

counterterrorism, military and humanitarian missions.

The United States has a very real and expanding interest in Central Asia. The United States looks forward to working closely with our partner The Kyrgyz Republic to successfully eliminate global terrorism and bring peace and stability to the region.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, October 11, 2005.

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC ON THE PRESENCE OF THE U.S. MILITARY IN THE REGION

Following is the text of a joint statement issued by the United States of America and the Kyrgyz Republic on the Presence of the U.S. Military in the Region.

Kyrgyzstan understands the need to resolve urgently the military and political situation in Afghanistan, to contain the sources of terrorism and to create peaceful conditions for the social, economic and democratic development of the country.

In this regard, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic recognizes the important contribution of the international anti-terrorist Coalition, located at the Ganci Airbase, in strengthening regional stability. The Kyrgyz side will continue to take part in these and other joint efforts of the international community to contend with modern-day challenges and threats to security.

We support the presence of Coalition Forces in the Kyrgyz Republic until the mission of fighting terrorism in Afghanistan is completed, a mission supported by the United Nations.

The governments of the United States and the Kyrgyz Republic express their readiness to review the transparency of investments made for the use of the Manas Airport and at the same time to discuss other organizational and technical questions.

Regarding its domestic policy, Kyrgyzstan intends to continue its orientation toward strengthening democratic principles and carrying out a decisive battle against corruption in order to create the necessary conditions for sustainable development.

ADAM ERELI,
Deputy Spokesman.

FREEDOM FOR ORLANDO ZAPATA
TAMAYO

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Orlando Zapata Tamayo, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Zapata Tamayo is a member of the Alternative Republican Movement as well as a member of the National Civic Resistance Committee. Because of his belief in freedom and democracy, Mr. Zapata Tamayo has been a constant target of the tyrant's machinery of repression. According to Amnesty International, he was detained and harassed by the dictatorship's thugs on July 3, 2002 and October 28, 2002. In November 2002, after taking part in a workshop on human rights in the central Havana park, he and eight other dictatorship opponents were arrested again. He was also arrested and thrown into the totalitarian gulag in December 2002.

Mr. Zapata Tamayo, knowing full well the heinous repression that awaited him if he con-

tinued to advocate for freedom for the people of Cuba, never wavered in his convictions. Unfortunately, on May 20, 2003, he was arrested again for taking part in a hunger strike to demand the release of Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet. According to Information Bridge Cuba-Miami, in a sham trial, Mr. Zapata Tamayo was sentenced to 3 years in the totalitarian gulag for the supposed crimes of "public disorder, disobedience and resisting authority."

Brave men and women like Mr. Zapata Tamayo represent the best of mankind. He and other pro-democracy activists languish in abhorrent dungeons, defy the dictator's machinery of repression and, despite every threat and obstacle, relentlessly demand liberty for the people of Cuba. Because of their unwavering dedication and the hard work and commitment of countless other patriots, Cuba will be free again.

Mr. Speaker, it is categorically unacceptable that, while the world stands by in silence and acquiescence, Mr. Zapata Tamayo languishes in a grotesque gulag because of his belief in freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We cannot permit the brutal treatment by a demented and murderous tyrant of a man like Mr. Zapata Tamayo for simply supporting freedom for his people. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Orlando Zapata Tamayo and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2360,
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2006

SPEECH OF

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the 2006 homeland security spending plan is something we must enact to sustain our ongoing efforts to protect the American people from harm. For that reason, I will support it. However, I have strong reservations with the bill.

First, the Republican majority has attached a plan to fundamentally reorganize the Department of Homeland Security to this must-pass bill—effectively forfeiting the oversight responsibility of the Congress. They are willingly making these sweeping changes, despite the fact that no meaningful hearings, discussions, or analyses have taken place on this proposal.

My colleagues, there are many lessons to be learned from Hurricane Katrina that ought to be incorporated into any restructuring plan of our Department of Homeland Security. Yet, the Republican majority has not only failed to undertake a full investigation of what went wrong in the Gulf Region, but it is now denying Congress the opportunity to appropriately study or amend Secretary Chertoffs proposed changes—which were submitted one month prior to the hurricane. This is wrong, and denies us the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of the last few months so that we might do better in the future.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, while this bill represents an attempt to make up for some of the funding shortfalls in the President's fiscal year 2006 homeland security budget—allocating

\$1.3 billion more for homeland security efforts this year than proposed by the Administration—it still does not adequately fund essential security initiatives that are needed to protect our citizens.

