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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 22, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM PRICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

SUGAR

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Later this week, there will be consideration of an amendment from Mr. FLAKE of Arizona and me dealing with the notorious sugar subsidy program, proposing a tiny reduction in it. For anyone who wants a lesson in how your government works, a review of the politics surrounding the sugar quota system is a textbook example of how the political process can distort reality and why. A Dear Colleague letter is circulating touting the benefits of a “no

cost to the taxpayer sugar program.” This does not pass the straight face test anywhere in America but Washington, DC. The most junior intern working in any congressional office who is doing independent research can quickly verify that this is not a “no cost program.” There are huge costs to the taxpayer, the government and the environment.

Straight off the top, this “no cost program” requires American consumers to pay almost \$2 billion a year more for sugar and sugar-related products. Only in Washington, DC would \$2 billion be “no cost.” Then there is the loss to industries for whom paying two to three times the price of the world price of sugar makes a big difference. There used to be a thriving confectionery industry, manufacturing in Hershey, Pennsylvania; in New England, in Chicago. Many of these jobs have since disappeared, being driven across the border to Canada, Mexico or elsewhere where sugar prices are dramatically lower. Only the powerful sugar lobbyists and the people who listen to them would think that \$2 billion a year that will be required to store and purchase surplus sugar over the next 10 years would be no cost.

One of the most perverse effects of the sugar program has been to dramatically increase cane sugar production in the State of Florida. Over the last 50 years the amount of acreage surrounding the Everglades has increased 800 percent. All of this sugar production is in the Everglades. This expansion has devastating consequences. Pollution, polluted runoff, and changed water flow attributed to the sugar industry is a significant reason why we are paying seven to \$8 billion as a down payment to clean up the Everglades and redo the plumbing. The sugar lobbyists in Washington, DC would lead you to believe that this is no cost.

How can this be? How can people pretend to believe this claptrap? Well, an

important reason this travesty continues is to be found in campaign contribution reports. This industry is only 1 percent of American agriculture, yet it spends 17 percent of the campaign contributions for agriculture and countless millions more lobbying and producing bogus surveys currently circulating on Capitol Hill.

I suggest if Members want to do a favor for the environment, for the taxpayer, allow a junior intern to do your research to determine whether or not this has no cost. This research done by any college economics student, in any college political science class, or by the outstandingly bright young men and women who work for us as volunteers on Capitol Hill right now as interns can demonstrate to any Member's satisfaction that it is not worth the cost. It is time to approve the Blumenauer-Flake amendment.

THE LEGACY AND LIFE OF CARMEN ANAYA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Carmen Anaya was a remarkable human being. Her life of 79 years both inspires and teaches us. Born in Monterrey, Mexico; a teacher, she moved to the United States as a young woman and married José Anaya.

For the next 20 years as their family grew, they worked as migrant farm workers all across America—harvesting cherries in Michigan, tomatoes in California, potatoes in Oregon, and sugar beets in the Dakotas. Eventually they opened a small general store in Las Milpas in the Texas Rio Grande Valley.

In Spanish, a “milpa” is a temporary field that is cultivated for a few seasons. But the colonia of Las Milpas was

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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the permanent home of thousands who lacked running water, had no paved roads and no jobs that offered a way to escape poverty. Even worse, most residents had little hope for a better future for themselves or for their children.

In 1982, Mrs. Anaya joined with other people of faith to found Valley Interfaith, a nonprofit coalition of over 40 churches that, with the work of lead organizer Elizabeth Valdez, has now expanded to represent some 60,000 Valley families. Valley Interfaith leaders already knew how to cultivate fields, but together they learned how to cultivate hope and justice. For more than two decades, they have put their faith into action to help the impoverished help themselves and to hold elected officials accountable at all levels of government.

With the very active and the very vocal participation of Mrs. Anaya, Valley Interfaith brought clean drinking water to over 160,000 residents of colonias like Las Milpas; secured living wage ordinances and raised the salaries of thousands; and, with a new job training program, have found jobs for another 1,500.

Above all, through her work with Valley Interfaith, Mrs. Anaya inspired her neighbors to believe in themselves, in their communities, and in their ability to bring about change. Those once isolated and frustrated are now an organized voice with the ability to demand justice.

Last Monday, I visited with the Anaya family at their home in Las Milpas shortly after the celebration of a funeral mass in the Parish of Santa Cabrini at which Ernesto Cortez, Jr., who continues to provide the leadership for a network of groups like Valley Interfaith, spoke of her leadership and tenacity in a eulogy. Mrs. Anaya loved her church at which she attended choir practice twice a week. At the rosary, Ofelia de los Santos, a friend through whom I got to know Mrs. Anaya, spoke of her involvement of her church in the quest for social justice.

St. Frances or Santa Cabrini, as she is known in the Valley, is a saint who is the patroness of immigrants. And it was Carmen Anaya, an immigrant to our Nation, who spread the gospel through her words and deeds. Her example is particularly significant in the course of the ongoing national debate about immigration. Because two farm workers came across the Rio Grande to do hot, hard, demanding work, America has gained not only from their labors but from their six children:

José, Jr., who operated the family store, now works for the city of Pharr.

Diana and Consuelo each provide leadership for our country's future as public school principals.

Minerva, or Minnie, a retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel, is now a homebuilder with her husband, retired Green Beret colonel, Chris St. John.

Eduardo, Eddie, an attorney and certified public accountant, has the only law office in Las Milpas.

Linda, a nurse, is an administrator at Cornerstone Regional Hospital.

The life of service of any one child would be enough to make a parent proud. But think how much our country gains and continues to gain from the service of each of these six children. Her life and her children say more about family values than a thousand speeches from the floor of this Congress. And in the ongoing national debate about immigration, we should reflect on her legacy. Mexican immigrants like Carmen and José Anaya have offered much to their adopted land. America is the stronger for their presence.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Monsignor Francis J. Maniscalco, Director of Communications, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

"The Lord takes delight in His people."

How important it is for us to know that You, our Maker, take delight in us; to know that all that exists came from You in a joy of creation that goes beyond what we can imagine; to know that amidst all the glories made by Your hand, it is the human race that You made in Your own image.

We are called to answer Your delight with delight of our own: delight in praising Your name when we begin our day and when we end it; delight in calling to mind that You are with us throughout the day; delight in dedicating what we say and do to Your glory; delight in serving our sisters and brothers in the human family and in loving them as we love ourselves; and when this earthly life at last comes to an end, delight in living in Your presence forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PENCE 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.

FREEDOM IS WINNING 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. Mr. Speaker, this weekend with the news of the adoption of a new government in Iraq, the silence was deafening. You could hear a pin drop among the critics of U.S. policy in Iraq.

But there it was. Prime Minister al-Maliki kept his word. He named 39 cabinet ministers, each of whom was approved by more than 90 percent of the 275-member elected Iraqi Parliament, the first government of Iraq formed since the toppling of Saddam Hussein.

May God bless Prime Minister al-Maliki and all those brave ministers in his new government; for despite what you read, despite some of what you see, freedom is winning in Iraq and this new government's formation stands for that truth.

CRUEL AND UNUSUAL

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, raped for more than an hour, sometimes by two gang members at once, they cried out for help. Tortured by six gang members, they begged for their lives.

As those gangsters strangled them with a belt, they clutched at it, hoping for air. The murderers, holding each end of the belt, pulled so hard, the belt snapped in two. Just to make sure that 14-year-old Jennifer Ertman and 16-year-old Elizabeth Pena were dead, the six gang members stomped on their necks with their boots.

Five of the killers were sentenced to death by separate Texas juries. Today, 13 years later, Elizabeth's parents and Jennifer Ertman's parents wait for justice and sob, wait for executions that were stayed.

The Supreme Court believes participating in a brutal gang rape and murder just months before your 18th birthday makes you too young for the death penalty, so two sentences were commuted. Now the others have had their executions stayed by the same arrogant, elitist judges, who wonder if lethal injection is cruel and unusual punishment.

Mr. Speaker, maybe not today, maybe not the next day, but some day, judges will treat victims with the same concern and compassion that they treat barbarians.

And that's just the way it is.

CORPORATE HERO: HOME DEPOT

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the continued good work by an Atlanta-based company in helping rebuild the hurricane ravaged gulf coast.

Nine months after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the area, Home Depot continues to play a lead role in reconstruction. The region remains in need, and to date Home Depot has contributed over \$11 million to the relief efforts, and their employees have volunteered countless hours and resources to help rebuild the region. The company has vowed to continue their work to make sure that the region realizes that rebirth. And while it may be easy for a company to pledge support early when the spotlight is on, it is admirable to see Home Depot still out there with hammer and nails in hand months after the media frenzy has subsided.

While time has passed, Home Depot's enthusiasm and compassion for the victims of this disaster has not. It is important to recognize these ongoing efforts and all the people continuing to aid in the recovery.

Mr. Speaker, the gulf coast region remains in need of a helping hand, and Home Depot is an outstanding example of corporate responsibility and compassion.

TRIBUTE TO LUCKY MONDRES

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, many of our colleagues and staff who are on the Hill today may not remember Marvin "Lucky" Mondres, but those of us who have been around for a while will recall Lucky ran Representative Burke's Washington office for several years.

Our paths first crossed when I served at the Interior Department and Lucky was my counterpart as the congressional liaison officer for the Commerce Department in the early 1970s.

He served with distinction at Commerce and in several other Departments in both the Nixon and Ford administrations. Members on both sides of the aisle came to know that if they needed information or assistance, they could depend on Lucky to be forthright and diligent in providing it.

I want to share the news that Lucky is battling the final stages of cancer. But as those who know him would guess, he is not dwelling on that but is focused on living each day to the fullest, just as he has done his entire life.

In his retirement years in Massanutten in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, he has devoted his time to his children and his grandchildren, with some charity work along the way, and always some time for golf.

We want to thank Lucky for his public service and his contributions to our country and ask the Good Lord to bless him.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 after 6:30 p.m. today.

HURRICANE RELIEF EXTENSION
ACT OF 2006

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5354) to authorize the Secretary of Education to extend the period during which a State educational agency or local educational agency may obligate temporary emergency impact aid for elementary and secondary school students displaced by Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5354

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 "Hurricane Relief Extension Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR OBLIGATION OF TEMPORARY EMERGENCY IMPACT AID FOR DISPLACED STUDENTS.

Notwithstanding sections 107(f) and 110 of title IV (commonly known as the "Hurricane Education Recovery Act") of Division B 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; 119 Stat. 2680), the Secretary of Education may extend the period during which a State educational agency or local educational agency may obligate temporary emergency impact aid for elementary and secondary schools that enroll students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina or Rita.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds as follows:

(1) According to the Department of Education, more than 370,000 students were unable to attend school in the weeks following hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

(2) According to the Department of Education, 158,000 students remained displaced as of October 1, 2005, and are eligible for impact aid.

(3) The unprecedented nature of this crisis and the massive dislocation of students prompted the Congress in 2005 to approve the Hurricane Education Recovery Act to provide money to reopen schools in the Gulf Coast region and an additional \$645 million for impact aid.

(4) The Congress included stringent time lines in the Hurricane Education Recovery Act to ensure the money would quickly be sent to the local educational agencies to help the schools in need.

(5) The Department of Education accelerated the application process in order to quickly release education-related relief.

(6) A significant portion of the recovery aid, both restart and impact aid, has yet to reach damaged schools and local educational agencies.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—The Congress urges State educational agencies to expeditiously distribute education relief funds received under title IV (commonly known as the "Hurricane Education Recovery Act") of Division B 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; 119 Stat. 2680) to impacted schools and institutions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 5354.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5354, the Hurricane Relief Extension Act of 2006, amends the Hurricane Education Recovery Act to allow the Secretary of Education to extend, beyond the 2006 school year, the period during which a State educational agency or local educational agency may obligate temporary emergency impact aid for elementary and secondary schools that enroll students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina or Rita.

In addition, the bill includes a sense of the Congress that urges State educational agencies to distribute expeditiously any education relief funds received under such act to impacted schools and institutions.

I want to thank Chairman MCKEON and the Education and the Workforce Committee staff for working with me on this legislation.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita created real and pressing educational needs in the gulf coast region. According to the U.S. Department of Education, more than 370,000 students were unable to attend school in the weeks following the hurricanes. About 158,000 students were still displaced as of October 1, 2005, and are eligible for impact aid. More than 1,100 schools, public, private, and parochial, were still closed 2 weeks after the storms.

In the immediate days after the hurricanes hit, I worked closely with my colleagues on the Education and the Workforce Committee to assess the damage caused by the storms and to move forward and send Federal aid to the highest need areas in the shortest amount of time possible. We supported an innovative electronic reimbursement proposal that would have enabled

parents and schools to bypass government bureaucracy and receive Federal aid more quickly.

□ 1415

Unfortunately, many of our colleagues opposed these efforts as a backdoor attempt to implement a voucher system. Let me be emphatic: That was not the case. This proposal would have prevented the delays we are now seeing in Federal support reaching our teachers and students who most need it.

As an alternative, when Congress passed the Hurricane Education Recovery Act in December, we included stringent timelines to ensure the money would quickly be sent to local educational agencies to help schools in need. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education accelerated the application process for these funds in order to quickly release education-related relief. Yet, Federal education aid is still not reaching the ground in many Gulf States, including my home State of Louisiana.

I recently visited Johnson Bayou High School in my congressional district in Cameron Parish hit directly by Hurricane Rita, and school officials had yet to receive one penny in Federal assistance. This was only 3 to 4 weeks ago. A headline last month in the *Baton Rouge Advocate* read, "East Baton Rouge Schools Await Hurricane Funds." At an April 26 Education and Workforce Committee hearing, education leaders from throughout the gulf coast testified that Federal aid had yet to make its way to the local level.

This bill allows the Secretary to set a date to obligate the funds for displaced students that is beyond the end of the school year because several districts have indicated the difficulty in meeting the current statutory July 31 date. The extension of this date will give the districts the extra time needed to ensure the funds are obligated toward the allowable expenditures from the 2005–2006 school year.

The bill makes certain that the funds can only be used for expenses from the 2005–2006 school year and that the funds will not be extended into the 2006–2007 school year. These funds are desperately needed by the districts to help with the costs associated with educating the displaced students.

Districts should not have to return the funds because they were not able to obligate them by the July 31 deadline. Mr. Speaker, schools should not be penalized because bureaucratic red tape has delayed the process on the State level, which, to me, is very unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5354, the Hurricane Relief Extension Act of 2006.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5354, the Hurricane Relief Ex-

ension Act, and thank Mr. BOUSTANY for introducing this very important measure.

Mr. Speaker, in March of this year, Democrats from the House Committee on Education and the Workforce traveled to New Orleans and surrounding areas to survey and see firsthand the damage left by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The members of the delegation were clear in their assessment: Until you see the damage firsthand, it is very, very difficult to understand the magnitude of these storms and what the devastation that they left behind is.

The school systems in the gulf coast were hit particularly hard. The wind tore off roofs of schools, and storm surges brought additional water into classrooms, sometimes reaching over 10 feet. These school systems, both public and private, lost books, computers and desks. Teachers, principals and students lost their homes to the storms.

At the time of the delegation's visit, families had started to return to the area, and due to the leadership of local superintendents, principals and teachers, students were returning to the classrooms. Across the country, school systems in nearly every State opened their doors to enroll displaced students. They continued to educate these children, expending their own resources to meet the increased enrollments.

In spite of the pressures on schools to reopen and enroll displaced students, it was not until December, nearly 5 months after the levees broke, that Congress designated funds to assist schools along the gulf coast and the schools that had taken in displaced students. And it appears Congress did not live up to its own promise. The funds provided were less than what was promised, nearly one-third less.

H.R. 5354 does not fix the funding problem, nor does it address the challenges these same schools will have next year, particularly those in New Orleans, which expect their enrollment to double in the fall. H.R. 5354 will, however, resolve an immediate issue by extending the time in which funds are to be obligated for the current school year.

H.R. 5354 also addresses a concern heard by the delegation during its visits to schools that State educational agencies were delaying the distribution of these funds to local school systems. As such, H.R. 5354 includes a sense of the Congress that urges States to expedite the release of these funds to local school districts.

Families are eager to return to their communities, but will only do so if they can be assured that their children can attend school. H.R. 5354 will assist schools in their efforts to educate displaced students and reopen schools.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman on the other side of the aisle, Mr. BOUSTANY, for bringing this bill to the floor, and urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close at this time. I want to thank my colleague, the gentlelady from New York, for her support, and for all the support of my colleagues across the aisle. I think this is an important piece of legislation, because much of the money that we have obligated has not reached where it needs to go, to those students and schools in need.

When I was back home just about 2 months ago, I was at a school in Erath, a small town that was devastated by flooding, and they were rebuilding the school. In fact, they had just reopened some of the classrooms there. One of the teachers showed me her bright new shining classroom, freshly painted with a new bookshelf, and she had actually spent \$1,600 of her own money to do that, because the Federal money that we had obligated had not reached the ground level. So I am urging the States to release the money that we have sent down so that we can get the money where it needs to be to take care of those students in need and get those schools up and running.

With that, I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5354.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5354, the Hurricane Relief Extension Act. I thank my Education and the Workforce Committee colleague, Mr. BOUSTANY, for his work on this measure—and for his efforts on behalf of his constituents in the wake of last fall's hurricanes.

Last year, the Gulf Coast endured one of the worst series of hurricanes in our nation's history. Students, workers, retirees, and families from the region were impacted in ways seemingly incomprehensible before the storms struck.

The Education and the Workforce Committee and this Congress have been active in driving legislation to provide resources to schools and families as part of the recovery effort. Last year, led by Mr. BOUSTANY and his Louisiana colleague, Representative JINDAL, we passed legislation to reimburse public, including charter, and private schools that have enrolled displaced students and to help those schools get supplies and equipment to help educate those students.

Now, as the academic year during which Katrina and Rita struck draws to a close, we want to ensure that available money will be used by the schools and districts. The bill before us today will allow the U.S. Secretary of Education to extend the date by which these funds must be obligated to beyond the end of this school year. While the funds must still be used on expenses for the 2005/2006 school year, by extending the obligation date, the districts and schools will be able to make sure that funds are used on appropriate expenses and do not have to be returned to the federal government. It is not just a necessary move—but an appropriate one as well.

Last month, the Education and the Workforce Committee held a hearing highlighted by educators from across the Gulf Coast region. We listened as they discussed the challenges faced and successes achieved by Gulf Coast schools in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and

Rita. And we heard them provide their unique insights into what we have done well with regard to education in the Gulf Coast region, as well as what obstacles we still face.

Unfortunately, some officials testified that they have yet to receive their full, expected sum of federal impact aid dollars. And as we consider this legislation today, I am especially hopeful that some of the bureaucratic problems we've witnessed in the past several months will end—and end soon.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is this: as educators, joined by parents and students from the region, work to rebuild an academic way of life, they ought to have all of the necessary tools at their disposal. The measure we are considering today takes a major step toward providing just that. And I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5354.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE IN SUPPORT OF THE GOALS OF NATIONAL ONE-STOP MONTH

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 808) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in support of the goals of National One-Stop Month.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 808

Whereas national workforce professional organizations and the local workforce investment boards will celebrate National One-Stop Month from May 1 to 31, 2006;

Whereas workforce investment boards and One-Stop delivery system were created under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and are designed to provide a full range of employment solutions to employers and job seekers in a single location;

Whereas more than 600 workforce investment boards and 2,000 One-Stop Career Centers are enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation by providing workforce solutions for hundreds of thousands of employers annually across the United States;

Whereas, in the spirit of the Workforce Investment Act, the cornerstones of maximizing customer choice, employment and training solutions, and universal access are the primary missions of the One-Stop delivery system, allowing more than 14,000,000 job seekers annually the opportunity to connect with the tools they need for their next career opportunity;

Whereas each year the One-Stop delivery system and regional workforce investment boards contribute to the competitiveness of the Nation's workforce by providing training assistance through grants to job seekers and employed workers and other programs to more than 400,000 Americans so they may upgrade or acquire new skills; and

Whereas, in the spirit of the Workforce Investment Act, the private sector leadership

of the regional workforce investment boards provides the planning, oversight, and accountability of workforce strategies that succeed in communities across the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals of National One-Stop Month; and

(2) supports the efforts of the workforce investment boards and One-Stop delivery system in preparing the Nation's workforce.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 808.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, associations representing the local workforce development community have declared May National One-Stop Month. I rise this afternoon in support of H. Res. 808, which expresses the support of the House of Representatives for the goals of National One-Stop Month and supports the work of the Nation's local workforce investment boards.

The one-stop delivery system this resolution recognizes is a product of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, or WIA. WIA consolidated numerous Federal training programs and integrated employment and training services at the local level in a more unified workforce development system. Local business-led workforce investment boards now direct the activities of the system.

One of the hallmarks of WIA is the establishment of One-Stop Career Centers to provide re-employment services and job training to individuals looking for a new or better job. The centers were developed to increase access to Federal and State resources available to help individuals obtain employment of their choice.

While WIA funds are available for occupational training, there are numerous other Federal programs that provide employment assistance. These programs, including adult education, vocational rehabilitation, veterans employment programs and more, must make their services available through the centers. WIA created One-Stop Career Centers to provide a single point of access for individuals desiring services through these programs. The one-stop delivery system also provides labor market information regarding the kinds of jobs currently available in a local area, data on growing industries and job listings to assist individuals in making informed career choices.

