

REPUBLICAN OVERSIGHT
FAILURES

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the Iraq war, House Republicans have rubber-stamped every war supplemental the President has sent to Congress with very few questions about how the money is being spent.

House Democrats have repeatedly tried to get Republicans to join us in supporting the creation of a select committee to investigate government contracting.

The committee would be similar to the Truman Committee during World War II, which, under Democratic Senator Harry Truman's leadership, held hundreds of hearings and fact-finding missions into contracts approved by the Democratic Roosevelt administration.

Truman did not see this as a partisan issue, and said, unlike Republicans today, he took his oversight responsibilities seriously.

The Truman investigation saved the American taxpayer an estimated \$15 billion. Just think how much money we could save the American taxpayer today. Under Halliburton's two largest Iraq contracts, Pentagon auditors found \$1 billion in questioned costs and \$400 million in unsupported costs, and these discoveries are from Pentagon auditors.

Just think what we could discover from a real congressional investigation. It is time for the Republican rubber-stamping to end.

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DEMOCRATS HAVE A WEAK
RECORD ON NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today Democrats are scheduled to host a media stunt to unveil their so-called strategy on national security issues. While I am sure that the Democrats will talk the talk, actions speak far louder than words. The American people need to look beyond the Democrats' spin and study their record on these issues. When they do, they will see the Democrats have no credibility, because they voted against many measures to keep our country safe.

Cases in point: Republicans voted to pass the major border security bill in December, but Democrats, led by their minority leader, opposed the bill. Republicans voted to pass the PATRIOT Act to keep Americans safe, but Democrats, led by their minority leader, opposed the bill. Republicans voted to pass the REAL ID Act to make sure that people who received driver's licenses are here legally. The Democrats, led by their minority leader, again opposed the bill.

If this was not bad enough, Democrats are trying to cut \$60 billion from military weapons systems that keep our brave men and women in uniform safe. If Democrats want to talk the talk like they are for strong national security, then they need to start walking the walk.

GRACE PESHKUR

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Grace Peshkur and her family on the occasion of her fourth birthday today. Grace is an extraordinary child who has endured a life of struggle, and yet she has persevered against a rare skin disease and genetic disorder called epidermolysis bullosa, or EB for short.

Grace is an inspiration to many Long Island families who have rallied around her. She has helped raise awareness about EB, which I had never heard of before meeting Grace.

Over 12,000 Americans like Grace are afflicted with EB. The symptoms are fragile skin, recurrent blisters and painful sores caused by minor rubbing and that can be aggravated by routine activities we take for granted, like eating, walking and even changing clothes.

For Grace and her family, every day that goes by is another battle won. I admire the Peshkur family and over 12,000 other Americans afflicted with EB who fight this disease and are working to raise awareness, find better treatments and, ultimately, discover a cure.

In lieu of a fourth birthday present for Grace, I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor H. Res. 335, which would raise awareness by creating an EB awareness week.

Mr. Speaker, we can only imagine the difficulty that Grace and her family face on a daily basis, but we can do something about it. We can provide the hope and promise of a cure.

DEMOCRAT "NATIONAL SECURITY
AGENDA"

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Democrat leaders are planning to make big news at a press conference later today. What is the news? That they are tough on national security. This kind of claim coming from congressional Democratic leaders leaves the American people scratching their heads. It is one thing to hold an election-year conference full of tough talk on national security issues; it is quite another thing to back that talk up with your voting record.

Unfortunately, their rhetoric doesn't match their record. Where were the Democrat leaders when it came time to vote for the PATRIOT Act or for border security legislation or armed serv-

ices recruiting or the REAL ID Act? Given the chance, they often line up against our Nation's national security initiatives, again and again and again.

It is Democrats who would like to censure President Bush for authorizing the NSA terrorist surveillance program. It is Democrats who want to unilaterally withdraw from the Iraqi front in the war on terror. A news conference to announce Democrat leaders are tough on national security, that certainly is big news.

ENERGY PRICES

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, gasoline prices are once again on the rise. Over the last 2 weeks, prices are up by 14 cents, 40 cents higher than at this same time last year. Americans are looking to Washington for relief, but no relief has occurred. That is because House Republicans rubber-stamped in secret by a Cheney energy task force, whose participants are still not known to the American people.

Based on the final law, one can only assume that the American consumer was not represented at those closed-door meetings. The Bush administration, Mr. Speaker, has admitted that this energy law will do absolutely nothing to reduce the pain Americans feel when they fill up at the pump.

In fact, according to the President's own administration, the final energy law will actually lead to higher gasoline prices. As gas prices increase in the coming weeks, the American people should blame House Republicans who rubber-stamped an energy policy written by and for Big Oil at the White House.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS REMAIN
COMMITTED TO SUCCESS IN IRAQ

(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. Mr. Speaker, Ralph Waldo Emerson once said that an ounce of action is worth a pound of theory. As I listen to theories of doom and gloom about our military operations in Iraq, I am proud that American soldiers remain focused to successfully accomplish their mission to protect American families. Last week, the U.S. director of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office reminded us of the tremendous progress that has been made in Iraq over the last 3 years.

Ambassador Daniel Speckhard reported that Iraq's per capita annual income increased from \$500 per person in March 2003 to \$1,200 today. More than 30,000 Iraqi businesses have been registered in the past year. Iraq now has a free press, more than 2,000 Internet cafes, and more than 5 million cell phone users.