereas on December 27, 2008, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said, "For approximately seven years, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens in the south have been suffering from missiles being fired at them . . . In such a situation we had no alternative but to respond. We do not rejoice in battle but neither will we be deterred from it. . . . The operation in the Gaza Strip is designed, first and foremost, to bring about an improvement in the security reality for the residents of the south of the country";

Whereas the humanitarian situation in Gaza, including shortages of food, water, electricity, and adequate medical care, is becoming more acute;

Whereas Israel has facilitated humanitarian aid to Gaza with hundreds of trucks carrying humanitarian assistance and numerous ambulances entering the Gaza Strip since the current round of fighting began on December 27, 2008;

Whereas on January 6, 2009, before the United Nations Security Council, Secretary Rice stated that: "The situation before the current events in Gaza was clearly not sustainable. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis lived under the daily threat of rocket attack, and frankly, no country, none of our countries, would have been willing to tolerate such a circumstance. Moreover, the people of Gaza watched as insecurity and lawlessness increased and as their living conditions grew more dire because of Hamas's actions which began with the illegal coup against the Palestinian Authority in Gaza. . . . A ceasefire that returns to those circumstances is unacceptable and it will not last"; and

Whereas the ultimate goal of the United States is a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will ensure the welfare, security, and survival of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with secure borders, and a viable, independent, and democratic Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representa-

(1) expresses vigorous support and unwavering commitment to the welfare, security, and survival of the State of Israel as a Jew-

ish and democratic state with secure borders, and recognizes its right to act in self-defense to protect its citizens against Hamas's unceasing aggression, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter;

(2) reiterates that Hamas must end the rocket and mortar attacks against Israel, recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence, agree to accept previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinians, and verifiably dismantle its terrorist infrastructure;

(3) encourages the Administration to work actively to support a durable and sustainable cease-fire in Gaza, as soon as possible, that prevents Hamas from retaining or rebuilding its terrorist infrastructure, including the capability to launch rockets and mortars against Israel, and thereby allowing for the long-term improvement of daily living conditions for the people of Gaza;

(4) believes strongly that the lives of innocent civilians must be protected to the maximum extent possible, expresses condolences to innocent Palestinian and Israeli victims and their families, and reiterates that humanitarian needs in Gaza should be addressed promptly and responsibly;

(5) calls on all nations—

(A) to condemn Hamas for deliberately embedding its fighters, leaders, and weapons in private homes, schools, mosques, hospitals, and otherwise using Palestinian civilians as human shields, while simultaneously targeting Israeli civilians; and

(B) to lay blame both for the breaking of the "calm" and for subsequent civilian casualties in Gaza precisely where blame belongs, that is, on Hamas;

(6) supports and encourages efforts to diminish the appeal and influence of extremists in the Palestinian territories, and strengthen moderate Palestinians who are committed to a secure and lasting peace with Israel;

(7) calls on Egypt to intensify its efforts to halt smuggling between Gaza and Egypt and affirms the willingness of the United States to continue to assist Egypt in these efforts;

(8) calls for the immediate release of the kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who has been illegally held in Gaza since June 2006; and

(9) reiterates its strong support for a just and sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict achieved through negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in order to ensure the welfare, security, and survival of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state with secure borders, and a viable, independent, and democratic Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.