

security because democratic governance fosters more stable countries and regions, and free nations are more peaceful towards other democracies. Democracy promotion funding, started under President Reagan, has grown to its current consistent level of \$70 million. Sustained congressional support for HRDF is critical.

Promoting democracy and human rights is a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy goals and the advancement of our national interests because it is the most effective long-term way to strengthen international stability. By reducing regional conflicts, countering terrorism and terror-supporting extremism, and extending peace and prosperity, the U.S. protects liberty and justice and the non-negotiable demands of human dignity.

The Human Rights and Democracy Fund is the foundation for U.S. support for democracy and human rights across the globe. With HRDF, the U.S. addresses the most egregious of human rights abuses, open political space in struggling and nascent democracies and authoritarian regimes, promote religious freedom and tolerance, support civil society, protect at risk populations, and further global internet freedom and corporate social responsibility throughout the world. With HRDF, the United States was able to help counter extremism by supporting at risk populations in the Middle East, thereby reducing breeding grounds of future terrorists. DRL was able to provide thousands of Haitians with internet and radio access in the immediate aftermath of the Hurricane there.

The Human Rights and Democracy Fund is enabling the U.S. to implement innovative programs across Africa. In Morocco, the Democracy Fund supports justice sector institutions to develop alternatives to pre-trial detention of youth offenders that enable rehabilitation outside of prison. To stem gender-based violence (GBV) in the war-torn region of eastern Congo, the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) initiative provided legal assistance to victims of sexual violence. As a result, 296 GBV survivors received legal counseling and 212 survivors received psychological counseling; 98 criminal complaints were filed against suspected perpetrators; and an unprecedented 25 rape convictions were secured. In Sudan, in response to widespread violence against women in Darfur, DRL used Democracy Fund appropriations to provide critical services and community outreach to survivors of gender-based violence. Through the establishment of women centers, tens of thousands of women received an array of services, including literacy classes, health education, income-generating activities and treatment for sexual violence including medical, psychosocial, and case management services.

Without HRDF, victims will lose valuable avenues for recourse, civil society activists will become increasingly isolated, women will become more vulnerable, and truth-telling journalists will be quieted. DRL would not be able to support efforts to push the Chinese government to more actively disclose food and drug safety information that directly affects the well-being of the American public; foster critical advances in the rule law, including criminal justice reform; support the growth of the NGO sector and its advocacy on behalf of the marginalized in society; or widen space for religious freedom. Without HRDF, DRL would

not be able to help male civic and religious leaders be a powerful voice for the rights of women in Afghanistan.

I urge my colleagues to support democracy and human rights in the developing world by voting NO on the Reed/Graves amendment #380.

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 18, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011. This ill conceived bill imposes draconian spending cuts that harm working families and, if implemented, could cause 1 million Americans to lose their jobs. Even worse, this bill hampers our country's ability to compete with other rising world powers, like China and India, by imposing draconian cuts to education, research, and infrastructure investments.

At a time when education is critical to thriving in our global economy, the Republican led House is undermining America's future. Specifically, today's legislation would reduce the Pell Grants award by \$845, causing over 9.4 million college students to suffer from increased levels of educational debt. Additionally, 218,000 children will be immediately dropped from Head Start program and 7,000 special education teachers will lose their jobs. House Republicans also want to reduce job training programs by \$3.6 billion, cutting training for more the 200,000 Americans who lost their jobs in this "Great Recession."

H.R. 1 will cut \$740 million in WIC nutrition assistance and thus cause thousands of low-income children to lose access to nutritional foods and health coverage. During one of the coldest winters in memory, Republicans propose to cut \$400 million to the low-income Home Energy Assistance Program—literally leaving many of our fellow citizens out in the cold. They also would abolish Title X funding, thus cutting life-saving health services such as HIV testing, cancer screening, blood-pressure testing, and contraceptive services to more than five million low-income women, the majority of whom are uninsured. \$1.3 billion is cut from Community Health Centers, which would deny care to over 3.2 million Americans. Lastly, 75,000 homeless veterans would lose their housing vouchers under this bill.

With the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Democrats boldly showed that investing in America's infrastructure could put America to work, while laying the groundwork for future private sector investment. With this measure, Republicans would seek to undo that commitment and move our country backwards with billions in cuts to transportation funding. H.R. 1 would cut \$2.5 from high speed rail projects that have been

already awarded and eliminate funding for High Speed Rail Corridors. It would also eliminate 750 fewer wastewater and drinking water projects. 25,000 TIGER Surface Transportation Projects would be terminated.

During the Great Depression, conservatives advocated for reduced spending at a time when the government needed greater investments in job creation. This unfortunate decision prolonged that economic malaise and resulted in untold levels of human suffering by millions of Americans. With H.R. 1, today's conservatives are simply repeating these failed economic policies. We cannot allow this. Republican "No Jobs Agenda" to succeed. I encourage my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF
THE SUMGAIT MASSACRE

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 18, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, next week marks the twenty-third anniversary of the Sumgait massacre. I stand today to recognize the massacres in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, and the continued Turkish and Azeri aggression against the Armenian people.

In late February of 1988, during what was supposed to be a period of glasnost and perestroika within the Soviet Union, Armenians, who had been the target of genocide in the early part of the 20th century by the Ottoman government, were under assault by the Azeri authorities in the town of Sumgait in Azerbaijan. This three-day rampage left dozens dead and hundreds injured, many burned alive. Women and minors were abused, scores of apartments were robbed, shops and kiosks were demolished, and thousands of people became refugees.

The Sumgait massacre is but one example in a long line of Azerbaijan's aggression and hostility against the Armenian people. Just two years later, the disappearance of a 450,000 strong Armenian community in Azerbaijan was witnessed. While Azerbaijan claims that events in Baku were about the liberation of Azerbaijani people from the Soviet occupation, the truth is that Mikhail Gorbachev had to send Soviet troops to the Azerbaijani capital to stop the mass killings and deportations of Armenians organized by the Government of Azerbaijan. The unfortunate fact is that the Azerbaijani Government was successful in ethnic cleansing and the mass deportation of the entire Armenian population of Baku.

Despite the attempt by the Government of Azerbaijan to cover up the crimes of Sumgait and Baku, enough brave witnesses came forward to give an accurate account of the offenses. Having survived near annihilation at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish authorities, it is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Armenian people that they were able to endure and overcome another genocide campaign during the pogroms that took place throughout Azerbaijan, including in its capital city of Baku.

Many Armenians have marked the anniversary of the Sumgait massacre by organizing a march here in Washington from the Embassy of Turkey to the Embassy of Azerbaijan in