Specifically, the measure cuts by \$60 million funding for Firefighter Grants. It also fails to provide the level of funding needed to fully protect our Nation's ports which, according to the Coast Guard, will cost \$4.8 billion.

Our constituents are depending on us to keep them safe from harm and the nation free from terror. This bill fails to live up to our promise—and this Administration's promise—to provide real leadership in the face of real threats.

Mr. Speaker, I will reluctantly vote for this measure because it would be irresponsible to cut off funding for our homeland security efforts altogether. But, from my seat on the Budget Committee, I will continue to work to ensure that Congress lives up to its responsibility to provide strong leadership and to meet the Nation's security needs.

IN HONOR OF THE 2ND ANNUAL
RAMADAN IFTAR DINNER IN
CLEVELAND, OHIO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of the 2nd Annual Ramadan Iftar Dinner, hosted once again by the Cleveland Office of the Ohio Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). This joyous celebration reflects the significance of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, a sacred event reflecting the core values of the Islamic religion: a steadfast devotion to faith, peace, family and heritage.

Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of the religion of Islam and one of the central forms of Islamic worship. Throughout the entire ninth month of the Islamic Calendar year, Muslims show their devotion to God by fasting daily from daybreak until sundown. The sacred month of Ramadan is a time of giving, gratitude to God and sacrifice, which serves to unify Muslims around the world with a great sense of connection to all humanity.

Muslim Americans comprise a significant number of citizens in Greater Cleveland and across America. Moreover, the Muslim community greatly enriches the diverse fabric of our culture. Muslim Americans contribute immensely within all aspects of society, including premier achievements in science, medicine, business, religion, government service, education and art. The leaders and members of the Cleveland Office of the Ohio Chapter of CAIR remain focused on their vital mission: to enhance understanding of Islam, protect civil liberties and establish community coalitions to promote justice and mutual respect.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of American Muslims of Greater Cleveland and Muslims around the world. We also stand in tribute to the leaders and members of CAIR, for celebrating the sacred month of Ramadan with our community, at the 2nd Annual Ramadan Iftar Dinner. This interfaith gathering is reflective of the freedoms of our democratic society and underscores a deep and abiding honor and respect

for individuals of all cultures and faiths, there-
by strengthening our entire Nation.

GASOLINE FOR AMERICA'S
SECURITY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 7, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, as our nation continues to reel from the tragic effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we need to have an honest debate about our nation's energy policy and dependency on foreign sources of oil. The recent natural disasters along the Gulf Coast not only revealed the failures of our federal emergency plans, they also exposed the vulnerability of our nation's refineries and oil and gas pipelines. A comprehensive energy policy that promotes efficiency and invests in alternative energy is desperately needed. The proof is at the pump—consumers are facing soaring prices on the road, and record heating costs will await them at home this winter. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that home heating prices will experience the biggest annual increase in three decades. In my state of Minnesota, the largest natural gas utility is projected to charge 77 percent more than last year.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today appears to reflect the wishes of special interests, not the reality facing ordinary Americans. This Republican bill promotes consumption and increases pollution but does nothing to lower the cost of gasoline, reduce our dependency on foreign oil, or keep our environment clean.

It was very disappointing that the Rules Committee rejected a very important amendment, which I would have supported, offered by Rep. GUTKNECHT of Minnesota. This amendment would have added a 10 percent ethanol requirement for all gasoline sold in the United States by the year 2010. Minnesota is a leader in renewable fuels, having enacted a 10 percent ethanol requirement in 1997. Unfortunately, the House was denied the opportunity to consider this worthy amendment.

This bill severely limits the use of ethanol and homegrown fuels by creating a federal fuels list limited to two diesel and four gasoline fuel blends for the entire nation. If a state or local program wished to promote a cleaner-burning fuel, the EPA could deny the plan on the grounds that it would interrupt the fuel supply in surrounding states.

This bill also fails to protect the American consumer from price gouging. As prices soared in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, refineries cashed in. The industry reported a 255 percent increase in profits from just one year prior. Provisions in this bill, however, target only retailers, many who show only marginal gains during price hikes. These anti-gouging measures are also limited to disaster zones, leaving consumers in the rest of the country at the industry's mercy.

H.R. 3893 further exploits these natural disasters by rolling back basic environmental and public health protections. Cities with the most persistent smog problems would be allowed to delay their cleanup deadlines for many years. The bill also requires the president to des-

ignite sites for new refineries on federal land, with no exemptions for national wildlife refuges and national forests.