Over 2,000 one-stop centers across the Nation have connected millions of individuals with the tools they need to find their next employment opportunity, while helping employers find the workers they need.

The economy is dynamic, and research shows that the types of growing industries are changing. The Nation's job training programs are critical to our ongoing effort to equip Americans with the resources and skills they need to find a new or better job in today's knowledge-based economy. Local workforce investment boards have responded to these challenges by creating comprehensive services to assist our workforce.

Approximately 5.2 million new jobs have been created since August of 2003. With solid and consistent job growth in high-wage, high-skill occupations, renewing and strengthening the Federal investment in workforce development and job training is more critical than ever. Last year, this House approved legislation to reauthorize WIA and renew the one-stop delivery system, and we hope for further action on that legislation to build upon the success already attained. Yet in the interim, we know our local community leaders remain committed to providing the best services possible for the Nation's job seekers.

I commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness, Congressman RIC KELLER of Florida, for introducing this measure to highlight the critical assistance that the local boards and the one-stop delivery system provide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of National One-Stop Month. For over 30 years, Congress has worked hard on a bipartisan basis to create a job training system that works well for both employers and employees.

During the Clinton administration, job training advocates developed the idea of a universal system, a one-stop job training system that would provide needed job search, placement and training services to all job seekers who walked through its doors. The system would also be a one-stop system for employers, providing outreach and matching services to enable employers to find workers with the job skills that they need.

Approximately 2,000 one-stop centers and the workforce boards that oversee them now exist in all of our communities, providing a 21st century resource for all. This system is an investment in our economy and in our country.

But that investment is also under attack. For the past 6 years, the administration and this Congress have been cutting funding for the one-stop system. The one-stops have not had a single inflation adjustment in 6 years. The

one-stops have actually had their budgets cut about \$700 million since 2001. This Congress has failed to reauthorize the one-stop system, and has insisted on opening it up to religious discrimination, which has never existed or been a problem for years. Most recently, in its 2007 budget request, the administration proposed effectively eliminating the one-stop system and turning it into a voucher program run by the Governors.

Democrats believe in job training to help workers improve their skills and find good-paying jobs to support their families. Democrats believe in helping employers find workers with the skills they need to compete in the global economy. In order to truly help employers and employees, we must adequately fund the one-stops and our job training system.

□ 1430

This is a low-cost investment in our future. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to support improved funding for a 21st-century job-training system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close at this time. We have no further speakers. Again, I thank my colleague from New York for her support and the support of all Members across the aisle for this resolution.

Let me just close by saying that in the aftermath of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, I personally visited some of these one-stop shops in my district and was really impressed with the work that they were doing.

They were very successful in matching up those in need of jobs with available jobs. And so this is a worthy resolution. I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 808, a measure expressing support for the goals of National One-Stop Month. As we stand here today we find ourselves in an increasingly competitive job market, one in which the knowledge and skills of each job seeker play a critical role in determining whether the individual will succeed. And while our economy has created more than 5.2 million new jobs since August 2003, we still have work ahead of us to provide the resources and training workers need to claim and keep these new jobs.

Testifying before the House Education and the Workforce Committee several years ago, former Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan told Members of our panel that providing "rigorous education and ongoing training to all members of our society" is essential for future job growth and worker security in the United States. His words ring all the more true today, as our workforce takes on the new realities of an increasingly competitive global economy.

Eight years ago, when Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act, we did so with an eye toward preparing our working men and women for the challenges of a turn-of-the-cen-

tury economy. Indeed, the 21st century is no longer the age of machine and muscle but, rather, has become the age of the mind.

And central to our efforts in crafting the Workforce Investment Act was the establishment of the one-stop system. One-stop career centers are aimed at providing a single, convenient, central location to offer job training and other employment-related services. And they have been remarkably successful for countless Americans.

In my view, the establishment of one-stops in 1998 was the single most important federal job training accomplishment in a generation. We brought dozens of disparate services under one roof, providing a better deal for job seekers and a better investment for American taxpayers.

Last year, this House approved legislation to build upon the success of the one-stop system, and as we hope for further congressional action on that measure, we take time this month to celebrate the achievements of those who have been involved in the one-stops—including those providing services and those benefiting from them.

Mr. Speaker, May is National One-Stop Month, but for those seeking high-quality employment services, the one-stops are there for them all year long. I applaud them, and I look for them to play an even bigger role in our job training system in the decades to come. I thank my colleague Mr. KELLER, the chairman of the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee, for bringing this resolution to the floor, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 808.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS' HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1235) to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the availability of \$400,000 in life insurance coverage to servicemembers and veterans, to make a stillborn child an insurable dependent for purposes of the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program, to make technical corrections to the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004, to make permanent a pilot program for direct housing loans for Native American veterans, and to require an annual plan on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1235

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—HOUSING MATTERS

Sec. 101. Adapted housing assistance for disabled veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by family member.

Sec. 102. Adjustable rate mortgages.

Sec. 103. Permanent authority to make direct housing loans to Native American veterans.

Sec. 104. Extension of eligibility for direct loans for Native American veterans to a veteran who is the spouse of a Native American.

Sec. 105. Technical corrections to Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004.

TITLE II—EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

Sec. 201. Additional duty for the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training to raise awareness of skills of veterans and of the benefits of hiring veterans.

Sec. 202. Modifications to the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training.

Sec. 203. Reauthorization of appropriations for homeless veterans reintegration programs.

TITLE III—LIFE AND HEALTH INSURANCE MATTERS

Sec. 301. Duration of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage for totally disabled veterans following separation from service.

Sec. 302. Limitation on premium increases for reinstated health insurance of servicemembers released from active military service.

Sec. 303. Preservation of employer-sponsored health plan coverage for certain reserve-component members who acquire TRICARE eligibility.

TITLE IV—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 401. Inclusion of additional diseases and conditions in diseases and disabilities presumed to be associated with prisoner of war status.

Sec. 402. Consolidation and revision of outreach authorities.

Sec. 403. Extension of annual report requirement on equitable relief cases.

TITLE V—TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

Sec. 501. Technical and clarifying amendments to new traumatic injury protection coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Sec. 502. Terminology amendments to revise references to certain veterans in provisions relating to eligibility for compensation or dependency and indemnity compensation.

Sec. 503. Technical and clerical amendments.

TITLE I—HOUSING MATTERS

SEC. 101. ADAPTED HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR DISABLED VETERANS RESIDING TEMPORARILY IN HOUSING OWNED BY A FAMILY MEMBER.

(a) ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.—Chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2102 the following new section:

§2102A. Assistance for veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member

“(a) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.—In the case of a disabled veteran who is described in subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) of section 2101 of this title and who is residing, but does not intend to permanently reside, in a residence owned by a member of such veteran’s family, the Secretary may assist the veteran in acquiring such adaptations to such residence as are determined by the Secretary to be reasonably necessary because of the veteran’s disability.

“(b) AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—The assistance authorized under subsection (a) may not exceed—

“(1) \$14,000, in the case of a veteran described in section 2101(a)(2) of this title; or

“(2) \$2,000, in the case of a veteran described in section 2101(b)(2) of this title.

“(c) LIMITATION.—The assistance authorized by subsection (a) shall be limited in the case of any veteran to one residence.

“(d) REGULATIONS.—Assistance under this section shall be provided in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe.

“(e) TERMINATION.—No assistance may be provided under this section after the end of the five-year period that begins on the date of the enactment of the Veterans’ Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006.”

(b) LIMITATIONS ON ADAPTED HOUSING ASSISTANCE.—Section 2102 of such title is amended—

(1) in the matter in subsection (a) preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “shall be limited in the case of any veteran to one housing unit, and necessary land therefor, and”; and

(B) by striking “veteran but shall not exceed \$50,000 in any one case—” and inserting “veteran—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d)(1) The aggregate amount of assistance available to a veteran under sections 2101(a) and 2102A of this title shall be limited to \$50,000.

“(2) The aggregate amount of assistance available to a veteran under sections 2101(b) and 2102A of this title shall be limited to \$10,000.

“(3) No veteran may receive more than three grants of assistance under this chapter.”

(c) COORDINATION OF ADMINISTRATION OF BENEFITS.—Chapter 21 of such title is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§2107. Coordination of administration of benefits

“The Secretary shall provide for the coordination of the administration of programs to provide specially adapted housing that are administered by the Under Secretary for Health and such programs that are administered by the Under Secretary for Benefits under this chapter, chapter 17, and chapter 31 of this title.”

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended—

(1) by inserting after the item relating to section 2102 the following new item:

“2102A. Assistance for veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member.”

; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new item:

“2107 Coordination of administration of benefits.”

(e) GAO REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress an interim report on the implementation by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of section 2102A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than five years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a final report on the implementation of such section.

(f) TEMPORARY INCREASE IN CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.—For a subsequent loan described in subsection (a) of section 3710 of title 38, United States Code, to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down or any other subsequent loan described in that subsection, other than a loan with 5-down or 10-down, that is closed during fiscal year 2007, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall apply section 3729(b)(2) of such title by substituting “3.35” for “3.30”.

SEC. 102. ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGES.

Section 3707A(c)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “1 percentage point” and inserting “such percentage points as the Secretary may prescribe”.

SEC. 103. PERMANENT AUTHORITY TO MAKE DIRECT HOUSING LOANS TO NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.

(a) PERMANENT AUTHORITY.—Section 3761 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “establish and implement a pilot program under which the Secretary may” in the first sentence; and

(B) by striking “shall establish and implement the pilot program” in the third sentence and inserting “shall make such loans”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “In carrying out the pilot program under this subchapter, the” and inserting “The”; and

(3) by striking subsection (c).

(b) REPORTS.—Section 3762(j) of such title is amended to read as follows:

“(j) The Secretary shall include as part of the annual benefits report of the Veterans Benefits Administration information concerning the cost and number of loans provided under this subchapter for the fiscal year covered by the report.”

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION 3762.—Section 3762 of such title is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by inserting “under this subchapter” after “to a Native American veteran”; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1)(E), by striking “the pilot program established under this subchapter is implemented” and inserting “loans under this subchapter are made”; and

(C) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by striking “carry out the pilot program under this subchapter in a manner that demonstrates the advisability of making direct housing loans” in the second sentence and inserting “make direct housing loans under this subchapter”; and

(D) in subsection (i)—

(i) by striking “the pilot program provided for under this subchapter and” in paragraph (1); and

(ii) by striking “under the pilot program and in assisting such organizations and veterans in participating in the pilot program” in paragraph (2)(A) and inserting “under this subchapter and in assisting such organizations and veterans with respect to such housing benefits”; and

(iii) by striking “in participating in the pilot program” in paragraph (2)(E) and inserting “with respect to such benefits”.

(2) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 8(b) of the Veterans Home Loan Program Amendments of 1992 (Public Law 102-547; 38 U.S.C. 3761 note) is repealed.

(d) ESTABLISHMENT OF MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF LOANS.—Section 3762(c)(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “(B) The” and inserting “(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), the”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(ii) The amount of a loan made by the Secretary under this subchapter may not exceed the maximum loan amount authorized for loans guaranteed under section 3703(a)(1)(C) of this title.”

(e) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Subsection (c)(1)(A) of section 3762 of such title is amended by inserting “veteran” after “Native American”.

(f) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for subchapter V of chapter 37 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“SUBCHAPTER V—DIRECT HOUSING LOANS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS”.

(2) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 3761 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§3761. Direct housing loans to Native American veterans; program authority”.

(3) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 3762 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§3762. Direct housing loans to Native American veterans; program administration”.

(4) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 37 of such title is amended by striking the items relating to subchapter V and sections 3761 and 3762 and inserting the following new items:

“SUBCHAPTER V—DIRECT HOUSING LOANS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS

“3761. Direct housing loans to Native American veterans; program authority.

“3762. Direct housing loans to Native American veterans; program administration.”

SEC. 104. EXTENSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DIRECT LOANS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS TO A VETERAN WHO IS THE SPOUSE OF A NATIVE AMERICAN.

(a) EXTENSION.—Subchapter V of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 3764 as section 3765; and

(2) by inserting after section 3763 the following new section:

“§3764. Qualified non-Native American veterans

“(a) TREATMENT OF NON-NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this section, for purposes of this subchapter—

“(1) a qualified non-Native American veteran is deemed to be a Native American veteran; and

“(2) for purposes of applicability to a non-Native American veteran, any reference in this subchapter to the jurisdiction of a tribal organization over a Native American veteran is deemed to be a reference to jurisdiction of a tribal organization over the Native American spouse of the qualified non-Native American veteran.

“(b) USE OF LOAN.—In making direct loans under this subchapter to a qualified non-Native American veteran by reason of eligibility under subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that the tribal organization permits, and the qualified non-Native American veteran actually holds, possesses, or purchases, using the proceeds of the loan, jointly with the Native American spouse of the qualified non-Native American veteran, a meaningful interest in the lot, dwelling, or both, that is located on trust land.

“(c) RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—Nothing in subsection (b)

shall be construed as precluding a tribal organization from imposing reasonable restrictions on the right of the qualified non-Native American veteran to convey, assign, or otherwise dispose of such interest in the lot or dwelling, or both, if such restrictions are designed to ensure the continuation in trust status of the lot or dwelling, or both. Such requirements may include the termination of the interest of the qualified non-Native American veteran in the lot or dwelling, or both, upon the dissolution of the marriage of the qualified non-Native American veteran to the Native American spouse.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3765 of such title, as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) The term ‘qualified non-Native American veteran’ means a veteran who—

“(A) is the spouse of a Native American, but

“(B) is not a Native American.”

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 37 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 3764 and inserting the following new items:

“3764. Qualified non-Native American veterans.

“3765. Definitions.”

SEC. 105. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO VETERANS BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2004.

(a) CORRECTIONS.—Section 2101 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 401 of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-454; 118 Stat. 3614), is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) a new subsection (c) consisting of the text of subsection (c) of such section 2101 as in effect immediately before the enactment of such Act, modified—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the first sentence, by striking “paragraph (1), (2), or (3)” and inserting “subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (2)”; and

(ii) in the second sentence, by striking “the second sentence” and inserting “paragraph (3)”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the first sentence, by striking “paragraph (1)” and inserting “paragraph (2)”; and

(ii) in the second sentence, by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”; and

(3) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “subsection (c)” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting “subsection (d)”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as of December 10, 2004, as if enacted immediately after the enactment of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004 on that date.

TITLE II—EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

SEC. 201. ADDITIONAL DUTY FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS’ EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING TO RAISE AWARENESS OF SKILLS OF VETERANS AND OF THE BENEFITS OF HIRING VETERANS.

Subsection (b) of section 4102A of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(8) With advice and assistance from the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training, and Employer Outreach established under section 4110 of this title, furnish information to employers (through meetings in person with hiring executives of corporations and otherwise) with respect to the training and skills of veterans and disabled veterans, and the advantages afforded

employers by hiring veterans with such training and skills, and to facilitate employment of veterans and disabled veterans through participation in labor exchanges (Internet-based and otherwise), and other means.”

SEC. 202. MODIFICATIONS TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

(a) COMMITTEE NAME.—

(1) CHANGE OF NAME.—Subsection (a)(1) of section 4110 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training” and inserting “Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach”.

(2) SECTION HEADING.—The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

“§ 4110. Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach”.

(3) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The item relating to section 4110 in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 41 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“4110. Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach.”

(4) REFERENCES.—Any reference to the Advisory Committee established under section 4110 of such title in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach.

(b) EXPANSION OF DUTIES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Subsection (a)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and their integration into the workforce” after “veterans”;

(2) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B);

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (E); and

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraphs:

“(C) assist the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans’ Employment and Training in carrying out outreach activities to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and the advantages afforded employers by hiring veterans;

“(D) make recommendations to the Secretary, through the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans’ Employment and Training, with respect to outreach activities and the employment and training of veterans; and”.

(c) MODIFICATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) MEMBERSHIP.—Subsection (c)(1) of such section is amended to read as follows:

“(c)(1) The Secretary of Labor shall appoint at least 12, but no more than 15, individuals to serve as members of the advisory committee as follows:

“(A) Six individuals, one each from among representatives nominated by each of the following organizations:

“(i) The National Society of Human Resource Managers.

“(ii) The Business Roundtable.

“(iii) The National Association of State Workforce Agencies.

“(iv) The United States Chamber of Commerce.

“(v) The National Federation of Independent Business.

“(vi) A nationally recognized labor union or organization.

“(B) Not more than five individuals from among representatives nominated by veterans service organizations that have a national employment program.

“(C) Not more than five individuals who are recognized authorities in the fields of business, employment, training, rehabilitation, or labor and who are not employees of the Department of Labor.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended—

(A) by striking paragraphs (3), (4), (8), (10), (11), and (12); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), (7), and (9) as paragraphs (3), (4), (5), and (6), respectively.

(d) REINSTATEMENT AND MODIFICATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Subsection (f)(1) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking the first sentence and inserting the following: “Not later than December 31 of each year, the advisory committee shall submit to the Secretary and to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the employment and training needs of veterans, with special emphasis on disabled veterans, for the previous fiscal year.”;

(2) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and their integration into the workforce” after “veterans”;

(3) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B);

(4) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (F), respectively;

(5) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) an assessment of the outreach activities carried out by the Secretary of Labor to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and the advantages afforded employers by hiring veterans;”;

(6) by inserting after subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraphs:

“(D) a description of the activities of the advisory committee during that fiscal year;

“(E) a description of activities that the advisory committee proposes to undertake in the succeeding fiscal year; and”.

SEC. 203. REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS.

Subsection (e)(1) of section 2021 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2009.”

TITLE III—LIFE AND HEALTH INSURANCE MATTERS

SEC. 301. DURATION OF SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR TOTALLY DISABLED VETERANS FOLLOWING SEPARATION FROM SERVICE.

(a) SEPARATION OR RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY.—

(1) EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF COVERAGE.—Paragraph (1)(A) of section 1968(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “shall cease” and all that follows and inserting “shall cease on the earlier of the following dates (but in no event before the end of 120 days after such separation or release):

“(i) The date on which the insured ceases to be totally disabled.

“(ii) The date that is—

“(I) two years after the date of separation or release from such active duty or active duty for training, in the case of such a separation or release during the period beginning on the date that is one year before the date of the enactment of Veterans’ Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006 and ending on September 30, 2011; and

“(II) 18 months after the date of separation or release from such active duty or active duty for training, in the case of such a separation or release on or after October 1, 2011.”

(2) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Paragraph (1) of such section is further amended—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “shall cease—” and inserting “shall cease as follows:”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “at” after “(B)” and inserting “At”.

(b) SEPARATION OR RELEASE FROM CERTAIN RESERVE ASSIGNMENTS.—Paragraph (4) of such section is amended by striking “shall cease” the second place it appears and all that follows and inserting “shall cease on the earlier of the following dates (but in no event before the end of 120 days after separation or release from such assignment):

“(A) The date on which the insured ceases to be totally disabled.

“(B) The date that is—

“(i) two years after the date of separation or release from such assignment, in the case of such a separation or release during the period beginning on the date that is one year before the date of the enactment of Veterans’ Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006 and ending on September 30, 2011; and

“(ii) 18 months after the date of separation or release from such assignment, in the case of such a separation or release on or after October 1, 2011.”.

SEC. 302. LIMITATION ON PREMIUM INCREASES FOR REINSTATED HEALTH INSURANCE OF SERVICEMEMBERS RELEASED FROM ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) PREMIUM PROTECTION.—Section 704 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 594) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) LIMITATION ON PREMIUM INCREASES.—

“(1) PREMIUM PROTECTION.—The amount of the premium for health insurance coverage that was terminated by a servicemember and required to be reinstated under subsection (a) may not be increased, for the balance of the period for which coverage would have been continued had the coverage not been terminated, to an amount greater than the amount chargeable for such coverage before the termination.

“(2) INCREASES OF GENERAL APPLICABILITY NOT PRECLUDED.—Paragraph (1) does not prevent an increase in premium to the extent of any general increase in the premiums charged by the carrier of the health care insurance for the same health insurance coverage for persons similarly covered by such insurance during the period between the termination and the reinstatement.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Subsection (b)(3) of such section is amended by striking “if the” and inserting “in a case in which the”.

SEC. 303. PRESERVATION OF EMPLOYER-SPONSORED HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE FOR CERTAIN RESERVE-COMPONENT MEMBERS WHO ACQUIRE TRICARE ELIGIBILITY.

(a) CONTINUATION OF COVERAGE.—Subsection (a)(1) of section 4317 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after “by reason of service in the uniformed services,” the following: “or such person becomes eligible for medical and dental care under chapter 55 of title 10 by reason of subsection (d) of section 1074 of that title.”.