When it comes to our energy policy, Americans can no longer afford business as usual. The Democratic energy plan offered by Representatives BART STUPAK and RICK BOUCHER, which I support, is a reality-based solution to our energy needs. This package provides meaningful relief to American consumers and small businesses by promoting efficiency and investing in alternative sources of power.

The Stupak-Boucher bill establishes a Strategic Refinery Reserve to allow for the release of refined product during energy emergencies. This reserve would maintain a capacity of five percent of the total U.S. daily demand for gasoline and home heating oil. This would double the spare capacity that currently exists and would help curb the skyrocketing prices that disproportionately affect seniors and low-income households.

The Democratic plan provides real protection from price gouging by covering the entire production and supply chain. In addition to gasoline, it would protect against price gouging of propane, natural gas, and home heating oil. It would extend beyond disaster zones to anywhere in the country price gouging occurs.

The Republican-controlled Rules Committee demonstrated their intolerance for energy efficiency by rejecting the Boehler/Markey amendment. This amendment would have increased the fuel efficiency standards of cars and trucks from twenty-five to thirty-three miles per gallon by 2016. By reducing our consumption of gasoline we could have relieved market pressure and decreased our dependency on foreign oil.

Now is the time to invest in the next generation of efficient technologies and to move our nation toward a sustainable and energy-independent future. I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 3893 and support the Democratic substitute.

IN HONOR OF DOLORES ALFANO

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Dolores Alfano upon her receipt of the Sister Ann Marguerite Gildea Award given by the Ministry of Caring, Inc. Mrs. Alfano's dedication to community and charitable giving make her a more than worthy honoree.

Mrs. Alfano's community service and fund raising career stretches well over 30 years. She has managed the finances of presidential candidate, former congressman and governor Pete DuPont and directed charitable giving at MBNA of America, the largest independent credit card issuer in the United States. Additionally, Mrs. Alfano served as the head of the Republican State Committee throughout the 1980s. In addition to her meaningful contributions to the Delaware political system, Mrs. Alfano is on the United Way of Delaware Board.

Tonight, Mrs. Alfano will be honored by many distinguished friends and family at a function honoring her contributions to the city

of Wilmington and the State of Delaware. Mrs. Alfano has served Delaware skillfully and diligently. Throughout her career, Mrs. Alfano has raised well over one-hundred million dollars for various Delaware charities.

Mrs. Alfano recently founded DV Alfano Consulting. Mrs. Alfano will continue to work in her field of expertise, raising money for worthwhile causes. It is truly a pleasure to know that such a motivated and altruistic individual calls Delaware her home.

I congratulate and thank Mrs. Alfano for all she has contributed to the City of Wilmington and the State of Delaware.

FOLLOW BLACK VOTERS TO
NATIONAL SALVATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the recently reported unprecedented two percent approval rating of President Bush's overall performance shows that the wisdom of African American voters is escalating. To save our republic, mainstream American voters should follow this enlightened leadership. The smoke and mirrors, Disney World fantasy of Bush policies is hypnotizing only two percent of the Black voters. This emperor has no clothes on and we'll all catch pneumonia if we follow him. Where, in domestic or international history, has any group reached more insightful political conclusions and made more sophisticated democratic choices?

In the street language of my youth, the "trick bags" and "okie doke" of every day living causes a lot of suffering in Black communities. Forced to be perpetual victims African Americans have developed a greater immunity to the glitter of the phony and the fraudulent. Lessons like New Orleans are not forgotten after the media grows weary of spotlighting the truth. Blacks understand why Bush and the American majority that elected him refused to acknowledge the heroism of the thousands who spent several nights smothering under a blanket of heat and darkness in the dome and the convention center. To make the world understand better the credit these evacuees deserve for not going mad under those conditions, every basketball game this season should begin with a few minutes of silence after all of the lights in the arena have been shut off.

"Shoot to kill" was the earliest and strongest clear message to emerge from the babbling public officials responsible for the New Orleans debacle. Branding the hero victims as undesirable, provided the perfect setup for their later mistreatment by a "reformed" FEMA. The presidential executive order suspending the Davis-Bacon law and the nullification of all affirmative action regulations sent further messages informing the storm wracked Blacks that they had been permanently profiled as unworthy of the regular protections and benefits of their government.

Ninety-eight percent of Blacks understand what most Americans refuse to acknowledge: That the truly dangerous and costly corruption was not exposed by the looting of the New Orleans supermarkets. No, the massive, systematic no bidding contract process now underway on the Gulf Coast for Halliburton and