(b) REINSTATEMENT OF COVERAGE.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by inserting after “by reason of service in the uniformed services,” the following: “or by reason of the person’s having become eligible for medical and dental care under chapter 55 of title 10 by reason of subsection (d) of section 1074 of that title.”; and

(B) by inserting “or eligibility” before the period at the end of the first sentence; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) In the case of a person whose coverage under a health plan is terminated by reason

of the person having become eligible for medical and dental care under chapter 55 of title 10 by reason of subsection (d) of section 1074 of that title but who subsequently does not commence a period of active duty under the order to active duty that established such eligibility because the order is canceled before such active duty commences, the provisions of paragraph (1) relating to any exclusion or waiting period in connection with the reinstatement of coverage under a health plan shall apply to such person’s continued employment, upon the termination of such eligibility for medical and dental care under chapter 55 of title 10 that is incident to the cancellation of such order, in the same manner as if the person had become reemployed upon such termination of eligibility.”.

TITLE IV—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 401. INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL DISEASES AND CONDITIONS IN DISEASES AND DISABILITIES PRESUMED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH PRISONER OF WAR STATUS.

Section 1112(b)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(L) Atherosclerotic heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease) and their complications (including myocardial infarction, congestive heart failure and arrhythmia).

“(M) Stroke and its complications.”.

“CHAPTER 63—OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

“6301. Purpose; definitions.

“6302. Biennial plan.

“6303. Outreach services.

“6304. Veterans assistance offices.

“6305. Outstationing of counseling and outreach personnel.

“6306. Use of other agencies.

“6307. Outreach for eligible dependents.

“6308. Biennial report to Congress.

“§ 6301. Purpose; definitions

“(a) PURPOSE.—The Congress declares that—

“(1) the outreach services program authorized by this chapter is for the purpose of ensuring that all veterans (especially those who have been recently discharged or released from active military, naval, or air service and those who are eligible for readjustment or other benefits and services under laws administered by the Department) are provided timely and appropriate assistance to aid and encourage them in applying for and obtaining such benefits and services in order that they may achieve a rapid social and economic readjustment to civilian life and obtain a higher standard of living for themselves and their dependents; and

“(2) the outreach services program authorized by this chapter is for the purpose of charging the Department with the affirmative duty of seeking out eligible veterans and eligible dependents and providing them with such services.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘other governmental programs’ includes all programs under State or local laws as well as all programs under Federal law other than those authorized by this title; and

“(2) the term ‘eligible dependent’ means a spouse, surviving spouse, child, or dependent parent of a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service.

“§ 6302. Biennial plan

“(a) BIENNIAL PLAN REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall, during the first nine months of every odd-numbered year, prepare a biennial plan for the outreach activities of the Department for the two-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of that year.

“(b) ELEMENTS.—Each biennial plan under subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) Plans for efforts to identify eligible veterans and eligible dependents who are not enrolled or registered with the Department for benefits or services under the programs administered by the Secretary.

“(2) Plans for informing eligible veterans and eligible dependents of modifications of the benefits and services under the programs administered by the Secretary, including eligibility for medical and nursing care and services.

“(c) COORDINATION IN DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the biennial plan under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

“(1) Directors or other appropriate officials of organizations approved by the Secretary under section 5902 of this title.

“(2) Directors or other appropriate officials of State and local education and training programs.

“(3) Representatives of nongovernmental organizations that carry out veterans outreach programs.

“(4) Representatives of State and local veterans employment organizations.

“(5) Other individuals and organizations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

“§ 6303. Outreach services

“(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES.—In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the Secretary shall provide the outreach services specified in subsections (b) through (d). In areas where a significant number of eligible veterans and eligible dependents speak a language other than English as their principal language, such services shall, to the maximum feasible extent, be provided in the principal language of such persons.

“(b) INDIVIDUAL NOTICE TO NEW VETERANS.—The Secretary shall by letter advise each veteran at the time of the veteran’s discharge or release from active military, naval, or air service (or as soon as possible after such discharge or release) of all benefits and services under laws administered by the Department for which the veteran may be eligible. In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall ensure, through the use of veteran-student services under section 3485 of this title, that contact, in person or by telephone, is made with those veterans who, on the basis of their military service records, do not have a high school education or equivalent at the time of discharge or release.

“(c) DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION.—(1) The Secretary—

“(A) shall distribute full information to eligible veterans and eligible dependents regarding all benefits and services to which they may be entitled under laws administered by the Secretary; and

“(B) may, to the extent feasible, distribute information on other governmental programs (including manpower and training programs) which the Secretary determines would be beneficial to veterans.

“(2) Whenever a veteran or dependent first applies for any benefit under laws administered by the Secretary (including a request for burial or related benefits or an application for life insurance proceeds), the Secretary shall provide to the veteran or dependent information concerning benefits and health care services under programs administered by the Secretary. Such information shall be provided not later than three months after the date of such application.

“(d) PROVISION OF AID AND ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide, to the maximum extent possible, aid and assistance (including personal interviews) to members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and eligible dependents with respect to subsections (b) and (c) and in the preparation and presentation of claims under laws administered by the Department.

“(e) ASSIGNMENT OF EMPLOYEES.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall assign such employees as the Secretary considers appropriate to conduct outreach programs and provide outreach services for homeless veterans. Such outreach services may include site visits through which homeless veterans can be identified and provided assistance in obtaining benefits and services that may be available to them.

“§ 6304. Veterans assistance offices

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and maintain veterans assistance offices at such places throughout the United States and its territories and possessions, and in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The Secretary may maintain such offices on such military installations located elsewhere as the Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Defense and taking into account recommendations, if any, of the Secretary of Labor, determines to be necessary to carry out such purposes.

“(b) LOCATION OF OFFICES.—In establishing and maintaining such offices, the Secretary shall give due regard to—

“(1) the geographical distribution of veterans recently discharged or released from active military, naval, or air service;

“(2) the special needs of educationally disadvantaged veterans (including their need for accessibility of outreach services); and

“(3) the necessity of providing appropriate outreach services in less populated areas.

“§ 6305. Outstationing of counseling and outreach personnel

“The Secretary may station employees of the Department at locations other than Department offices, including educational institutions, to provide—

“(1) counseling and other assistance regarding benefits under this title to veterans and other persons eligible for benefits under this title; and

“(2) outreach services under this chapter.

“§ 6306. Use of other agencies

“(a) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall arrange with the Secretary of Labor for the State employment service to match the particular qualifications of an eligible veteran or eligible dependent with an appropriate job or job training opportunity, including, where possible, arrangements for outstationing the State employment personnel who provide such assistance at appropriate facilities of the Department.

“(b) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, actively seek to promote the development and establishment of employment opportunities, training opportunities, and other opportunities for veterans, with particular emphasis on the needs of veterans with service-connected disabilities and other eligible veterans, taking into account applicable rates of unemployment and the employment emphases set forth in chapter 42 of this title.

“(c) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall cooperate with and use the services of any Federal department or agency or any State or local governmental agency or recognized national or other organization.

“(d) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall, where appropriate, make referrals to any Federal department or agency or State or local governmental unit or recognized national or other organization.

“(e) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary may furnish available space and office facilities for the use of authorized representatives of such governmental unit or other organization providing services.

“(f) In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall conduct and provide for studies,

in consultation with appropriate Federal departments and agencies, to determine the most effective program design to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

“§ 6307. Outreach for eligible dependents

“(a) NEEDS OF DEPENDENTS.—In carrying out this chapter, the Secretary shall ensure that the needs of eligible dependents are fully addressed.

“(b) INFORMATION AS TO AVAILABILITY OF OUTREACH SERVICES FOR DEPENDENTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the availability of outreach services and assistance for eligible dependents under this chapter is made known through a variety of means, including the Internet, announcements in veterans publications, and announcements to the media.

“§ 6308. Biennial report to Congress

“(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall, not later than December 1 of every even-numbered year (beginning in 2008), submit to Congress a report on the outreach activities carried out by the Department.

“(b) CONTENT.—Each report under this section shall include the following:

“(1) A description of the implementation during the preceding fiscal year of the current biennial plan under section 6302 of this title.

“(2) Recommendations for the improvement or more effective administration of the outreach activities of the Department.”.

(b) INCORPORATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE OUTREACH AND AWARENESS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the extent appropriate, incorporate the recommendations for the improvement of veterans outreach and awareness activities included in the report submitted to Congress by the Secretary pursuant to section 805 of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-454).

(c) REPEAL OF RECODIFIED PROVISIONS.—Subchapter II of chapter 77 of title 38, United States Code, is repealed.

(d) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subchapter III of chapter 77 of such title is redesignated as subchapter II.

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by striking the items relating to the heading for subchapter II, sections 7721 through 7727, and the heading for subchapter III and inserting the following:

“SUBCHAPTER II—QUALITY ASSURANCE”.

(3) The tables of chapters at the beginning of such title, and at the beginning of part IV of such title, are amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 61 the following new item:

“63. Outreach Activities 6301”.

(e) CROSS-REFERENCE AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 3485(a)(4)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “subchapter II of chapter 77” and inserting “chapter 63”.

(2) Section 4113(a)(2) of such title is amended by striking “section 7723(a)” and inserting “section 6304(a)”.

(3) Section 4214(g) of such title is amended by striking “section 7722” and “section 7724” and inserting “section 6303” and “section 6305”, respectively.

(4) Section 168(b)(2)(B) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2913(b)(2)(B)) is amended by striking “subchapter II of chapter 77” and inserting “chapter 63”.

SEC. 403. EXTENSION OF ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENT ON EQUITABLE RELIEF CASES.

Section 503(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “December 31, 2004” and inserting “December 31, 2009”.

TITLE V—TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

SEC. 501. TECHNICAL AND CLARIFYING AMENDMENTS TO NEW TRAUMATIC INJURY PROTECTION COVERAGE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS’ GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) SECTION 1980A.—Section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) Subsection (a) is amended to read as follows:

“(a)(1) A member of the uniformed services who is insured under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance shall automatically be insured for traumatic injury in accordance with this section. Insurance benefits under this section shall be payable if the member, while so insured, sustains a traumatic injury on or after December 1, 2005, that results in a qualifying loss specified pursuant to subsection (b)(1).

“(2) If a member suffers more than one such qualifying loss as a result of traumatic injury from the same traumatic event, payment shall be made under this section in accordance with the schedule prescribed pursuant to subsection (d) for the single loss providing the highest payment.”.

(2) Subsection (b) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “issued a” and all that follows through “limited to—” and inserting “insured against traumatic injury under this section is insured against such losses due to traumatic injury (in this section referred to as ‘qualifying losses’) as are prescribed by the Secretary by regulation. Qualifying losses so prescribed shall include the following:”;

(ii) by capitalizing the first letter of the first word of each of subparagraphs (A) through (H);

(iii) by striking the semicolon at the end of each of subparagraphs (A) through (F) and inserting a period; and

(iv) by striking “; and” at the end of subparagraph (G) and inserting a period;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “subsection—” and inserting “subsection.”;

(ii) by striking “the” at the beginning of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) and inserting “The”;

(iii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “4 limbs;” and inserting “four limbs.”;

(iv) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” at the end and inserting a period;

(v) in subparagraph (C), by striking “1 side” and inserting “one side”; and

(vi) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) The term ‘inability to carry out the activities of daily living’ means the inability to independently perform two or more of the following six functions:

“(i) Bathing.

“(ii) Continence.

“(iii) Dressing.

“(iv) Eating.

“(v) Toileting.

“(vi) Transferring.”;

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense,”;

(ii) by striking “shall prescribe” and inserting “may prescribe”; and

(iii) by striking “the conditions under which coverage against loss will not be provided” and inserting “conditions under which coverage otherwise provided under this section is excluded”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) A member shall not be considered for the purposes of this section to be a member insured under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance if the member is insured under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance only

as an insurable dependent of another member pursuant to subparagraph (A)(ii) or (C)(ii) of section 1967(a)(1) of this title.”.

(3) Subsection (c) is amended to read as follows:

“(c)(1) A payment may be made to a member under this section only for a qualifying loss that results directly from a traumatic injury sustained while the member is covered against loss under this section and from no other cause.

“(2)(A) A payment may be made to a member under this section for a qualifying loss resulting from a traumatic injury only for a loss that is incurred during the applicable period of time specified pursuant to subparagraph (B).

“(B) For each qualifying loss, the Secretary shall prescribe, by regulation, a period of time to be the period of time within which a loss of that type must be incurred, determined from the date on which the member sustains the traumatic injury resulting in that loss, in order for that loss to be covered under this section.”.

(4) Subsection (d) is amended by striking “losses described in subsection (b)(1) shall be—” and all that follows and inserting “qualifying losses shall be made in accordance with a schedule prescribed by the Secretary, by regulation, specifying the amount of payment to be made for each type of qualifying loss, to be based on the severity of the qualifying loss. The minimum payment that may be prescribed for a qualifying loss is \$25,000, and the maximum payment that may be prescribed for a qualifying loss is \$100,000.”.

(5) Subsection (e) is amended—

(A) by striking “of Veterans Affairs” each place it appears;

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking “as the premium allocable” and all that follows through “protection under this section”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “Secretary of the concerned service” and inserting “Secretary concerned”;

(D) by striking paragraphs (6), (7), and (8) and inserting the following:

“(6) The cost attributable to insuring members under this section for any month or other period specified by the Secretary, less the premiums paid by the members, shall be paid by the Secretary concerned to the Secretary. The Secretary shall allocate the amount payable among the uniformed services using such methods and data as the Secretary determines to be reasonable and practicable. Payments under this paragraph shall be made on a monthly basis or at such other intervals as may be specified by the Secretary and shall be made within 10 days of the date on which the Secretary provides notice to the Secretary concerned of the amount required.

“(7) For each period for which a payment by a Secretary concerned is required under paragraph (6), the Secretary concerned shall contribute such amount from appropriations available for active duty pay of the uniformed service concerned.

“(8) The sums withheld from the basic or other pay of members, or collected from them by the Secretary concerned, under this subsection, and the sums contributed from appropriations under this subsection, together with the income derived from any dividends or premium rate adjustments received from insurers shall be deposited to the credit of the revolving fund established in the Treasury of the United States under section 1869(d)(1) of this title.”.

(6) Subsection (f) is amended to read as follows:

“(f) When a claim for benefits is submitted under this section, the Secretary of Defense or, in the case of a member not under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense, the

Secretary concerned, shall certify to the Secretary whether the member with respect to whom the claim is submitted—

“(1) was at the time of the injury giving rise to the claim insured under Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance for the purposes of this section; and

“(2) has sustained a qualifying loss.”.

(7) Subsection (g) of such section is amended—

(A) by inserting “(1)” after “(g)”;

(B) by striking “will not be made” and inserting “may not be made under the insurance coverage under this section”;

(C) by striking “the period” and all that follows through “the date” and inserting “a period prescribed by the Secretary, by regulation, for such purpose that begins on the date”;

(D) by designating the second sentence as paragraph (2);

(E) by striking “If the member” and inserting “If a member eligible for a payment under this section”;

(F) by striking “will be” and inserting “shall be”;

(G) by striking “according to” and all that follows and inserting “to the beneficiary or beneficiaries to whom the payment would be made if the payment were life insurance under section 1967(a) of this title.”.

(8) Subsection (h) of such section is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking “member’s separation from the uniformed service” and inserting “termination of the member’s duty status in the uniformed services that established eligibility for Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance”;

(B) by striking the second sentence; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The termination of coverage under this section is effective in accordance with the preceding sentence, notwithstanding any continuation after the date specified in that sentence of Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance coverage pursuant to 1968(a) of this title for a period specified in that sentence.”.

(9) Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) Regulations under this section shall be prescribed in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY TO QUALIFYING LOSSES INCURRED IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM AND OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM BEFORE EFFECTIVE DATE OF NEW PROGRAM.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY.—A member of the uniformed services who during the period beginning on October 7, 2001, and ending at the close of November 30, 2005, sustains a traumatic injury resulting in a qualifying loss is eligible for coverage for that loss under section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, if, as determined by the Secretary concerned, that loss was a direct result of a traumatic injury incurred in the theater of operations for Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

(2) CERTIFICATION OF PERSONS ENTITLED TO PAYMENT.—The Secretary concerned shall certify to the life insurance company issuing the policy of life insurance for Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance under chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, the name and address of each person who the Secretary concerned determines to be entitled by reason of paragraph (1) to a payment under section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, plus such additional information as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may require.

(3) FUNDING.—At the time a certification is made under paragraph (2), the Secretary concerned, from funds then available to that Secretary for the pay of members of the uniformed services under the jurisdiction of that Secretary, shall pay to the Secretary of

Veterans Affairs the amount of funds the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to be necessary to pay all costs related to payments to be made under that certification. Amounts received by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under this paragraph shall be deposited to the credit of the revolving fund in the Treasury of the United States established under section 1969(d) of title 38, United States Code.

(4) QUALIFYING LOSS.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “qualifying loss” means—

(A) a loss specified in the second sentence of subsection (b)(1) of section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a); and

(B) any other loss specified by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to the first sentence of that subsection.

(5) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “Secretary concerned” has the meaning given that term in paragraph (25) of section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1965 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (11).

(2) Section 1032(c) of Public Law 109-13 (119 Stat. 257; 38 U.S.C. 1980A note) is repealed.

SEC. 502. TERMINOLOGY AMENDMENTS TO REVISE REFERENCES TO CERTAIN VETERANS IN PROVISIONS RELATING TO ELIGIBILITY FOR COMPENSATION OR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

Title 38, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) Section 1114(l) is amended by striking “so helpless” and inserting “with such significant disabilities”.

(2) Section 1114(m) is amended by striking “so helpless” and inserting “so significantly disabled”.

(3) Sections 1115(1)(E)(ii), 1122(b)(2), 1311(c)(2), 1315(g)(2), and 1502(b)(2) are amended by striking “helpless or blind, or so nearly helpless or blind as to” and inserting “blind, or so nearly blind or significantly disabled as to”.

SEC. 503. TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.

Title 38, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR.—Section 1117(h)(1) is amended by striking “notwithstanding” and inserting “notwithstanding”.

(2) INSERTION OF MISSING WORD.—Section 1513(a) is amended by inserting “section” after “deleted by”.

(3) DELETION OF EXTRA WORDS.—Section 3012(a)(1)(C)(ii) is amended by striking “on or”.

(4) CROSS REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 3017(b)(1)(D) is amended by striking “3011(c)” and inserting “3011(e)”.

(5) STYLISTIC AMENDMENTS.—Section 3018A is amended—

(A) by striking “of this section” in subsections (b) and (c);

(B) by striking “of this subsection” in subsections (a)(4), (a)(5), (d)(1) (both places it appears), and (d)(3); and

(C) by striking “of this chapter” in subsection (d)(3) and inserting “of this title”.

(6) CROSS REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 3117(b)(1) is amended—

(A) by striking “section 8” and inserting “section 4(b)(1)”;

(B) by striking “633(b)” and inserting “633(b)(1)”.

(7) INSERTION OF MISSING WORD.—Section 3511(a)(1) is amended by inserting “sections” after “under both”.

(8) SUBSECTION HEADINGS.—

(A) Sections 3461, 3462, 3481, 3565, 3680, and 3690 are each amended by revising each subsection heading for a subsection therein (appearing as a centered heading immediately before the text of the subsection) so that such heading appears immediately after the subsection designation and is set forth in capitals-and-small-capitals typeface, followed by a period and a one-em dash.

(B) Section 3461(c) is amended by inserting after the subsection designation the following: "DURATION OF ENTITLEMENT.—".

(C) Section 3462 is amended—

(i) in subsection (d), by inserting after the subsection designation the following: "PRISONERS OF WAR.—"; and

(ii) in subsection (e), by inserting after the subsection designation the following: "TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE.—".

(9) CROSS REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 3732(c)(10)(D) is amended by striking "clause (B) of paragraphs (5), (6), (7), and (8) of this subsection" and inserting "paragraphs (5)(B), (6), (7)(B), and (8)(B)".

(10) DATE OF ENACTMENT REFERENCE.—Section 3733(a)(7) is amended by striking "the date of the enactment of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003" and inserting "December 16, 2003".

(11) REPEAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISIONS.—Section 4102A is amended—

(A) in subsection (c)(7)—

(i) by striking "With respect to program years beginning during or after fiscal year 2004, one percent of" and inserting "Of"; and

(ii) by striking "for the program year" and inserting "for any program year, one percent"; and

(B) in subsection (f)(1), by striking "By not later than May 7, 2003, the" and inserting "The".

(12) REPEAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISIONS.—Section 4105(b) is amended—

(A) by striking "shall provide," and all that follows through "Affairs with" and inserting "shall, on the 15th day of each month, provide the Secretary and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with updated information regarding"; and

(B) by striking "and shall" and all that follows through "regarding the list".

(13) CITATION CORRECTION.—Section 4110B is amended—

(A) by striking "this Act" and inserting "the Workforce Investment Act of 1998"; and

(B) by inserting "(29 U.S.C. 2822(b))" before the period at the end.

(14) CROSS-REFERENCE CORRECTION.—Section 4331(b)(2)(C) is amended by striking "section 2303(a)(2)(C)(ii)" and inserting "section 2302(a)(2)(C)(ii)".

(15) CAPITALIZATION CORRECTION.—Section 7253(d)(5) is amended by striking "court" and inserting "Court".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MILLER of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1235, as amended, the Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006.

S. 1235, as amended, the Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006, reflects a compromise agreement that has been

reached by the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs on the following bills:

S. 1235, as amended, which passed the Senate on September 28, 2005; H.R. 1220, as amended, which passed the House on July 13, 2005; H.R. 2046, as amended, which passed the House on May 23, 2005; and H.R. 3665, as amended, which passed the House on November 10, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert at this point in the RECORD for the benefit of my colleagues a joint explanatory statement describing the compromise agreement we have reached with the other body.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ON AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL, S. 1235, AS AMENDED

S. 1235, as amended, the Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006, reflects a Compromise Agreement reached by the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs (the Committees) on the following bills reported during the 109th Congress: S. 1235, as amended (Senate Bill), H.R. 1220, as amended, H.R. 2046, as amended, and H.R. 3665, as amended (House Bills). S. 1235, as amended, passed the Senate on September 28, 2005; H.R. 2046, as amended, passed the House on May 23, 2005; H.R. 3665, as amended, passed the House on November 10, 2005.

The Committees have prepared the following explanation of S. 1235, as further amended to reflect a compromise agreement between the Committees (Compromise Agreement). Differences between the provisions contained in the Compromise Agreement and the related provision of the Senate Bill and the House Bills are noted in this document, except for clerical corrections, conforming changes made necessary by the Compromise Agreement, and minor drafting, technical, and clarifying changes.

TITLE I—HOUSING MATTERS

Adapted Housing Assistance for Disabled Veterans Residing in Housing Owned by Family Member

Current Law.—Chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, authorizes the Secretary to provide grants to adapt or acquire suitable housing for certain severely disabled veterans. The grant amounts are limited to \$50,000 for severely disabled veterans with impairments of locomotion or loss of function of both arms described in section 2101(a) of title 38, United States Code, and \$10,000 to severely disabled veterans with loss of vision or loss of function of both hands as described in section 2101(b) of title 38, United States Code. Currently a veteran may receive a grant for specially adapted housing only once. However, a veteran who has qualified for the smaller grant may nonetheless receive a higher grant if disabilities under that provision later develop.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 101 (a) through (e) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would amend chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, by inserting a new section 2102A. Subparagraph (a) would authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a program providing a partial adapted housing grant to severely injured veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member. Subparagraph (b) would authorize the Secretary to provide up to a \$10,000 grant for such veterans with disabilities involving impairments of locomotion and up to a \$2,000 grant for such veterans with visual impairments or loss of function of both hands. Subparagraph (c) would limit the assistance to one family

residence. Subparagraph (d) would require the Secretary to issue relevant regulations. Finally, subparagraph (e) would limit the program to 5 years after enactment.

Section 101(b) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would amend section 2102 of title 38, United States Code, to allow a veteran to receive no more than three grants of assistance under chapter 21 of title 8, United States Code. The total value of all grants would not exceed \$50,000 for the most severely disabled veterans and \$10,000 for less severely disabled veterans. However, a veteran who receives a grant under section 2102(b) of title 38, United States Code, would still be allowed to receive grants under section 2102(a) of title 38, United States Code, if he or she becomes eligible.

Section 101(c) would amend chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, by adding at the end a new section 2107 to provide that the Secretary shall coordinate the administration of programs to provide specially adapted housing that are administered by both the Under Secretary for Health and the Under Secretary for Benefits under chapters 17, 21, and 31 of title 38, United States Code.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 101 of the Compromise Agreement generally follows the House language except in the case of veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member, veterans with disabilities involving impairments of locomotion may receive up to \$14,000. Section 101 would also increase the funding fee for a subsequent use of the VA home loan guaranty with no money down by 5 basis points for the period October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007.

Adjustable Rate Mortgages

Current Law.—Section 3707A(c)(4) of title 38, United States Code, limits the maximum increase or decrease of any single annual interest rate adjustment after the initial contract interest rate adjustment to 1 percentage point.

Senate Bill.—Section 201 of the Senate Bill would give VA the flexibility to prescribe an appropriate annual rate adjustment cap for VA hybrid Adjustable Rate Mortgage loans with an initial rate of interest fixed for 5 or more years.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 102 of the Compromise Agreement follows the Senate language.

Permanent Authority To Make Direct Housing Loans to Native American Veterans

Current Law.—Section 3761 of title 38, United States Code, establishes a pilot program to make direct housing loans to Native American veterans for homes on tribal lands. The authorization expires on December 31, 2008. Section 3762 of title 38, United States Code, describes the administration of the program and limits the maximum loan amount to \$80,000, unless the Secretary allows a larger amount due to higher housing costs in a particular geographic area.

Senate Bill.—Section 203 of the Senate Bill contains a similar provision.

House Bills.—Section 102 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would make permanent the Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program. It would also limit the Secretary's discretion in approving a loan large than \$80,000 to the loan limitation amount provided by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act for a single-family residence.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 103 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

Extension of Eligibility for Direct Loans for Native American Veterans to a Veteran Who Is The Spouse of a Native American

Current Law.—Section 3761 of title 38, United States Code, limits loans under the

Native American Home Loan Program to veterans who are Native Americans. Under current law, a veteran residing on tribal lands with a Native American spouse is not eligible to receive a home loan under this program.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 103 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would extend eligibility for the Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program to non-Native American veterans who are spouses of Native American eligible to be housed on tribal land. The non-Native American veteran must be able to acquire a meaningful interest in the property under tribal law.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 104 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

Technical Corrections to Veterans' Benefit Improvement Act of 2004

Current Law.—Section 2101 of title 38, United States Code, provides for grants to adapt or acquire suitable housing for certain severely disabled veterans. Section 401 of Public Law 108-183 amended section 2101 to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide adapted housing assistance to certain disabled servicemembers who have not yet been processed for discharge from military service, but who will qualify for the benefit upon discharge due to the severity of their disabilities. However, this provision was inadvertently omitted from section 2101 of title 38, United States Code when changes to that section were made by P.L. 108-454.

Senate Bill.—Section 202 of S. 1235 would amend section 2101 of title 38, United States Code, to reinstate the authority of the Secretary to provide adapted housing assistance to certain members of the armed services and make other conforming amendments. The amendments made by this provision would take effect on December 10, 2004, immediately after the enactment of Public Law 108-454.

House Bill.—Section 4 of H.R. 2046, as amended, contains a similar provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 105 of the Compromise Agreement contains this provision.

TITLE II—EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

Additional Duty for the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training To Raise Awareness of Skills of Veterans and of the Benefits of Hiring Veterans

Current Law.—Subsection (b) of section 4102A of title 38, United States Code, describes the duties to be carried out by the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 202(a) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would add a new duty for the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) under section 4102A of title 38, United States Code, to furnish information to employers (through meetings with hiring executive of corporations and otherwise) concerning the training and skills of veterans and disabled veterans, and the advantages of hiring veterans. The ASVET would also be required to facilitate employment of veterans and disabled veterans through participation in labor exchanges (Internet-based and otherwise), and by other means.

Section 202(b) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would require the Secretary of Labor, acting through the ASVET, to develop a transition plan for the ASVET to assume certain duties and functions of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee and transmit the

plan to the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees not later than July 1, 2006.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 201 of the Compromise Agreement generally follows the House language, but does not include the requirement that the Secretary of Labor develop and transmit a transition plan.

Modifications to the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training

Current Law.—Section 4110 of title 38, United States Code, establishes the Advisory Committee on Veterans employment and Training, its membership, and its duties. The Advisory Committee advises the ASVET on the employment and training needs of veterans and how the Department of Labor is meeting those needs. No outreach efforts are required of the Advisory Committee in current law.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 203(a) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would amend section 4110 of title 38, United States Code, by renaming the "Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training" to "Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach".

Section 203(b) would modify the duties of the Advisory Committee to include assisting and advising the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) in carrying out outreach to employers.

Section 203(c) would modify the membership of the Advisory Committee to include representatives from the National Society of Human Resource Managers, The Business Roundtable, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Independent Business, a nationally recognized labor union or organization, veterans service organizations that have a national employment program, and recognized authorities in the fields of business, employment, training, rehabilitation, or labor. Section 203(c) would also retain six nonvoting ex officio members of the Advisory Committee: Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Secretary of Defense, Director of the Office of Personnel Management, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Section 203(d) of H.R. 3665, as amended, would require the Advisory Committee to submit a report to the Secretary of Labor on the employment and training needs of veterans for the previous fiscal year. The report would include a description of the activities of the Advisory Committee during that fiscal year as well as suggested outreach activities to be carried out by the Secretary of Labor to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and the advantage afforded employers by hiring veterans.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 202 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

Reauthorization of Appropriations for Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs

Current Law.—Section 2021 of title 38, United States Code, authorizes appropriations for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs (HVRP) through fiscal year 2006.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 301 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would reauthorize HVRP for fiscal years 2007 through 2009, and retain the maximum authorization of \$50 million per year.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 203 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

TITLE III—LIFE AND HEALTH INSURANCE MATTERS

Duration of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Coverage for Totally Disabled Veterans Following Separation From Service

Current Law.—Section 1968 of title 38, United States Code, provides coverage at no charge under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program for 1 year after the date of separation or release from active duty if a veteran is rated totally disabled at the time of separation. Veterans may also convert their insurance coverage from Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance to Veterans' Group Life Insurance, or to an individual policy of insurance, during the 1-year, post-separation period.

Senate Bill.—Section 101 of the Senate Bill would extend from 1 to 2 years, after separation from active duty service, the period within which totally disabled members may receive premium-free SGLI coverage. In addition, such members would be eligible to convert their coverage to Veterans' Group Life Insurance or an individual policy of insurance.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 301 of the Compromise Agreement would extend the post-separation coverage period from 1 to 2 years until September 30, 2011, for all members who are totally disabled when separated or released from active duty 1 year before date of enactment of this Act. For members who are totally disabled when they separate or are released on or after October 1, 2011, the post-separation coverage period would be reduced to 18 months.

Limitation on Premium Increases for Reinstated Health Insurance of Servicemembers Released From Active Military Service

Current Law.—Section 704 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) provides that a servicemember who is ordered to active duty is entitled, upon release from active duty, to reinstatement of any health insurance coverage in effect on the day before such service commenced. Section 704 of the SCRA currently contains no express provision regarding premium increases.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bill.—Section 2 of H.R. 2046, as amended, would amend section 704 of SCRA by adding at the end a new subsection that would limit health insurance premium increases. The amount charged for the coverage once reinstated would not exceed the amount charged for coverage before the termination except for any general increase for persons similarly covered by the insurance during the period between termination and the reinstatement.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 302 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

Preservation of Employer-Sponsored Health Plan Coverage for Certain Reserve-Component Members Who Acquire TRICARE Eligibility

Current Law.—Section 4317 of title 38, United States Code, requires an employer to provide employees returning from active duty with the same employer-sponsored health benefits they had when they reported for active duty. However, section 4317 does not preserve employer-sponsored health plan reinstatement rights for certain Reserve-component members who acquire health insurance coverage under TRICARE prior to entering active duty under section 1074(d) of title 10, United States Code. This option became available by an amendment to the

TRICARE authority enacted on November 24, 2003.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 3 of H.R. 2046, as amended, would amend section 4317 of title 38, United States Code, to preserve employer-sponsored health plan reinstatement rights under the Uniformed Services employment and Reemployment Rights Act for Reserve-component members who acquire TRICARE coverage prior to entering active duty. This includes those Reserve Component members whose active duty orders are canceled prior to reporting to active duty.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 303 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

TITLE IV—OTHER MATTERS

Inclusion of Additional Diseases and Conditions in Diseases and Disabilities Presumed To Be Associated with Prisoner of War Status

Current Law.—Section 1112(b) of title 38, United States Code, contains two lists of diseases that are presumed to be related to an individual's experience as a prisoner of war. The first presumptive list require no minimum internment period and includes diseases associated with mental trauma or acute physical trauma, which could plausibly be caused by a single day of captivity. The second list has a 30-day minimum internment requirement.

Senate Bill.—Section 303 of the Senate Bill would codify a June 28, 2005, VA regulation which added atherosclerotic heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease) and their complications (including myocardial infarction, congestive heart failure and arrhythmia), and stroke and its complications as presumptive conditions for service-connection when related to the prisoner of war experience. These diseases would be included under the list requiring minimum 30-day internment period.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 401 of the Compromise Agreement follows the Senate language.

Consolidation and Revision of Outreach Activities

Current Law.—Section 7722 of title 38, United States Code, requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to distribute full information to eligible servicemembers, veterans, and dependents regarding all benefits and services to which they may be entitled under laws administered by the Department.

Senate Bill.—Section 301 of the Senate Bill would require the VA to prepare annually (and submit to Congress) a plan governing an upcoming year's outreach activities. Such a plan would incorporate the recommendations of the report mandated by Public Law 108-454, and would be prepared after consultations with veterans service organizations, State and local officials, and other interested groups and advocates.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 402 of the Compromise Agreement follows the Senate language with modifications. VA outreach activities would be revised and consolidated in a new chapter 63 of title 38, United States Code. Additionally, VA would be required to prepare biennially an outreach plan governing an upcoming 2 years of outreach activities, beginning on October 1, 2007. Furthermore, VA would be required to report biennially on the execution of the outreach plan, beginning on October 1, 2008.

Extension of Reporting Requirements on Equitable Relief Cases

Current Law.—Section 503 of title 38, United States Code, authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide monetary relief to persons whom the Secretary determines were deprived of VA benefits by reason of administrative error by a federal government employee. The Secretary may also provide relief which the Secretary determines is equitable to a VA beneficiary who has suffered loss as a consequence of an erroneous decision made by a federal government employee. No later than April 1 of each year, the Secretary was required to submit to Congress a report containing a statement as to the disposition of each case recommended to the Secretary for equitable relief during the preceding calendar year; the requirement for this report expired on December 31, 2004.

Senate Bill.—Section 302 of the Senate Bill would extend the equitable relief reporting requirement through December 31, 2009.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 403 of the Compromise Agreement follows the Senate language.

TITLE V—TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

Technical and Clarifying Amendments to New Traumatic Injury Protection Coverage Under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance

Current Law.—Section 1032 of Public Law 109-13 (119 STAT. 257) established, effective December 1, 2005, a new traumatic injury protection program within title 38, United States Code. Section 1980A provides servicemembers enrolled in the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program automatic coverage against qualified traumatic injuries. In the event a servicemember sustains a qualified traumatic injury, SGLI will pay the injured servicemember between \$25,000 to \$100,000, depending on the nature of the injury and in accordance with a payment scheduled prescribe by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 401 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would make various technical and clerical amendments to section 1980A of title 38, United States Code. These technical amendments more clearly specify the responsibilities of the different uniformed services who participate in the Servicemembers' Groups Life Insurance program: military services under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense, the United States Coast Guard under the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Public Health Service under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Commerce.

The technical amendments in section 401 are intended to clarify and to conform section 1980A of title 38, United States Code, to current provisions and are not intended to make any substantive change in current law.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 501 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

Terminology Amendments To Revise References to Certain Veterans in Provisions Relating to Eligibility for Compensation or Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Current Law.—Sections 1114(1), 1114(m), 1115(b)(2), 1122(b)(2), 1311 (c)(2), 1315(g)(2), and 1502(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, contain language that refers to "helpless veterans" when relating to eligibility for compensation or dependency and indemnity compensation.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bill.—Section 104 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would amend sections 1114(1), 1114(m), 1115(1)(E)(ii), 1122(b)(2), 1311(c)(2), 1315(g)(2), and 1502(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, eliminating use of the obsolete term "helpless" when describing significantly disabled veterans. No substantive change is intended by these amendments.

Compromise Agreement.—Section 502 of the Compromise Agreement follows the House language.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS NOT ADOPTED

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Claims

Current Law.—Section 501 of title 38, United States Code, provides the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with the authority to prescribe all rules and regulations necessary or appropriate to carry out the laws administered by VA, including the methods of making medical examinations and the manner and form of adjudications and awards.

Senate Bill.—Section 304 would require VA to develop and implement policy and training initiatives to standardize the assessment of PTSD disability compensation claims.

House Bills.—The House bills contain no comparable provision.

Increase in Rates of Disability Compensation Paid to Certain Surviving Spouses With Children

Current Law.—Under current law, a surviving spouse with one or more children under the age of 18 is entitled to receive a transitional benefit of an additional \$250 per month for the first two years of eligibility or dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC).

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 206 of H.R. 1220, as amended, would provide a cost-of-living adjustment for the \$250 transitional DIC for 2006.

Treatment of Stillborn Children as Insurable Dependents Under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Program

Current Law.—Section 1967 of title 38, United States Code, provides coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program to the spouse and children of insured, full-time, active duty servicemembers, as well as covered members of the Ready Reserve. Coverage for the spouse may not exceed \$100,000, and the servicemember may elect in writing not to insure a spouse. Coverage for each child, in the amount of \$10,000, is automatic. Coverage for the dependent begins immediately following a live birth.

Senate Bill.—Section 102 of the Senate Bill would cover a member's stillborn child as an insurable dependent under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program.

House Bills.—The House Bills contain no comparable provision.

Demonstration Project To Improve Business Practices of Veterans Health Administration

Current Law.—There is no applicable current law.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 5 of H.R. 1220, as amended, would establish a demonstration project to improve the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) collections from third-party payers.

Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Centers

Current Law.—There is no applicable current law.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 6 of H.R. 1220, as amended, would permanently authorize six Parkinson's disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs), subject to appropriations, and give priority to the existing PADRECCs for medical care and research dollars, insofar as such funds are awarded to projects for research in Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders.

Extension of Operation of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee

Current Law.—Section 6 of the Jobs for Veterans Act, Public Law 107-288, established the President's National Hire Veterans Committee (PNHVC) within the Department of Labor. The PNHVC furnishes information to employers with respect to the training and skills of veterans and disabled veterans and the advantages of hiring veterans. The Secretary of Labor provides staff and administrative support to the PNHVC to assist it in carrying out its duties under this section. The PNHVC also has the authority to contract with government and private agencies to furnish information to employers. Under current law, the PNHVC terminated on December 31, 2005. The PNHVC was authorized \$3 million appropriated from the Unemployment Trust Fund through fiscal year 2005.

Senate Bill.—The Senate Bill contains no comparable provision.

House Bills.—Section 201 of H.R. 3665, as amended, would amend section 6 of the Jobs for Veterans Act by extending, for up to 1 year, the President's National Hire Veterans Committee until not later than December 31, 2006. Section 201 would also extend the authorization for appropriations through fiscal year 2006 and require an additional PNHVC report to the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees in 2006.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. The provisions in this bill will directly or indirectly impact the lives of servicemembers, veterans, and their survivors. Several of them fall within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, which I chair.

The other provisions fall within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, which is chaired by Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. BOOZMAN is currently conducting a roundtable on employment in Michigan, so I will describe his subcommittee's provisions as well.

In title I of the bill, we provide additional flexibility to the Adapted Housing Grant program and the Native American Home Loan program. These provisions were originally in H.R. 3665, introduced by Mr. BOOZMAN, and H.R. 1773, introduced by Ms. HERSETH.

Mr. Speaker, some of those wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan return home with significant disabilities. Many severely disabled servicemembers spend much of their convalescence at a family home before moving on to a home of their own. Under current rules, VA cannot help adapt family homes to the veteran's disability unless the veteran has an ownership interest in that property.

Section 101 would eliminate the ownership requirement and would also provide a partial Adaptive Housing Assistance grant, ranging from \$2,000 to \$13,000 depending on the level of disability to veterans temporarily in housing owned by a family member.

It would also authorize up to three separate specially adaptive housing grants within the current maximum amounts.

Section 102 of this bill would give the Secretary of Veterans Affairs the authority to prescribe an appropriate annual rate adjustment cap for the VA Hybrid Adjustable Rate Mortgage Loan program. This provision brings VA ARMs in line with the mortgage industry and improves their value on the secondary market.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would also make permanent the Pilot Program for Housing Loans to Native American Veterans; extend the eligibility for Native American loans to certain non-Native American veterans who have a meaningful interest in the property under tribal law and are the spouses of a Native American; and, finally, adjust the maximum loan to conform to the Freddie Mac limits, similar to other VA loans currently at \$359,650.

Title II of the bill would transition some of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee's duties to the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training, and modifies the title of the Assistant Secretary's advisory committee to the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach, its membership and its duties to improve employer outreach activities.

Taxpayers made a significant investment in the work of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee, and we feel strongly that some of the duties and products of the committee should be adopted by the Veterans Employment and Training Service at the Department of Labor.

Section 203 would reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs for fiscal years 2007 through 2009, and retain the maximum authorization of \$50 million per year. Mr. Speaker, we recognize that homelessness among veterans continues to be a problem. While there are varying estimates about the total number of homeless veterans and the causes for homelessness, there is no disagreement that a job is one of the keys to breaking the cycle of homelessness and that the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs remain a valuable tool to assist homeless veterans in finding gainful employment.

I do want to emphasize that this is an employment program managed by the Veterans Employment and Training Service at the Department of Labor, and it is not a housing program.

Title III of the bill would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act to provide additional protections to servicemembers. Section 302 and 303 originated in H.R. 2046, introduced by Chairman BUYER.

Under current law, when a member is rated totally disabled at the time of separation, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage is provided for

1 year free of charge. Section 301 of the bill would extend this coverage to 2 years through September 30, 2011, and 18 months as of October 1, 2011.

Members then may convert to Veterans' Group Life Insurance or a commercial policy. Section 302 would prohibit any increase in premiums for health insurance after reinstatement except for any general increase in the premiums being charged by the carrier for persons similarly covered.

Currently, a servicemember who is ordered to active duty and terminated their health insurance, employer-sponsored insurance coverage upon release from active duty is entitled to reinstatement of their previous health insurance coverage.

Section 303 closes a current gap in health insurance coverage for those Reservists who elect TRICARE coverage in advance of activation and allows them to retain reinstatement rights under their employer-sponsored health plan, even if they do not eventually report to active duty.

Since members of the Reserve component play such an important role in today's military, these important changes to the law will protect the members and their families from loss of coverage and unwarranted cost increases.

Section 401 of the bill would codify a June 2005 Department of Veterans Affairs regulation to add heart disease and ensuing complications and stroke to the list of diseases presumed service-connected for former prisoners of war that were interned for at least 30 days.

Section 402 would revise and consolidate VA outreach activities into a new chapter of title 38, United States Code, to ensure that servicemembers, veterans, and their survivors are aware of the benefits and services to which they may be entitled.

This section would further require VA to prepare a biennial outreach plan, as well as report to Congress every 2 years on the execution of that plan. I held a committee hearing on March 16 of this year, and I was disappointed to learn that VA was no longer filing an annual outreach report as mandated by law.

It is our interpretation that by creating this chapter, VA will put more of an emphasis on its outreach activities.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Senate bill 1235, as amended, the Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006. This bipartisan and bicameral benefit package incorporates a number of important measures aimed at improving the quality of life for our servicemembers, veterans, and military families.

I would like to thank Chairman BUYER and Ranking Member LANE EVANS for their leadership on the full committee and for their assistance in moving this bill to the floor today.

I also want to express my appreciation to the chairman and ranking member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, JOHN BOOZMAN and STEPHANIE HERSETH, respectively, for their hard work and bipartisan leadership in this legislative package.

□ 1445

Additionally, I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, JEFF MILLER and SHELLEY BERKLEY, for their diligence and hard work on this bill.

Our Nation's servicemembers and veterans have earned and their families deserve all of the benefits and opportunities provided under Senate bill 1235. In fact, they deserve much more. I am pleased, however, that this legislative package takes a strong step in the right direction, and I am sure the veterans and military families in my home State of Colorado will appreciate their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, Senate bill 1235, as amended, will enable severely disabled veterans to make necessary adaptations to homes in which they are temporarily residing, and it will give totally disabled veteran servicemembers who are leaving military service an additional year of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage and limit unjustified health premium increases on activated National Guard members and Reservists. It will extend the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program which provides employment opportunities for homeless veterans and improve the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service.

In addition, the bill includes language from H.R. 1773, the Native American Veterans Home Loan Act, a measure introduced by Representative STEPHANIE HERSETH of South Dakota. This bill will make permanent the Native American Housing Loan Program so that veterans residing on tribal land can obtain an appropriate home loan.

It will also provide housing opportunities for veterans who are residing on tribal land with Native American spouses.

By all accounts, the pilot program has been a great success and, in fact, has a negative subsidy; that is, it actually pays for itself. That is something that is rarely done here at the Federal level. Making this program permanent is the right thing to do for Native American veterans and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that veterans who are former prisoners of war have been found to have disproportionate rates of heart disease and stroke. This bill will assure that they will be compensated for these conditions by codifying a current regulation.

Finally, this bill will improve the Department of Veterans Affairs' outreach to veterans and their families in an organized fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the servicemembers, veterans and military families of this

Nation have earned and deserve our best efforts here in Congress. As we approach Memorial Day today, I am very proud to support this long overdue legislation, and I am confident that it will benefit the veterans of my home State of Colorado as well as other veterans around this country.

I fully support Senate bill 1235, as amended, and urge my colleagues to do the same. But before I reserve the balance of my time, I would like to bring attention to a matter of deep concern. We learned today of the theft of 26.5 million veterans' records from the home of a career VA employee. I am very concerned about this theft because the records include the name, Social Security number and date of birth of every veteran in this country.

I would like to encourage veterans to visit www.firstgov.gov or call 1-800-FED-INFO, 333-4636.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time, and I thank Mr. MILLER of Florida.

I rise in strong support of this Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act that is before us. This is bipartisan legislation and includes several provisions introduced by both Democrats and Republicans. It demonstrates what can be accomplished when we work together to deliver the best to our Nation's veterans, and again, I thank Chairman MILLER and all the Members on his side for bringing to us this bipartisan legislation.

One of the most important parts of the bill is the reauthorization of appropriations for the Labor Department's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP), through fiscal year 2009 with a maximum level of \$50 million per year. This program has proven to be very successful in providing job training and other services that help our Nation's veterans get back into productive lives.

Mr. Speaker, together with the ranking member, Mr. EVANS, I convened a homeless veterans forum just last Thursday, May 18. We heard some very tough statistics, hard-to-hear statistics about our Nation's veterans. Each night as many as 200,000 veterans are sleeping in a doorway, under a bridge, in an alley, in a box, in a barn or a car or homeless shelter. In fact, one out of every three homeless males is a veteran, most of those from Vietnam. A hard-to-believe fact is that the number of homeless Vietnam-era veterans is greater, Mr. Speaker, than the number of servicemembers who died during that war. This is almost unbelievable, and Congress must renew efforts to fight this plague.

Women veterans, unfortunately, are also joining the ranks of the homeless.

According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, a survey of their members revealed that the percentage of women among homeless vets rose from 2 percent in 1966 to 7 percent at the end of 2005. Women who have served in the military are up to four times more likely to become homeless when compared with their peers in the general population. These statistics demonstrate the importance of passing S. 1235.

At the forum last week, we heard from a woman veteran, formerly homeless. Her story is one of a courageous person who fought for years to overcome the problems that kept her homeless. At the Mary E. Walker House on the grounds of the VA Coatesville Medical Center in Pennsylvania, she finally was able to get the assistance she needed to reestablish her life, regain her children and begin again. While testifying, tears came to her eyes. She said they were tears of joy at what the VA program had helped her accomplish.

We heard also about the success of the Stand Downs, which began in my home town of San Diego in 1988 and provide a one-stop 3-day event to provide all the services needed by homeless vets; that is, counseling, clothing, food, medical and dental, assistance with job applications.

We know how to help our vets. We have to bring together all these services in one place. And rather than have 3-day Stand Downs around the country, we ought to have these services available to our veterans everyday. In addition, the Homeless Court Program, which began a few years ago, brings the court to homeless shelters to assist homeless defendants in resolving outstanding cases that prevent them from getting jobs and moving forward.

I would also like to call attention to another important successful program not in this bill before us today, the VA Homeless Grant and Per Diem program which directs funding to providers of housing and traditional services for homeless vets. I believe this program should be given an authorized annual spending level of \$130 million for the next 5 years. This would mean that the funding level would increase each year to reach by increments the \$130 million level.

Our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee have authorized this program through September of 2007. I suggest our committee take steps to continue the authorization of this program through 2012.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard of other important components of this bill, improvements in employment, life and health insurance, adapted housing, and housing loans to Native American veterans. I would like to thank Chairman BUYER, Ranking Member EVANS, and the chairman and ranking members of the subcommittees and their staff who diligently worked to make this bill a reality. I urge the passage of this bill.

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

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa, ENI FALEOMAVAEGA.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate bill 1235, the Veterans Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006, and I thank my colleagues for including my provision which makes it possible for Samoan or Hawaiian or Native American veterans to qualify for VA home loans.

In 1992, as a result of the leadership of the chairman and ranking members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of both Houses, we were able to establish a pilot program in 1992 which became Public Law 102-547, making it possible for Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and American Samoans to qualify for VA home loans.

One of the problems that was encountered by the thousands of Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and American Samoans was the fact that they were not able to get any commercial loans because they lived in reservations for Native Americans; they lived in reservations for Native Hawaiians. They lived in homestead lands. For my people, they lived in communally owned lands. What this legislation does is it simply allows these people to participate in this important program. I especially want to thank Chairman STEVE BUYER and Ranking Member LANE EVANS of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and also Chairman JOHN BOOZMAN and Ranking Member STEPHANIE HERSETH of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, and Mary Ellen McCarthy, Democratic Staff Director for Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, for their support and tireless efforts in making this possible.

I also want to thank the VA for assisting the Veterans' Affairs Committee and my office in drafting the appropriate language to make this a go.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach Memorial Day to remember and honor our military men and women who have died in serving our Nation during a time of war, I believe Senate bill 1235 is a fitting tribute to the veterans who are still with us. And I am especially pleased that this legislation provides my district's veterans with the housing opportunities and other benefits that they deserve. For this reason, I again thank my colleagues and I sincerely ask my colleagues to approve this legislation.

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

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to let folks know that this is a great step in the right direction in making sure that we keep our promise to our veterans.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BUYER,

Ranking Member EVANS, Chairman BOOZMAN, Ranking Member BERKLEY and Ranking Member HERSETH for their leadership on crafting this bill. I also want to recognize Chairman CRAIG and Ranking Member AKAKA of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and the staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support Senate bill 1235, as amended.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I offer this statement in support of S. 1235, as amended, the Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006.

Working together with the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, we have reached a compromise that will provide significant improvements in veterans' benefits, for those who have served this country and for those who will follow in their footsteps.

Under title one, this bill will increase the flexibility enjoyed by the Adapted Housing Grant Program and the Native American Home Loan Program. I commend Mr. BOOZMAN and Ms. HERSETH for their leadership in originally introducing these provisions, in H.R. 3665 and H.R. 1773, respectively.

As they return home to convalesce from medical care, many injured or wounded servicemembers spend time in a family member's home before returning to their own home. This legislation authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to equip a family member's home with necessary adaptive equipment. Further, it provides a partial adaptive housing allowance grant of between \$2,000 and \$14,000 to accomplish that adaptation.

This bill also helps Native American veterans and their families by making it easier for them to own their own home. We do that by making permanent a housing loan pilot program for Native American veterans and extend eligibility for Native American loans to non-native American veterans who are spouses of a Native American and who have a meaningful interest in the property under tribal law. We also increase the maximum loan amount available on tribal lands from \$80,000 to the maximum limit used for Freddie Mac loans, now over \$417,000.

Finally, under title one, we authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to prescribe annual rate adjustment caps for VA's hybrid adjustable rate mortgage loans, thus bringing these ARMs into line with the mortgage industry and enhancing their value on the secondary market.

Mr. Speaker, title two of the bill would migrate some of the sunsetted President's National Hire Veterans Committee duties to the Veterans' Employment and Training Service of the Assistant Secretary of Labor. Further, to improve employer outreach, the bill modifies membership and duties to the Department of Labor's newly named Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training and Outreach.

Title two also reauthorizes the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2007 through 2009, retaining the maximum authorization of \$50 million per year. Winning the fight against homelessness means finding homeless veterans good jobs, and that is what this program, managed by the Department of Labor, is intended to do. It is therefore a critical component of our program to end chronic homelessness among veterans.

Members of the Reserve and National Guard today play roles of unprecedented importance in our national security and must be accorded commensurate protections.

In provisions originally introduced by H.R. 2046, which I sponsored, title three of the bill increases job security among veterans by improving the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act, SCRA, and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, USERRA. Servicemembers who are activated and drop their commercial health insurance are now entitled to reinstatement of that policy upon their return from active duty. This bill prohibits premium increases after reinstatement other than such increases charged by that insurer for other policy holders similarly covered.

Some reservists choose to enroll in TRICARE before they are activated, for example in anticipation of activation; and S. 1235 as amended preserves their reinstatement rights under the provision detailed in the preceding paragraph, even if they ultimately do not serve on active duty.

Section 301 of the bill would, until September 30, 2011, double to 2 years the provision of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage free of charge when a member is rated totally disabled at separation. From October 2001 forward, the limit will be 18 months of free SGLI coverage.

Former prisoners of war experience great hardships that often manifest themselves in ailments years after interment. Section 401 of the bill would codify the VA's June 2005 regulation that added heart disease and ensuing complications, as well as stroke, to those diseases presumptively service-connected for former prisoners of war who were captive for at least 30 days.

Outreach to veterans is a perennial criticism leveled at VA by the Congress. Veterans cannot access benefits they don't know about. This bill will increase accountability by causing outreach activities to be collected into a discrete chapter of title 38, facilitating management and oversight of outreach and require VA to prepare a biennial outreach plan and report to Congress on its performance of that plan every two years.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and thank Ranking Member LANE EVANS, Chairman BOOZMAN, Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member BERKLEY, and Ranking Member HERSETH for their work bringing in this legislation to the Congress an ultimately to the cause of service to our veterans. I also recognize my counterpart, Senator LARRY CRAIG, chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and Ranking Member AKAKA, for their leadership on this important legislation.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of S. 1235, the Veterans' Benefits Act, which addresses a multitude of important issues facing our nation's veterans: life and health insurance, housing for our disabled and Native American veterans, adjustable rate mortgages, POW diseases, Tricare, homeless veterans, and veterans outreach.

Section 104 of S. 1235 provides permanent authority for the Native American Direct Home Loan Program and extends eligibility for such loans to non-Native American spouses of Native Americans living on Native American trust lands. H.R. 3665, which I cosponsored and which passed the House last November, also contained this important provision.

The Native American Direct Home Loan Program has been a highly successful veterans effort, particularly in my Hawaii where it applies to veterans living on lands held in trust under this Congress' Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920.

The majority of these Hawaiian home lands are in my 2nd Congressional District, on the islands of Oahu, Kauai, Molokai, Maui, Hawaii, and Lanai.

Since the inception of this program, which was spearheaded by Hawaii Senator Spark Matsunaga, and continued by Senator DANIEL AKAKA, Native Hawaiian veterans have successfully utilized this direct home loan program for their acute housing needs, and, I am proud to say, with nominal delinquency. Over \$20 million has been approved for over 200 loans in Hawaii, with 106 loans, totaling \$7.5 million, pending.

This is an incredible help not only with the needs of many veterans who would likely otherwise be precluded from quality housing, but with Hawaii's overall housing crisis.

Due to its success over the last 13 years, the Native American Direct Home Loan Program, which initially started out as a pilot program, was twice extended by Congress, but is currently set to expire on December 31, 2005.

It is vital to understand why this program is so important to our Native American veterans and why we should make the program permanent, as S. 1235 purposes.

Of course, the most basic reason is the success of the overall program in honoring our commitment to our nation's veterans.

Beyond that, Congress found some years ago that, during the entire history to that date of the program, not a single Native American veteran living on Indian trust lands or Hawaiian home lands had received a VA home loan under the VA's traditional home loan program.

The reason for that was that the unique trust status of native lands did not lend itself to conventional lending practices because banks and other financial institutions did not recognize those lands as valid collateral.

As part of our obligation to all of our Nation's veterans is to ensure that they are all able to tap fully into VA programs, the Native American Direct Home Loan Program addressed this unique and discrete challenge facing many Native American veterans and afforded them the same opportunity of homeownership availed their comrades-in-arms.

This bill recognizes and improves upon the clear success of this effort, and I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of S. 1235.

Mahalo.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act.

For more than 10 years, Congress has taken unprecedented steps to support our veterans and the families. The American veteran is the model of integrity. They have given this Nation so much and ask for so little in return. They symbolize all that is great about America.

Since 1995, Congress has increased the Department of Veterans Affairs' healthcare budget by 80 percent, drastically increased coverage and benefits, and taken great steps to better the lives of families left behind. This legislation continues to help our veterans, and it is my privilege to cast a vote in favor of our veterans.

Today, Congress takes another step in our on-going effort to better the lives and well

being our Nation's veterans and their families. This legislation will increase the availability and amount of coverage for life insurance, assist in stabilizing low mortgage rates, require educational outreach by the VA to better inform our veterans of services available to them.

As our brave service men and women continue to serve in harm's way, it is important that we always honor their sacrifices and support their families. They return home as veterans and join the ranks of many who have selflessly served our Nation. These brave men and women have given so much so that the American people and our values would remain safe.

As they faithfully upheld their duty to defend our flag and all that it stands for—now we have a duty to stand strong for them.

I urge passage of this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1235, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on Senate bill 1235, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

LEWIS AND CLARK COMMEMORATIVE COIN CORRECTION ACT

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5401) to amend section 308 of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act to make certain clarifying and technical amendments.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5401

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 "Lewis and Clark Commemorative Coin Correction Act".

SEC. 2. LEWIS AND CLARK COMMEMORATIVE COIN AMENDMENTS.

Section 308 of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act (31 U.S.C. 5112 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking "Secretary as follows:" and all that follows

through the end of the subsection and inserting the following: "Secretary for expenditure on activities associated with commemorating the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, as follows:

"(1) NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK BICENTENNIAL.—½ to the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

"(2) MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY.—½ to the Missouri Historical Society.";

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection:

"(b) TRANSFER OF UNEXPENDED FUNDS.—Any proceeds referred to in subsection (a) that were dispersed by the Secretary and remain unexpended by the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial or the Missouri Historical Society as of June 30, 2007, shall be transferred to the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation for the purpose of establishing a trust for the stewardship of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on this legislation.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5401, the Lewis and Clark Commemorative Coin Correction Act introduced by the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON). This is a technical correction which addresses language in legislation that authorized the minting and sale of a commemorative coin recognizing the bicentennial of the great Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery expedition.

□ 1500

The original legislation was sponsored by a former colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. Bereuter), and the coin was issued in the year 2004.

That bill specified that the surcharge income from the sale of the coins be divided between the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council and the National Park Service to be used for events commemorating the bicentennial. Unfortunately, the Park Service has no capacity to raise the private funding necessary to satisfy the matching funds requirement of statutes guiding the issuance of commemorative coins.

This legislation, which has broad bipartisan support, corrects that problem and will allow disbursement of the funds in ways that support the Lewis and Clark exhibit that has made its

way around the country and opened 2 weeks ago at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History. This is an extraordinarily educational exhibit with many items from personal collections that have not been together since the expedition itself.

Mr. Speaker, this is a technical correction with no cost to the government. The cause is deserving. American history has many elements, but the Lewis and Clark expedition is unique to our development as a Nation. The courageous trek deserves celebration because it helps define the innate sense of adventure which is such an integral part of the American spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for its immediate passage and would simply note the wonderful support on both sides of the aisle as symbolized by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), a good friend.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5401, the Lewis and Clark Commemorative Coin Correction Act. This technical correction to the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act redirects a portion of the proceeds of sales of the Lewis and Clark silver dollars from the National Park Service to the Missouri Historical Society.

The Park Service does not want to and cannot receive the one-third share of the surcharge funds originally allocated to it since it has no mechanism to raise the required matching funds.

The Missouri Historical Society, in contrast, has to date raised matching funds equal to over half of the surcharge funds. The other share has been raised by the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

Under the bill proposed today, the National Council and the Missouri Historical Society would each receive half of the surcharge funds. Any funds not expended by these two organizations would go to the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation for the establishment of a trust for the stewardship of the Lewis and Clark Historical Trail.

I am happy to say the coin has been very successful and raised almost \$5 million to date. I understand that this resolution is supported by Congressional Representatives from many of the States along the trail and by the board of the national council, which has members from all of the Lewis and Clark States.

It is a sensible way to assure that funds raised by this coin are used for activities that preserve and honor the achievements of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the great State of Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the lead Democratic cosponsor of this bill and the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and gentlewoman from New

York and friend and gentleman from Iowa for their support on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, several years ago, I hosted a small breakfast for the well-known historian Stephen Ambrose, and I asked him what it was that made America so great. Now, I fully expected him to mention the westward movement of American pioneer families in the 1800s.

Instead, Mr. Ambrose replied, "Look at Russia. They have abundant natural resources and a hearty workforce. But they never had a George Washington, a John Adams and a Thomas Jefferson. It was Thomas Jefferson who had the wisdom and the foresight to appoint Merriweather Lewis and William Clark to explore the Louisiana Territory."

I am pleased that we are considering this legislation that will continue to honor the historic achievements of Lewis and Clark, and I want to thank my good friend, JO ANN EMERSON, for introducing the bill; and I appreciate the support of Financial Services Committee Chairman MIKE OXLEY and Ranking Member BARNEY FRANK.

This bill will designate the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and the Missouri Historical Society as beneficiaries of proceeds from the sale of the Lewis and Clark commemorative coin. These nonprofit organizations have raised nearly \$5 million to conduct Lewis and Clark Bicentennial promotional activities. They will use funds from the sale of the coin to further historic investments in the Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail and to promote additional Lewis and Clark bicentennial celebrations.

This legislation has been endorsed by the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, which includes representation from all the States along the Missouri River basin.

It is with a note of interest, Mr. Speaker, that the Missouri River flows right by my hometown of Lexington, Missouri, and as Lewis and Clark went up that river in that historic year 1804, they went by the bluffs which now contain my hometown of Lexington, Missouri. So it is special to those of us that do live along the river that we continue to honor the work, the courage of Lewis and Clark on their very, very courageous journey.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I thank very much the gentlewoman from New York and, of course, the gentleman from Missouri; and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5401.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR PARTICIPATION OF JUDICIAL BRANCH EMPLOYEES IN LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM FOR DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1736) to provide for the participation of employees in the judicial branch in the Federal leave transfer program for disasters and emergencies.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1736

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM IN DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES.

Section 6391 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

"(f) After consultation with the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Office of Personnel Management shall provide for the participation of employees in the judicial branch in any emergency leave transfer program under this section."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1736, legislation to allow judicial branch employees to participate in the Federal leave transfer program in the event of disasters and emergencies.

In 1997, Congress authorized the creation of an emergency leave transfer program that allowed employees of the executive branch, as well as the Government Accountability Office, to transfer portions of their annual leave to other executive branch employees who are adversely affected by a natural disaster or emergencies. The 1997 legislation was built upon special procedures that were developed to assist Federal employees in the wake of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 19, 1995.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts petitioned Congress to consider extending the existing emergency leave transfer program to cover employees of the judicial

branch. S. 1736, introduced last September by Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chair SUSAN COLLINS, was passed by the Senate last October. While it may be too late to benefit the approximately 400 judicial branch employees displaced by Hurricane Katrina, this authority will be available to judicial branch employees should disaster strike again.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation demonstrates to our hardworking and dedicated Federal workforce that the Congress of the United States is committed to their safety and security. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. On September 2, 2005, the President authorized the Office of Personal Management to establish an emergency leave transfer program for executive branch employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The Judicial Conference of the United States subsequently requested legislative authority to do the same.

The judicial circuits and districts affected by Hurricane Katrina have thus far only been able to grant weather emergency-related administrative leave to their employees. Administrative leave for judicial employees will be curtailed as the courts slowly resume operations.

S. 1736 will ensure an emergency leave transfer program is in place to assist approved judicial branch leave recipients as their need for donated leave increases when affected courts resume operations and many of the employees who evacuated in response to Hurricane Katrina remain unable to return to work.

I join Senators COLLINS and LIEBERMAN in supporting this bill.

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

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

I just want to say that I should not have left out Senator LIEBERMAN. Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator COLLINS both worked very closely on a bipartisan basis to move forward important legislation. I think this is important legislation, and I join with my colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), in urging passage of this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1736.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SCOTT REED FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4530) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, as the "Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4530

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, shall be known and designated as the "Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4530.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 4530 was introduced by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER). The bill designates the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, as the Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse.

Judge Scott Reed was born in Lexington, Kentucky, on July 3, 1921. He graduated from Henry Clay High School and the University of Kentucky College of Law, where he received many honors.

During his years as a private attorney, he distinguished himself as a trial lawyer of great integrity. His career as a jurist began in 1964 when he became a Fayette Circuit Court judge. Five years later, he was elected to the Kentucky Court of Appeals, where he sat for over 7 years.

During the mid-1970s, Kentucky's judicial system experienced a significant reorganization with the creation of the new Kentucky Supreme Court. Judge Reed played an instrumental role in the reorganization and was elected to serve as the first chief justice of Ken-

tucky in 1976. He was considered a strict interpreter of Kentucky's constitution and a staunch advocate of the separation of the judiciary from the other branches of government.

In 1979, he was named U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky. He served as a U.S. district judge until he retired in 1990.

His opinions from the Supreme Court of Kentucky have received national acclaim for their scholarly content, and he has been recognized by many in a comparable light to Brandeis, Holmes, and Marshall.

□ 1515

I support this measure and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

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

I first want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) for his working with me on this bill. He has been very helpful throughout the process.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4530 is a bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, as the Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse. I can think of no other individual more deserving, no other public servant more worthy and no other action more appropriate than naming the Federal courthouse in Lexington after the Honorable Scott Reed.

A prominent central Kentucky attorney, first Chief Justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court and Federal judge, Scott Reed exemplifies the definition of honor and integrity. Born in Lexington, Kentucky, on July 3, 1921, Scott Reed graduated with distinction from the University of Kentucky. While in college, he was editor-in-chief of the Kentucky Law Journal and awarded the Order of the Coif, the highest academic award that can be given to a law graduate. He was also a member of the Phi Delta Phi Fraternity.

He achieved many honors at the University of Kentucky culminating, upon graduation, as the recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medallion, an extremely prestigious award given to individuals who "exhibit ideals of heart, mind and conduct as evince a spirit of love for and helpfulness to other men and women."

Prior to his service on the bench, Scott Reed was County Attorney. He was retained as counsel for the Fayette County School Board and distinguished himself as a trial lawyer with great integrity. He served from 1948 through 1956 as an acting associate professor at the University of Kentucky College of Law, and from 1964 until 1969, he was judge of the First Division of the Fayette County Circuit Court, which is the highest trial court in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He then was elected to the Kentucky Court of Appeals, at that time Kentucky's highest court.

As Chief Judge of the Kentucky Court of Appeals, Judge Reed oversaw the most comprehensive judicial reform in our State's history. It included passage of a constitutional amendment that unified and modernized Kentucky's court system. As part of the modernization, the Court of Appeals became the Kentucky Supreme Court, and Scott Reed was elected by his fellow justices to be the first Chief Justice of Kentucky.

As Chief Justice, he then oversaw the implementation of the reform that has led Kentucky into having one of the most efficient and modern court systems in the country. The Chief Justice of the Commonwealth holds equal rank with the Governor, the latter being the head of the executive branch and the Chief Justice serving as head of the judiciary.

He was elected as a fellow in the National College of the Judiciary in 1965 and Judge Reed was a voting member of the American Law Institute, a body of scholarly people who shape the laws of our Nation. The opinions written by Scott Reed during his time on the Supreme Court of Kentucky have received national acclaim for their scholarly content. He has been viewed as one of Kentucky's most accomplished and erudite jurists.

Judge Reed was a frequent lecturer to the National College of Trial Judges and has achieved the highest honors that can be bestowed on a member of his profession. Scott Reed was named to the University of Kentucky College of Law Hall of Distinguished Alumni on April 11, 1980. He crowned his career with 10 years on the Federal bench.

In 1989, he took senior status while battling the onset of Alzheimer's, which eventually took his life on February 17, 1994. Judge Scott Reed's fine legacy to his hometown of Lexington and to his home State of Kentucky will always be a proud part of our heritage.

Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of H.R. 4530, I strongly urge its passage.

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman working on this, and just to let the gentleman know, I have a Henry Clay Township in Pennsylvania, which happens to be in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, so Pennsylvania and Kentucky have more in common than one would think.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4530 is a bill to designate the Federal building located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, as the Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse. The bill was introduced by the Gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER) and his Kentucky colleague (Mr. ROGERS).

Scott Reed was born in Lexington, Kentucky, in 1921. He attended local schools and graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1945. While at the University, Reed received many awards and honors, including the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medalion for Excellence.

The first years of Judge Reed's career were spent in private practice during which he dis-

tinguished himself as a trial lawyer of great integrity. During this time, he also taught at the University of Kentucky College of Law.

From 1964 to 1969, Judge Reed was judge of the First Division of the Fayette Circuit Court. From 1969 until 1976, he served on the Court of Appeals, 5th Appellate District. In 1976, Judge Reed became the Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, a position which holds equal rank with the Governor. His opinions from the Supreme Court of Kentucky have received national attention for their scholarly content and careful judicial reasoning.

In August 1979, Judge Reed was nominated by President Carter to the federal bench. He was confirmed later that year and served until his death in 1994. During his confirmation hearing for the federal bench, Judge Reed was characterized as possessing a great sense of fairness and objectivity, practical legal experience, and great respect for the law and its responsibility to our Nation's citizens. Both Senator Huddleston and Senator Ford participated in Judge Reed's confirmation hearing in October 1979.

Judge Reed enjoyed a rich and rewarding career. His contributions to the American judicial system are exceptional. It is fitting that the Lexington courthouse bears his name to honor his distinguished career and enduring legacy.

I support H.R. 4530 and urge its passage.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL of California). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4530.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PETS EVACUATION AND TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS ACT OF 2005

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3858) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3858

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 "Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. STANDARDS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OPERATIONAL PLANS.

Section 613 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5196b) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

“(g) STANDARDS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OPERATIONAL PLANS.—In approving standards for State and local emergency preparedness operational plans pursuant to subsection (b)(3), the Director shall ensure that such plans take into account the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3858.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 3858, originally sponsored by Representative LANTOS of California and Representative SHAYS of Connecticut amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require the Director of FEMA to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operational plans take into account the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

During the evacuation of the gulf coast region last fall, we learned of the difficulty of evacuating household pets and service animals. Concerns over whether pets would be permitted to accompany their owners made some victims reluctant or unwilling to evacuate, choosing to wait out the disaster. The PETS Act would help ensure that household pets and service animals are considered by State and local emergency preparedness plans.

I would like to recognize my colleague, Mr. LANTOS, who introduced this bill soon after Hurricane Katrina devastated the gulf coast. Mr. LANTOS, a founding member of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus, has been an outspoken champion for animals.

I would also like to commend Mr. SHAYS for his dedication in moving this legislation and strong desire to resolve flaws in our Nation's emergency management system made apparent by Hurricane Katrina. I was lucky to have the opportunity to work with Mr. SHAYS on the Katrina investigation committee.

Both Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SHAYS have been champions of this issue and have worked to ensure that owners don't have to make a choice between their personal safety and their pets' safety.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005. This legislation amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require the Director of FEMA to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or an emergency.

It must be a top priority of our Nation to save citizens from any disaster, yet we should not underestimate the importance of rescuing pets to our ability to help citizens in a disaster. None of us should be faced with the choice of abandoning our beloved pets and critically needed service animals or risking our own personal safety.

As we witnessed during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, a significant number of people chose not to abandon their pets and risked their lives to stay with their animals. Some areas of Florida where hurricanes are a yearly occurrence have long recognized saving animals saves people and include a place for animals in emergency plans. And now, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, a few areas and other Gulf Coast States, including Harrison County, Mississippi, will have its first pet-friendly shelter in place for the 2006 hurricane season.

However, unfortunately, for most of the gulf coast and indeed the rest of the country, the issue is still unresolved unless legislation like this is approved today. All of us saw many horrible scenes of abandoned pets wandering through the flooded city of New Orleans. In addition to the humanitarian issue of forcing people to choose between their own safety and leaving their pets behind, there are serious problems, including health and safety risks to the disaster area, that are exacerbated by the abandoning of pets.

We know that many of these problems can be mitigated or even eliminated through proper emergency planning. Fortunately, legislation like this helps increase the awareness of lawmakers and emergency officials to recognize what animal advocates already know, that pets figure strongly in a person's decision to evacuate to safety. And we certainly want to encourage our citizens to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. I applaud Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SHAYS for all of their efforts on this bill, and I urge its support.

Mr. Speaker, I think that Mr. SHUSTER has already mentioned Mr. LANTOS' interest in the welfare of animals. It is heartfelt. I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. LANTOS on the International Relations Committee, and I have the great privilege today of introducing him and yielding to him such time as he may consume to speak on this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend and colleague on

the International Relations Committee from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER). I want to thank Mr. SHUSTER for his extraordinarily gracious gesture. I also want to express my appreciation to Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the ranking member on that subcommittee, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

I particularly want to thank my dear friend and colleague of many years, CHRIS SHAYS, for again joining with me in sponsoring a significant and major humane piece of legislation. But my most sincere thanks go to my wife, Annette, who has been my guiding light on all humane pieces of legislation I have had the privilege of working on.

Mr. Speaker, the work of my colleagues, along with the Herculean efforts of all the animal welfare organizations, will ensure not only the safety of household pets and service animals but of their owners in moments of potential fatal danger. Families will be able to prepare and evacuate from a disaster with more confidence and security knowing that all of their family members and their pets will be secure.

Mr. Speaker, the devastation in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama brought unbelievable images into every American home night after night.

□ 1530

The loss of life and property was staggering. But on top of all of that, the sight of evacuees having to choose between being rescued or remaining with their pets, perhaps even having to leave behind their service animals they rely on every day, was just heart-breaking.

I was watching television one night, Mr. Speaker, and I saw a 7-year-old little boy with his dog. His family lost everything, and all they had left was their dog. And since legislation such as ours was not yet on the statute books, the dog was taken away from this little boy. To watch his face was a singularly revealing and tragic experience.

This legislation was born that moment. Many pieces of legislation we pass in this body are the result of months and years of study and research and preparation. Not this bill. This bill was born the moment the 7-year-old little fellow had to give up his dog because there was no provision to provide shelter for his pet.

The Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act will put an end to all of this. Until today, accommodating families with pets or disabled citizens with service animals was never considered an essential part of any evacuation plan. Our PETS Act requires State and local emergency preparedness authorities to include in their evacuation plans provisions to accommodate pets or service animals in case of a disaster.

The lack of planning in the past interfered with disaster operations in New Orleans where people who were worried about losing their animal com-

panions often refused rescuers' help. If evacuees know that their pets, who obviously are considered members of their family, are in good hands, they will be willing to cooperate with authorities.

According to the Humane Society of the United States, Mr. Speaker, there are 65 million dogs and 77 million cats owned as pets by American families. Thousands of visually impaired people depend on guide dogs to get around. These faithful pet owners and visually impaired citizens must be able to evacuate if in the path of harm, and they must know that all members of their family will be safe.

Since the gulf coast hurricanes, this Nation has endured other weather events. In many cases, local authorities made impromptu plans for people with pets or service animals. This demonstrates that authorities are capable of making effective plans for people with pets and service animals. But we cannot let the lessons learned from the gulf coast hurricanes be forgotten. Our PETS Act will ensure that years from now States will continue to plan for their pet and service animal populations. This will ensure a smooth and safe evacuation for all members of the family and their pets and service animals.

I strongly urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this potentially life-saving legislation, life-saving with respect to the animals we love, and life-saving with respect to members of our families.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. YOUNG and Mr. OBERSTAR. I wanted to defer my opportunity to go before Mr. LANTOS because it needs to be clear this began in the heart and mind of Mr. LANTOS' wife, and we are merely instruments of her goodness.

I rise, in support of H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act, which we do refer to as the PETS Act, which Congressman LANTOS and I, as co-chairmen of the Friends of Animals Caucus, introduced.

This commonsense bill requires State and local preparedness planners to include plans for evacuation of pet owners, pets and service animals, as has already been described by previous speakers.

Hurricane Katrina left so many victims in its wake, including an estimated 600,000 animals that either lost their lives or were left without shelter. Hurricane Katrina taught us the hard lesson that, as we prepare for future emergencies, it is important we incorporate pet owners and their pets in our plans.

Many pet owners had to choose between their safety and the safety of their pets, and anyone who owns a pet understands the difficult decisions that they had to make.

In order to qualify for Federal Emergency Management Agency funding, a jurisdiction is required to submit a plan detailing their disaster preparedness plan. The PETS Act would simply require State and local emergency preparedness authorities to plan for how they would accommodate household pets and service animals when presenting these plans to FEMA. Animals do not go before people, but animals will have a place in this plan.

The human horror and devastation in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama was a tragedy we are addressing, but it was also heartbreaking to hear stories of forcing evacuees to choose between being rescued or remaining with their pets.

This bipartisan legislation is necessary because when asked to choose between abandoning their pets or their personal safety, many pet owners chose to risk their lives and would continue today to risk their lives and remain with their pets. The plight of the animals left behind was truly tragic. This is not just an animal protection issue; this is a public safety issue. Roughly two-thirds of American households own pets. We need to ensure the pets and their pet owners are protected.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation. I, too, want to make reference to that young man; I guess he was around 7 years old. I think of him and think this young man may have lost his home, he may have lost everything he owned, but he had his pet. As long as he had his pet, he could deal with it. To see this pet being grabbed from him, to me it was the height of cruelty that I still have a hard time understanding and appreciating.

When my mom and dad moved when I was 8 or 9 years old to another place, our pet dog, Mack, kept running back to the original house, and we lost him. For 2 years, I didn't have a pet, but I grew up with a pet. Then we moved to a new home and my parents could afford nothing else. They told me no Christmas presents. There would be no Christmas presents. My Christmas present was a new home, a brand new room, and I dealt with that. I thought, this year, no Christmas presents.

They were gone Christmas Eve day, and they came home that night. They didn't tell me where they had been, which was very unusual. I was with my three older brothers. Then my parents asked me to come down into the garage. As I did, they were walking up holding a beautiful collie pup. That night I slept on the floor with Lance, my collie pup.

I will never forget the joy I had. It was the best Christmas I ever had, and it was just one little gift, a pet that remained in our household for years.

This is an important bill, and I urge its passage.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to thank Mr. LANTOS and his wife, Annette, in particular for extend-

ing their well-known humanitarian instincts to the welfare of animals. I also want to thank Mr. SHAYS and Mr. SHUSTER for all of their work on this bill.

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I also want to thank Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SHAYS for their work on this bill.

The PETS Act would help ensure that household pets and service animals are considered by State and local emergency preparedness plans because there are people in this country, myself included, I have a dog Chloe that has a close relationship with my family, and I know people throughout this country have pets that are near and dear to their hearts.

When you go to a rooftop, as we saw down in New Orleans as Mr. SHAYS and Mr. LANTOS pointed out, people are unwilling to get aboard a boat or helicopter if they have to leave their beloved pet behind. Once again, this is so States and local emergency preparedness plans take into consideration situations that might occur if someone has to abandon their pets. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act of 2005. This bill amends the Stafford Act to ensure that state and local emergency preparedness plans account for the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

There were many tragedies from Hurricane Katrina that will not soon be forgotten. Some of the most indelible images were the ones of people being forced to choose between leaving their pets behind or being evacuated to safety. In many cases, these loyal animals had stayed with their owners for days on rooftops waiting to be rescued, only to be abandoned because the rescuers refused to carry the pets to safety with their owners. In other cases, people chose not to be rescued—putting themselves in further danger—because they simply could not bear to leave their pets behind.

A person should not have to leave their seeing-eye dog behind in order to save her own life—as we saw in Hurricane Katrina. Nor should a child, who has already been traumatized by the devastation of a disaster, have to abandon his beloved pet in order to be transported to safety—as we saw in Hurricane Katrina. As the June 1st start of the next hurricane season approaches, it's important that this bill becomes law and that state and local officials start to plan for the evacuation of pets and service animals.

There are, of course, other issues in the wake of Hurricane Katrina that this Congress should address. Last week, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Government Reform Committee favorably ordered reported H.R. 5316, the Restoring Emergency Services to Protect our Nation from Disasters (RESPOND) Act to the House. The RESPOND Act not only restores FEMA as an independent, cabinet-level agency, but it also reforms and strengthens our national emergency preparedness system so that we never again have to witness such a dismal failure by

the federal government to respond to its citizens in need as we did with Hurricane Katrina.

H.R. 5316 ensures that FEMA's core functions of preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation will once again coexist and work to complement each other in an independent FEMA, and not be separated and dismantled as they have been in the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, the bill we have before us is a much-needed first step in a longer process of reforming our emergency management system. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3858.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3858, the Pets and Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act of 2005. This is a sample, focused piece of legislation that will require local and state emergency preparedness authorities to include in their evacuation plans how they will accommodate household pets and/or service animals in case of a disaster. It deserves our support.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita revealed gaping holes in our capacity to effectively manage the aftermath of large-scale disasters. Our failures in emergency response and evacuation were numerous, and they varied in both size and importance. One problem with our response was a blind spot in our disaster planning regarding the evacuation of pets and service animals. For too many caring animal owners, the opportunity to escape danger means separation from a beloved pet. More grievous, the evacuation of many residents of the Gulf Region who are dependent on service animals was complicated by inflexible regulations that did not take their special needs into account.

H.R. 3858 is commonsense legislation that will ensure planning for future disaster provides for the needs of pet owners. This bill is support by the Humane Society of the United States, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Doris Day Animal League and the Best Friends Animal Society.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to join in support of H.R. 3858.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3858.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1832

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 6 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON H.R. 5441, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of California, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-476) on the bill (H.R. 5441) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

- S. 1235, by the yeas and nays,
- H.R. 3858, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second vote will be a 5-minute vote.

VETERANS' HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AND BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 1235, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1235, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 372, nays 0, not voting 61, as follows:

[Roll No. 177]

YEAS—372

Abercrombie	Berkley	Boswell
Ackerman	Berry	Boucher
Aderholt	Biggert	Boustany
Akin	Bilirakis	Boyd
Alexander	Bishop (GA)	Bradley (NH)
Allen	Bishop (NY)	Brady (PA)
Baca	Bishop (UT)	Brady (TX)
Bachus	Blackburn	Brown (OH)
Baker	Blumenauer	Brown (SC)
Baldwin	Blunt	Brown-Waite,
Barrett (SC)	Boehlert	Ginny
Barrow	Boehner	Burgess
Bartlett (MD)	Bonilla	Burton (IN)
Barton (TX)	Bonner	Butterfield
Bass	Bono	Buyer
Bean	Boozman	Calvert
Beauprez	Boren	Campbell (CA)

Cantor	Herger	Napolitano
Capito	Higgins	Neal (MA)
Capps	Hobson	Neugebauer
Cardin	Hoekstra	Ney
Cardoza	Holden	Northup
Carnahan	Holt	Norwood
Carson	Honda	Nunes
Carter	Hooley	Obey
Case	Hostettler	Olver
Castle	Hoyer	Ortiz
Chabot	Hulshof	Osborne
Chandler	Hyde	Otter
Chocola	Inslee	Pallone
Clay	Israel	Pascarell
Cleaver	Jackson (IL)	Pastor
Clyburn	Jackson-Lee	Paul
Coble	(TX)	Payne
Cole (OK)	Jefferson	Pearce
Conaway	Jindal	Pelosi
Conyers	Johnson (CT)	Pence
Cooper	Johnson (IL)	Peterson (MN)
Costa	Johnson, E. B.	Petri
Costello	Johnson, Sam	Pitts
Cramer	Jones (NC)	Poe
Crenshaw	Kanjorski	Pomeroy
Crowley	Kaptur	Porter
Cubin	Kelly	Price (GA)
Cuellar	Kennedy (MN)	Price (NC)
Culberson	Kildee	Putnam
Cummings	Kind	Radanovich
Davis (AL)	King (IA)	Rahall
Davis (CA)	King (NY)	Ramstad
Davis (IL)	Kingston	Rangel
Davis (KY)	Kirk	Regula
Davis (TN)	Kline	Reichert
Davis, Jo Ann	Knollenberg	Renzi
Davis, Tom	Kucinich	Rogers (AL)
Deal (GA)	Kuhl (NY)	Rogers (KY)
DeFazio	LaHood	Rogers (MI)
Delahunt	Langevin	Rohrabacher
DeLauro	Lantos	Ros-Lehtinen
DeLay	Larsen (WA)	Ross
Dent	Latham	Rothman
Diaz-Balart, L.	LaTourrette	Roybal-Allard
Diaz-Balart, M.	Leach	Royce
Dicks	Lee	Rush
Dingell	Levin	Ryan (OH)
Doggett	Lewis (CA)	Ryan (WI)
Doyle	Lewis (KY)	Ryun (KS)
Drake	Linder	Sabo
Dreier	Lipinski	Salazar
Duncan	LoBiondo	Sanders
Edwards	Lofgren, Zoe	Saxton
Ehlers	Lucas	Schakowsky
Emanuel	Lungren, Daniel	Schiff
Emerson	E.	Schmidt
Engel	Lynch	Schwartz (PA)
English (PA)	Mack	Schwarz (MI)
Eshoo	Maloney	Scott (GA)
Etheridge	Manzullo	Scott (VA)
Everett	Marchant	Sensenbrenner
Farr	Markey	Serrano
Fattah	Marshall	Sessions
Feeney	Matheson	Shadegg
Ferguson	Matsui	Shaw
Filner	McCarthy	Shays
Fitzpatrick (PA)	McCaul (TX)	Sherman
Flake	McColum (MN)	Sherwood
Fortenberry	McCotter	Shimkus
Fossella	McCrary	Shuster
Fox	McDermott	Simmons
Frank (MA)	McGovern	Simpson
Franks (AZ)	McHenry	Skelton
Frelinghuysen	McHugh	Slaughter
Garrett (NJ)	McIntyre	Smith (NJ)
Gerlach	McKeon	Smith (TX)
Gilchrist	McMorris	Smith (WA)
Gillmor	McNulty	Sodrel
Gingrey	Meehan	Solis
Gohmert	Meek (FL)	Souder
Gonzalez	Meeks (NY)	Spratt
Goode	Melancon	Stark
Goodlatte	Mica	Stearns
Gordon	Michaud	Stupak
Granger	Millender-	Sullivan
Green, Al	McDonald	Tancredo
Green, Gene	Miller (FL)	Tanner
Grijalva	Miller (MI)	Tauscher
Gutknecht	Miller (NC)	Taylor (MS)
Hall	Miller, Gary	Terry
Harman	Miller, George	Thomas
Harris	Mollohan	Thompson (CA)
Hart	Moore (KS)	Thompson (MS)
Hastert	Moore (WI)	Thornberry
Hastings (WA)	Moran (KS)	Tiaht
Hayes	Murphy	Tiberi
Hayworth	Musgrave	Tierney
Hefley	Myrick	Towns
Hensarling	Nadler	Turner

Udall (CO)	Wasserman	Wexler
Udall (NM)	Schultz	Whitfield
Upton	Watson	Wilson (NM)
Van Hollen	Watt	Wilson (SC)
Velázquez	Waxman	Wolf
Visclosky	Weiner	Woolsey
Walden (OR)	Weldon (FL)	Wu
Walsh	Weldon (PA)	Wynn
Wamp	Weller	Young (AK)
	Westmoreland	Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—61

Andrews	Herseth	Owens
Baird	Hinchey	Oxley
Becerra	Hinojosa	Peterson (PA)
Berman	Hunter	Pickering
Brown, Corrine	Inglis (SC)	Platts
Camp (MI)	Issa	Pombo
Cannon	Istook	Pryce (OH)
Capuano	Jenkins	Rehberg
Davis (FL)	Jones (OH)	Reyes
DeGette	Keller	Reynolds
Doolittle	Kennedy (RI)	Ruppersberger
Evans	Kilpatrick (MI)	Sánchez, Linda
Foley	Kolbe	T.
Forbes	Larson (CT)	Sanchez, Loretta
Ford	Lewis (GA)	Snyder
Galleghy	Lowey	Strickland
Gibbons	McKinney	Sweeney
Graves	Moran (VA)	Taylor (NC)
Green (WI)	Murtha	Waters
Hastings (FL)	Nussle	Wicker
	Oberstar	

□ 1859

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the Senate bill was amended so as to read: "An Act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and extend housing, insurance, outreach, and benefits programs provided under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to improve and extend employment programs for veterans under laws administered by the Secretary of Labor, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PETS EVACUATION AND TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 3858.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3858, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 349, nays 24, not voting 60, as follows:

[Roll No. 178]

YEAS—349

Abercrombie	Barrett (SC)	Bishop (GA)
Ackerman	Barrow	Bishop (OH)
Aderholt	Bartlett (MD)	Bishop (NY)
Akin	Barton (TX)	Blumenauer
Alexander	Bass	Blunt
Allen	Bean	Boehlert
Baca	Beauprez	Boehner
Bachus	Berkley	Bonilla
Baker	Biggert	Bonner
Baldwin	Bilirakis	Bono

Boozman Green, Gene
 Boren Grijalva
 Boswell Gutknecht
 Boucher Hall
 Boustany Harman
 Boyd Harris
 Bradley (NH) Hart
 Brady (PA) Hastert
 Brady (TX) Hastings (WA)
 Brown (OH) Hayes
 Brown (SC) Hayworth
 Brown-Waite, Hefley
 Ginny Hensarling
 Burgess Herger
 Burton (IN) Higgins
 Butterfield Hinchey
 Calvert Hobson
 Campbell (CA) Hoekstra
 Cantor Holden
 Capito Holt
 Capps Honda
 Cardin Hooley
 Cardoza Hostettler
 Carnahan Hoyer
 Carson Hulshof
 Carter Hyde
 Case Insee
 Castle Israel
 Chabot Jackson (IL)
 Chandler Jackson-Lee
 Chocola (TX)
 Clay Jefferson
 Cleaver Jindal
 Clyburn Johnson (CT)
 Coble Johnson (IL)
 Cole (OK) Johnson, E. B.
 Conaway Johnson, Sam
 Conyers Jones (NC)
 Cooper Kanjorski
 Costa Kaptur
 Costello Keller
 Cramer Kelly
 Crenshaw Kennedy (MN)
 Crowley Kildee
 Cubin Kind
 Cuellar King (NY)
 Culberson Kingston
 Cummings Kirk
 Davis (AL) Kline
 Davis (CA) Knollenberg
 Davis (IL) Kucinich
 Davis (KY) Kuhl (NY)
 Davis (TN) LaHood
 Davis, Jo Ann Langevin
 Davis, Tom Lantos
 Deal (GA) Larsen (WA)
 DeFazio Latham
 Delahunt LaTourrette
 DeLauro Leach
 DeLay Lee
 Dent Levin
 Diaz-Balart, L. Lewis (CA)
 Diaz-Balart, M. Lewis (KY)
 Dicks Linder
 Dingell Lipinski
 Doggett LoBiondo
 Doyle Lofgren, Zoe
 Drake Lucas
 Dreier Lungren, Daniel
 Duncan E.
 Ehlers Lynch
 Emanuel Mack
 Emerson Maloney
 Engel Manzullo
 English (PA) Marchant
 Eshoo Markey
 Etheridge Marshall
 Everett Matheson
 Farr Matsui
 Patah McCarthy
 Ferguson McCaul (TX)
 Filner McCollum (MN)
 Fitzpatrick (PA) McCotter
 Fortenberry McCrery
 Fossella McDermott
 Foxx McGovern
 Frank (MA) McHugh
 Franks (AZ) McIntyre
 Frelinghuysen McKeon
 Gerlach McMorris
 Gilchrest McNulty
 Gillmor Meehan
 Gingrey Meek (FL)
 Gonzalez Meeks (NY)
 Goode Melancon
 Goodlatte Mica
 Gordon Michaud
 Granger Millender
 Green, Al McDonald

Miller (NC)
 Miller, Gary
 Miller, George
 Mollohan
 Moore (KS)
 Moore (WI)
 Moran (KS)
 Murphy
 Musgrave
 Myrick
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Ney
 Northup
 Nunes
 Obey
 Oliver
 Ortiz
 Osborne
 Otter
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Pastor
 Payne
 Pearce
 Pelosi
 Pence
 Peterson (MN)
 Petri
 Pomeroy
 Porter
 Price (GA)
 Price (NC)
 Radanovich
 Rahall
 Ramstad
 Rangel
 Regula
 Reichert
 Renzi
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Ross
 Rothman
 Roybal-Allard
 Royce
 Rush
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Ryun (KS)
 Sabo
 Salazar
 Sanders
 Saxton
 Schakowsky
 Leach
 Schiff
 Schmidt
 Schwartz (PA)
 Schwarz (MI)
 Scott (GA)
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 Sensenbrenner
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 Slaughter
 Smith (NJ)
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 Solis
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 Stearns
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 Sullivan
 Tanner
 Tauscher
 Taylor (MS)
 Thomas
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tierney
 Towns
 Turner

Udall (CO)
 Udall (NM)
 Upton
 Van Hollen
 Velazquez
 Visclosky
 Walden (OR)
 Walsh
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Berry
 Blackburn
 Buyer
 Feeney
 Flake
 Garrett (NJ)
 Gohmert
 King (IA)
 Andrews
 Baird
 Becerra
 Berman
 Brown, Corrine
 Camp (MI)
 Cannon
 Capuano
 Davis (FL)
 DeGette
 Doolittle
 Edwards
 Evans
 Foley
 Forbes
 Ford
 Gallegly
 Gibbons
 Graves
 Green (WI)
 Gutierrez

Watson
 Watt
 Waxman
 Weiner
 Weldon (FL)
 Weldon (PA)
 Weller
 Wexler
 Whitfield
 Wilson (NM)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wolf
 Woolsey
 Wu
 Wynn
 Young (AK)
 Young (FL)
 Putnam
 Shadegg
 Sodrel
 Tancredo
 Terry
 Tiahrt
 Wamp
 Westmoreland
 Oxley
 Peterson (PA)
 Pickering
 Platts
 Pombo
 Pryce (OH)
 Rehberg
 Reyes
 Reynolds
 Ruppertsberger
 Sanchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Snyder
 Strickland
 Sweeney
 Taylor (NC)
 Waters
 Wicker

1235 (Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2005) and "yea" on H.R. 3858 (Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today I was unavoidably absent and missed rollcall votes Nos. 177 and 178. Had I been present, I would have voted: "Yea" on rollcall No. 177, S. 1235, the "Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2005" and "yea" on rollcall No. 178, H.R. 3858, the "Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, official business requires my absence from legislative business scheduled for today, Monday, May 22, 2006. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on S. 1235, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2005 (rollcall No. 177) and "yea" on H.R. 3858, Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005 (rollcall No. 178).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 177 and 178 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both measures.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote today on the House floor. I take my responsibility to vote very seriously and would like my intentions included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I had been present, I would have voted "yea" on S. 1235, Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2005.

Additionally, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, on the legislative day of Monday, May 22, 2006, the House had a vote on rollcall 177, on S. 1235, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act, Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

The House also had a vote on rollcall 178, on H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably detained in my district due to congressional business. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 177 and "yea" on rollcall No. 178.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLE of New York). Pursuant to clause

NAYS—24

NOT VOTING—60

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1907

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from Washington on Monday, May 22, 2006. As a result, I was not recorded for rollcall votes No. 177 and No. 178. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 177 and No. 178.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD and regret that I could not be present today, Monday, May 22, 2006, to vote on rollcall votes Nos. 177 and 178 due to a family medical emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted: "yea" on rollcall vote No. 177 on passage of S. 1235, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2005, and "yea" on rollcall vote No. 178 on passage of H.R. 3858, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I missed two votes on May 22, 2006. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on S.

8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion 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.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM ACT OF 2006

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4681) to promote the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4681

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 "Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.

(a) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—It shall be the policy of the United States—

(1) to support a peaceful, two-state solution to end the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in accordance with the Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (commonly referred to as the "Roadmap");

(2) to oppose those organizations, individuals, and countries that support terrorism and violence;

(3) to urge members of the international community to avoid contact with and refrain from financially supporting the terrorist organization Hamas or a Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority until Hamas agrees to recognize Israel, renounce violence, disarm, and accept prior agreements, including the Roadmap;

(4) to promote the emergence of a democratic Palestinian governing authority that—

(A) denounces and combats terrorism;

(B) has agreed to and is taking action to disarm and dismantle any terrorist agency, network, or facility;

(C) has agreed to work to eliminate anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement and the commemoration of terrorists in Palestinian society;

(D) has agreed to respect the sovereignty of its neighbors;

(E) acknowledges, respects, and upholds the human rights of all people;

(F) implements the rule of law, good governance, and democratic practices, including conducting free, fair, and transparent elections in compliance with international standards;

(G) ensures institutional and financial transparency and accountability; and

(H) has agreed to recognize the State of Israel as an independent, sovereign, Jewish, democratic state; and

(5) to continue to support assistance to the Palestinian people.

(b) AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 1 of part III of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2351 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating the second section 620G (as added by section 149 of Public Law 104-164 (110 Stat. 1436)) as section 620J; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 620K. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.

"(a) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in subsection (e), assistance may be provided under this Act to the Palestinian Authority only during a period for which a certification described in subsection (b) is in effect.

"(b) CERTIFICATION.—A certification described in this subsection is a certification transmitted by the President to Congress that contains a determination of the President that—

"(1) no ministry, agency, or instrumentality of the Palestinian Authority is controlled by a foreign terrorist organization and no member of a foreign terrorist organization serves in a senior policy making position in a ministry, agency, or instrumentality of the Palestinian Authority;

"(2) the Palestinian Authority has—

"(A) publicly acknowledged Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state; and

"(B) recommitted itself and is adhering to all previous agreements and understandings by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority with the Government of the United States, the Government of Israel, and the international community, including agreements and understandings pursuant to the Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (commonly referred to as the 'Roadmap'); and

"(3) the Palestinian Authority has taken effective steps and made demonstrable progress toward—

"(A) completing the process of purging from its security services individuals with ties to terrorism;

"(B) dismantling all terrorist infrastructure, confiscating unauthorized weapons, arresting and bringing terrorists to justice, destroying unauthorized arms factories, thwarting and preempting terrorist attacks, and fully cooperating with Israel's security services;

"(C) halting all anti-Israel incitement in Palestinian Authority-controlled electronic and print media and in schools, mosques, and other institutions it controls, and replacing these materials, including textbooks, with materials that promote tolerance, peace, and coexistence with Israel;

"(D) ensuring democracy, the rule of law, and an independent judiciary, and adopting other reforms such as ensuring transparent and accountable governance; and

"(E) ensuring the financial transparency and accountability of all government ministries and operations.

"(c) RECERTIFICATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the President transmits to Congress an initial certification under subsection (b), and every six months thereafter—

"(1) the President shall transmit to Congress a recertification that the requirements contained in subsection (b) are continuing to be met; or

"(2) if the President is unable to make such a recertification, the President shall transmit to Congress a report that contains the reasons therefor.

"(d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Assistance made available under this Act to the Palestinian Authority may not be provided until 15 days after the date on which the President has provided notice thereof to the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate in accordance with the procedures applicable to reprogramming notifications under section 634A(a) of this Act.

"(e) EXCEPTIONS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to the following:

"(A) ASSISTANCE TO INDEPENDENT ELECTIONS COMMISSIONS.—Assistance to any Palestinian independent election commission if the President transmits to Congress a certification that contains a determination of the President that—

"(i) no member of such commission is a member of, affiliated with, or appointed by a foreign terrorist organization; and

"(ii) each member of such commission is independent of the influence of any political party or movement.

"(B) ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS.—Assistance to the Office of the President of the Palestinian Authority for non-security expenses directly related to facilitating a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or for the personal security detail of the President of the Palestinian Authority if the President transmits to Congress a certification that contains a determination of the President that—

"(i) such assistance is critical to facilitating a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

"(ii) the President of the Palestinian Authority is not a member of or affiliated with a foreign terrorist organization and has rejected the use of terrorism to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

"(iii) such assistance will not be used to provide funds to any individual who is a member of or affiliated with a foreign terrorist organization or who has not rejected the use of terrorism to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and

"(iv) such assistance will not be retransferred to any other entity within or outside of the Palestinian Authority except as payment for legal goods or services rendered.

"(2) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—Assistance described in paragraph (1) may be provided only if the President—

"(A) determines that the provision of such assistance is important to the national security interests of the United States; and

"(B) not less than 30 days prior to the obligation of amounts for the provision of such assistance—

"(i) consults with the appropriate congressional committees regarding the specific programs, projects, and activities to be carried out using such assistance; and

"(ii) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written memorandum that contains the determination of the President under subparagraph (A).

"(3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

"(A) the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

"(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

"(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION.—The term 'foreign terrorist organization' means an organization designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 219(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189(a)).

"(2) PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.—The term 'Palestinian Authority' means the interim Palestinian administrative organization that governs part of the West Bank and all of the Gaza Strip (or any successor Palestinian governing entity), including the Palestinian Legislative Council."

(c) APPLICABILITY TO UNEXPENDED FUNDS.—Section 620K of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by subsection (b), applies with respect to unexpended funds obligated

for assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to the Palestinian Authority before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains a review of the proposed procedures by which United States assistance to the Palestinian Authority under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 will be audited by the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, and all other relevant departments and agencies of the Government of the United States and any recommendations for improvement of such procedures.

(e) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the President should be guided by the principles and procedures described in section 620K of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by subsection (b), in providing direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority under any provision of law other than the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—Chapter 1 of part III of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2351 et seq.), as amended by section 2(b)(2) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 620L. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

“(a) **LIMITATION.**—Except as provided in subsection (d), assistance may be provided under this Act to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank and Gaza only during a period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of this Act is in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority.

“(b) **MARKING REQUIREMENT.**—Assistance provided under this Act to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank and Gaza shall be marked as assistance from the Government of the United States unless the Secretary of State or the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development determines that such marking will endanger the lives or safety of persons delivering or receiving such assistance or would have a material adverse effect on the implementation of such assistance.

“(c) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—Assistance made available under this Act to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank and Gaza may not be provided until 15 days after the date on which the President has provided notice thereof to the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate in accordance with the procedures applicable to reprogramming notifications under section 634A(a) of this Act.

“(d) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to the following:

“(1) **ASSISTANCE TO MEET BASIC HUMAN HEALTH NEEDS.**—The provision of food, water, medicine, sanitation services, or other assistance to directly meet basic human health needs.

“(2) **OTHER TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.**—The provision of any other type of assistance if the President—

“(A) determines that the provision of such assistance will further the national security interests of the United States; and

“(B) not less than 25 days prior to the obligation of amounts for the provision of such assistance—

“(i) consults with the appropriate congressional committees regarding the specific pro-

grams, projects, and activities to be carried out using such assistance; and

“(ii) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a written memorandum that contains the determination of the President under subparagraph (A) and an explanation of how failure to provide the proposed assistance would be inconsistent with furthering the national security interests of the United States.

“(3) **DEFINITION.**—In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(A) the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

“(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.”

(b) **OVERSIGHT AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **OVERSIGHT.**—For each of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008, the Secretary of State shall certify to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 30 days prior to the initial obligation of amounts for assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank or Gaza under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 that procedures have been established to ensure that the Comptroller General of the United States will have access to appropriate United States financial information in order to review the use of such assistance.

(2) **VETTING.**—Prior to any obligation of amounts for assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank or Gaza under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the Secretary of State shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that such assistance is not provided to or through any individual or entity that the Secretary knows, or has reason to believe, advocates, plans, sponsors, engages in, or has engaged in, terrorist activity. The Secretary shall, as appropriate, establish procedures specifying the steps to be taken in carrying out this paragraph and shall terminate assistance to any individual or entity that the Secretary has determined advocates, plans, sponsors, or engages in terrorist activity.

(3) **PROHIBITION.**—No amounts made available for any fiscal year for assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank or Gaza under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 may be made available for the purpose of recognizing or otherwise honoring individuals or the families of individuals who commit, or have committed, acts of terrorism.

(4) **AUDITS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall ensure that independent audits of all contractors and grantees, and significant subcontractors and subgrantees, that receive amounts for assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank or Gaza under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 are conducted to ensure, among other things, compliance with this subsection.

(B) **AUDITS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF USAID.**—Of the amounts available for any fiscal year for assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank or Gaza under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, up to \$1,000,000 for each such fiscal year may be used by the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Agency for International Development for audits, inspections, and other activities in furtherance of the requirements of subparagraph (A). Such amounts are in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes.

(c) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the President should be guided by the principles and procedures described in

section 620L of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by subsection (a), in providing assistance to nongovernmental organizations for the West Bank and Gaza under any provision of law other than the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

SEC. 4. UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS.

(a) **REVIEW AND REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall—

(A) conduct an audit of the functions of the entities specified in paragraph (2); and

(B) transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing recommendations for the elimination of such entities and efforts that are duplicative or fail to ensure balance in the approach of the United Nations to Israeli-Palestinian issues.

(2) **ENTITIES SPECIFIED.**—The entities referred to in paragraph (1) are the following:

(A) The United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights.

(B) The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

(C) The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority.

(D) The NGO Network on the Question of Palestine.

(E) The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

(F) Any other entity the Secretary determines results in duplicative efforts or funding or fails to ensure balance in the approach to Israeli-Palestinian issues.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations shall use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to seek the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report required under subsection (a)(1)(B).

(2) **WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS.**—Until the President certifies to the Congress that such recommendations have been implemented, the Secretary of State should withhold from United States contributions to the regular assessed budget of the United Nations for a biennial period amounts that are proportional to the percentage of such budget that are expended for such entities.

(c) **GAO AUDIT.**—The Comptroller General shall conduct an audit of the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report required under subsection (a)(1)(B).

(d) **WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS WITH RESPECT TO THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.**—

(1) **ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS.**—The Secretary of State should withhold from United States contributions to the regular assessed budget of the United Nations for a biennial period amounts that are equal to the amounts of such budget that are expended by any United Nations affiliated or specialized agency for assistance directly to the Palestinian Authority.

(2) **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.**—The Secretary of State shall withhold from United States contributions to the voluntary budget of the United Nations for a biennial period amounts that are equal to the amounts of such budget that are expended by any United Nations affiliated or specialized agency for assistance directly to the Palestinian Authority.

(3) **DEFINITION.**—For the purposes of this section, the term ‘amounts of such budget that are expended by any United Nations affiliated or specialized agency for assistance

directly to the Palestinian Authority” does not include—

(A) amounts expended during any period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) is in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority; or

(B) amounts expended for assistance of the type of assistance described in section 104(c), 104A, 104B, or 104C of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151b, 2151b-2, 2151b-3, or 2151b-4) and which would, if provided by the Government of the United States, be permitted under such sections, or under chapter 4 of part II of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2346 et seq.) to carry out the purposes of such sections, by reason of the application of section 104(c)(4) of such Act.

SEC. 5. DESIGNATION OF TERRITORY CONTROLLED BY THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY AS TERRORIST SANCTUARY.

It is the sense of Congress that, during any period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) is not in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority, the territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority should be deemed to be in use as a sanctuary for terrorists or terrorist organizations for purposes of section 6(j)(5) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405(j)(5)) and section 140 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f).

SEC. 6. DENIAL OF VISAS FOR OFFICIALS OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A visa shall not be issued to any alien who is an official of, affiliated with, or serving as a representative of the Palestinian Authority during any period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) is not in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority.

(b) WAIVER.—Subsection (a) shall not apply—

(1) if the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees, on a case-by-case basis, that the issuance of a visa to an alien described in such subsection is important to the national security interests of the United States; or

(2) with respect to visas issued in connection with United States obligations under the Act of August 4, 1947 (61 Stat. 756) (commonly known as the “United Nations Headquarters Agreement Act”).

SEC. 7. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY AND THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION STATIONED AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK CITY.

The President shall restrict the travel of officials and representatives of the Palestinian Authority and of the Palestine Liberation Organization who are stationed at the United Nations in New York City to a 25-mile radius of the United Nations headquarters building during any period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) is not in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority.

SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, it shall be unlawful to establish or maintain an office, headquarters, premises, or other facilities or establishments within the jurisdiction of the United States at the behest or direction of,

or with funds provided by, the Palestinian Authority or the Palestine Liberation Organization during any period for which a certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) is not in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority.

(b) ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall take the necessary steps and institute the necessary legal action to effectuate the policies and provisions of subsection (a), including steps necessary to apply the policies and provisions of subsection (a) to the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations.

(2) RELIEF.—Any district court of the United States for a district in which a violation of subsection (a) occurs shall have authority, upon petition of relief by the Attorney General, to grant injunctive and such other equitable relief as it shall deem necessary to enforce the provisions of subsection (a).

(c) WAIVER.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—The President may waive the application of subsection (a) for a period of 180 days if the President determines and certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver—

(A) is vital to the national security interests of the United States and provides an explanation of how the failure to waive the application of subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the vital national security interests of the United States; and

(B) would further the achievement of the requirements outlined in the certification described in section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act).

(2) RENEWAL.—The President may renew the waiver described in paragraph (1) for successive 180-day periods if the President makes the determination and certification described in such paragraph for each such period.

SEC. 9. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) UNITED STATES POLICY.—It shall be the policy of the United States that the United States Executive Director at each international financial institution shall use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to prohibit assistance to the Palestinian Authority unless a certification described in subsection (b) is in effect with respect to the Palestinian Authority.

(b) CERTIFICATION.—A certification described in this subsection is a certification transmitted by the President to Congress that contains a determination of the President that the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (3)(A), (B), (C), and (E) of section 620K(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act) are being met by the Palestinian Authority.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “international financial institution” has the meaning given the term in section 1701(c)(2) of the International Financial Institutions Act.

SEC. 10. DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH PALESTINIAN TERROR ORGANIZATIONS.

It shall be the policy of the United States that no officer or employee of the United States Government shall negotiate or have substantive contacts with members or official representatives of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, or any other Palestinian terrorist organization, unless and until such organiza-

(1) recognizes Israel’s right to exist;

(2) renounces the use of terrorism;

(3) dismantles the infrastructure necessary to carry out terrorist acts, including the dis-

arming of militias and the elimination of all instruments of terror; and

(4) recognizes and accepts all previous agreements and understandings between the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority.

SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(2) PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY.—The term “Palestinian Authority” has the meaning given the term in section 620K(e)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 2(b)(2) of this Act).

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to claim the time in opposition. I am opposed to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) opposed to the motion?

Mr. LANTOS. No, Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. On that basis, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) will control the time in opposition to the motion.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this matter be extended by 80 minutes, equally divided.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield half of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks, and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY).

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for bringing this resolution to the floor and to the gentleman from California for his support for this resolution. It is incredibly important that we bring this resolution to the floor today, and I rise in strong support

of the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act which reaffirms America's support for our allies in Israel and protects American interests.

It also brings an end to the dangerously infantilization of the Palestinian people, who through this legislation will finally be held responsible for their political decisions.

In and of itself, January's Palestinian election was a victory for the civilized world in the war on terror. The elections were fair, nonviolent, and added further evidence in support of democracy's fundamental compatibility with Middle Eastern culture.

The outcome of that election, the ascendancy of the unrepentant terrorist organization Hamas, was another story all together. The Palestinian people have made their choice; and while we must respect their God-given right to self-determination, the choice they made has consequences, chief among them the immediate end of foreign assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

American aid to the Palestinian people must be predicated on their rejection of terrorism. And as long as Hamas seeks the destruction of Israel and the murder of innocent Israelis, the United States cannot financially support the Palestinian Authority.

When the day comes that Palestinian leaders reject violence, break apart their terrorist infrastructure, embrace freedom, and seek membership in the civilized world, we will welcome them. Until that day, not a dime.

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

Everybody on this floor wants to send the same loud and clear message: that Congress is united in its opposition to terror and we are all deeply concerned about the future and security of our close friend and ally, Israel.

This debate is not about our shared revulsion at those who would murder innocent citizens or sow terror for political purposes.

□ 1915

It is not about current law, which prohibits any assistance to Hamas or a Hamas-controlled government, which Congress unanimously reaffirmed earlier this year. For many people, we will find tonight that this is a very personal issue. For anyone who has visited Israel, you understand.

When I first visited Jerusalem, I couldn't help but be struck by how close the holy sites of the three great religions are, less than the distance of a Tiger Woods 5-iron shot. I will always cherish the opportunity in a more optimistic time, to visit a security checkpoint outside Ramallah, jointly manned by Israelis and Palestinians. The possibility of that moment, its fragility and the ramifications of failure, have been brought home to me repeatedly in recent years.

I was and am impressed by the diversity of opinions in Israel, by its vibrant tradition of democracy and heated de-

bate. But I am also struck by how we are seeing elements of that vibrant debate within the American pro-Israeli community over the bill that is before us this evening.

As someone committed to Israel's security and to the vision of the two states living side by side in peace, I reluctantly oppose the legislation this evening, despite my deep respect for my colleagues who are bringing it forward on both sides of the aisle.

The bill before us is one that the administration does not need nor want. It sets permanent and inflexible limits on the United States, whether or not Hamas is in power. It could potentially limit the United States' ability to help our friend Israel if Israel decides in the future that working with a non-Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority is in their best interests.

Remember in 1995, Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin asked the United States to support a flawed Palestinian Authority because he felt it was important for Israel's security. Had the stringent conditions in this bill been in place, we would have had to have said no.

In 2003, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon asked the United States to support the Palestinian Prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas. Had the stringent conditions in this bill been in place, we would have had to say no.

Should a future Israeli leader come and ask us to support the Palestinian Authority, after Hamas is forced from power, we shouldn't allow the conditions in this bill to force us to say no.

Unfortunately, this bill defines the Palestinian Authority to include the Palestinian legislative council, as long as members of Hamas are in the Palestinian Parliament. We would have to say no to Israel's request.

As has been pointed out with Libya, the debate over Libya, sometimes we allow diplomatic relations with imperfect regimes because progress can best be made through engagement instead of isolation. This bill goes far beyond the ramifications of January's election and Hamas' rise to power.

It would restrict relations with and support for Palestinian groups and institutions that have nothing to do with terror or rejectionism. It places sanctions on the Palestinian leaders and parts of Palestinian civil society who support peace with Israel, oppose terrorism and who, if the two-state vision comes to pass, will form the backbone of a democratic society.

There is, in this legislation, no recognition that Palestinian society is deeply divided, and that it makes no sense to put sanctions on President Abbas, reformers, even activists for democracy, peace and coexistence. The bill would prohibit the assistance we give to schools that teach peace, to democratic and peaceful political organizations, to groups promoting cooperation with Israel on shared environmental challenges.

It would even punish the democratic opposition by prohibiting visas for

moderate Palestinian legislators or government officials who oppose Hamas. It would prevent the PLO, of which Hamas isn't a member, and which was not impacted by the election of Hamas, from having representatives in Washington or at the United Nations. I am afraid that this legislation may well backfire by actually strengthening the hands of extremists.

Remember, this past winter, the House, in our wisdom, voted to demand that the Palestinians prevent Hamas from running in the legislative elections, telling the Palestinian people to reject them. I don't think it was any accident that Hamas election banners had: "Israel and America say 'no' to Hamas. What do you say?"

I can't help think that any objective appraisal would suggest that the United States Congress, telling them what they could do, may well have provided that extra boost for Hamas' prospects at the election.

This bill provides no diplomatic horizon, no sunset. It is in perpetuity. It does little to prioritize on the basis of our strategic interest and provides no prospect for Palestinian reform coming through the process of negotiations. In so doing, it weakens the hands of those who advocate for peace negotiations and supports those extremists who believe in violence.

Democracy is a complex process in the Middle East and all too rare in the Middle East. The election of Hamas shows that for the kinds of democracies we want to see, elections aren't enough. We need to promote the kinds of democratic institutions, free civil society, conducive to sustainable, liberal democracy in Palestinian territories.

The President needs to be free to do just that, with congressional oversight, not congressional prohibitions and micromanagement. I understand the sincere concern that many people who support this legislation have, but it is too onerous and burdensome on an administration that needs to practice diplomacy.

Democracy is a continuing process that helps transform those who practice it. I agree with the rabbi from my district who wrote that, "change is everything in politics, no matter how bleak the situation currently is," in expressing his opposition to this legislation. We cannot support Hamas or other terrorist groups, but neither should we close the door on change.

Most of the Members of this body consider themselves to be strong friends and supporters of Israel. So do I. That is why I will urge a "no" vote on this resolution.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

During the course of this debate, I will rebut point-by-point the items raised by my good friend from Oregon,

for whom I have great respect and great affection. But let me just say that while I am convinced that his position is motivated by the best of intentions, he totally misrepresents the nature of our legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it was my great pleasure to join my friend and distinguished colleague, LEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, in introducing the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act. It has also been an honor to work with the chairman of the committee, HENRY HYDE, in bringing the bill to the floor in its present form. I would like to thank all 295 of my colleagues who are cosponsors of this bill, which was reported out of the International Relations Committee on a bipartisan vote of 36-2. I repeat, the legislation was reported out of the International Relations Committee representing the broadest spectrum of views and positions by a vote of 36-2. This is a bill that enjoys the broadest bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, a little more than a month ago, a 16-year-old boy from Florida, Daniel Wultz, arrived in Israel with his family. They were celebrating Passover, which commemorates Jewish liberation from brutality long ago. On a pleasant evening in Tel Aviv, Daniel met his father for dinner at a popular falafel restaurant in a working-class neighborhood.

Moments later, a Palestinian terrorist detonated 30 pounds of explosives just a few feet from the father and son. Daniel suffered severe internal injuries, and his leg had to be amputated.

After a valiant struggle for survival, Daniel died last week. As for his father, he faces a long and painful recovery physically; the psychological repercussions one can only speculate on.

This tragedy was compounded several times over, Mr. Speaker. In this one terrorist incident, perpetrated by Hamas, 10 people were murdered, more than 60 were injured, and hundreds of loved ones are suffering the atrocities, the effects of these atrocities for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Speaker, during the murderous Intifada, orchestrated, planned and perpetrated by Hamas, more than 1,000 Israelis were killed in incidents like this recent one, barbarous, random, sneak attacks on men, women and children, just going about their lives. Given its comparatively small population, less than 6 million, the loss of 1,000 innocent lives in Israel is the equivalent of losing 50,000 here in the United States. I wonder how many of our colleagues would stand up for the terrorists if we had lost 50,000, not 3,000 on 9/11.

What was the response of the Hamas government to the restaurant bombing? The spokesman for Hamas said that it was, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, "legal." This monstrous act, the most recent terrorist attack, killed 10 people, and Hamas leadership says, it's legal. No condemnation, no promise of pursuing the perpetrators of this vicious crime; just a blanket endorse-

ment of suicide attacks on both American and Israeli citizens.

Now, despite the pathetically naive hopes of some that Hamas would change its stripes upon assuming power, if anything, the anti-Israel rhetoric has only been stepped up. The foreign minister of the terrorist government, Mahmoud al-Zahar, recently told the world that he dreams of, and I am quoting again, Mr. Speaker, "hanging a huge map of the world on the wall at my Gaza home, which does not show Israel on it, because there is no place for the State of Israel on this land."

So much for moderation.

Mr. Speaker, such statements by Hamas government officials make crystal clear the rationale for our legislation. We must isolate the new terrorist authority in the West Bank and Gaza. The situation in the Middle East is alarming. The Palestinian Authority is now governed by a group of killers, like Iranian President Ahmadinejad, who believes that Israel, quote, should be wiped off the map.

It is therefore incumbent upon us, Mr. Speaker, as the ally and long-time supporter of the democratic State of Israel, to do everything we can to demonstrate the bankruptcy of Hamas' vision and to ensure that Hamas receives no help from the United States in implementing its evil plans.

Our bill does exactly that. We will end all assistance to the Palestinian Authority with exceptions for humanitarian aid. We will also end all contact between U.S. diplomats and the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority.

□ 1930

Our goal, Mr. Speaker, is not to punish the Palestinian people. Our goal is to demonstrate to them, and to their government, that hatred, murder, assassination and non-recognition of neighbors is unacceptable in a civilized world. Accordingly, we want to make sure that the U.S. taxpayer will not supply one penny of aid for which the Hamas government can claim any credit, and we want to make sure that Hamas and its government are accorded absolutely no legitimacy by the United States or our diplomatic representatives.

Our bill, of course, recognizes that humanitarian emergencies will arise and that we should be supportive of appropriate NGO activities. Just to cite one example, Mr. Speaker, I wrote Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently asking that the United States provide funding to assist the Palestinians in dealing with the serious outbreak of avian flu in the Gaza Strip, and I am pleased that our government has been responsive to my request. I think we would all agree on continuing the U.S. tradition of dealing with the humanitarian needs of any people, including the Palestinian people.

I am sure that all of my colleagues will join me in praising the government of Israel for the plan it an-

nounced just yesterday to release \$11 million and let these funds be used for medicine and equipment for Palestinian hospitals, bypassing entirely the terrorist government of Hamas.

Mr. Speaker, representatives of the United States have been meeting with their counterparts from Russia, the United Nations and the European Union to discuss the financial crisis that Palestinians have faced since Hamas came to power. Our bill is fully consistent with the positions and policies of the so-called quartet.

Mr. Speaker, we in this Congress are sickened by the fact that the Palestinians chose Hamas as their leader, and we are sickened and appalled by everything that Hamas stands for. Our bill, H.R. 4681, demonstrates that America will stand firm in the fight against terrorism, while remaining true to the hope for a peaceful Middle East. Our legislation will serve as a model for the right policy to take against terrorists, however they take power, and on behalf of the democratic ally that is the target of suicide bombings by a governmentally-organized campaign.

Allow me a personal word, Mr. Speaker. As all of my colleagues know, I am the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to the Congress of the United States. My family was wiped out by a government that systematically sought to eliminate an entire people.

I am here today to tell you that what Hamas has in mind is a holocaust on the installment plan. I repeat, I am here today to tell you that what Hamas has in mind is a holocaust on the installment plan. It is being done one atrocity at a time. As long as support continues to flow to Hamas, this holocaust on the installment plan will continue, and ultimately, it might succeed. But our bill will stop it.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important, vital, bipartisan piece of legislation.

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, tonight we should be working to ensure security and peace for Israel and for more hope, opportunity and peace for the Palestinian people.

Among our colleagues in the U.S. House, there is unanimous intolerance and condemnation for the current Hamas-led government of the Palestinian Authority. The refusal of the political leadership of Hamas to recognize the State of Israel, renounce violence and terrorism and agree to previous agreements and obligations of the Palestinian Authority is unacceptable, and, therefore, they must continue to be isolated by the international community.

Congress should be here tonight unanimously passing a bill that supports Secretary of State Rice as she leads the international community to keep firm pressure on Hamas until

they agree to internationally recognized and civilized standards of conduct. At the same time, Congress should be working to support the Bush administration and the international community to avoid a serious humanitarian crisis among the Palestinian people.

On May 9, 2006, Secretary Rice said as she announced \$10 million of medical assistance to the Palestinian people, "We will continue to work and look for ways to assist the Palestinian people and will encourage other countries to join us in this effort." She goes on to say, "We will not, however, provide support to a Hamas-led government that refuses to accept the calls of the Quartet and the broader international community to renounce terror and to become a partner for peace."

I strongly support her efforts, and it is unfortunate that the bill tonight could not have been drafted to come to the floor that would be supported by the State Department. The State Department's comment regarding H.R. 4681 is, "this bill is unnecessary."

Instead of advancing the U.S. interests, H.R. 4681 does not recognize the three criteria set forth by President Bush, demanded by President Bush and the international community, for Hamas to commence any form of engagement and to work with the U.S. and the international community.

H.R. 4681 sets an elevated threshold which makes U.S. leadership for peace in the Middle East nearly impossible, even if Hamas does agree to recognize Israel, does renounce terrorism and does agree to abide by all previous agreements.

The outcome of this bill, if it were to become law, would be to isolate Palestinian leaders who have been committed to advancing the peace process, isolate leaders who have denounced terrorism and isolate leaders who are working with Israel for peace and a permanent two-state solution. How does this advance the U.S. goals in the region? It does not.

This bill's real result will be to isolate the U.S. among the members of the international community that are working for peaceful solutions between Israel and the Palestinians.

One of our partners in isolating Hamas and delivering humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people is the United Nations. A section in this bill calls for the withholding of a portion of the U.S. contribution to the United Nations, as if this valuable partner were an enemy. For this bill to target the United Nations, a member of the quartet, in such a fashion is a clear signal that this bill's intent is to undermine the Bush administration's multilateral leadership.

This bill places extreme constraints on the delivery of humanitarian assistance by non-governmental organizations to the Palestinian people. This bill's unnecessary obstacles have the potential for very negative human consequences and would exacerbate a human crisis.

Palestinian families and children must not be targeted. They must not be deprived of their basic human needs by this Congress. Instead, this House should assure that Palestinian families and children will be treated in a fashion that reflects our values and the belief that their lives are valuable.

NGOs with significant experience in delivering humanitarian assistance have expressed serious concerns with the lack of flexibility in this bill. On April 6, 2006, a letter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to Chairman HYDE expressing concerns regarding this bill states, "The legislation provides for the urgent needs of the Palestinian people. A further deterioration of the humanitarian and economic situation of the Palestinian people compromises human dignity and serves the long-term interests of neither the Palestinians nor of Israelis who long for peace."

In its present form, this bill will not allow NGOs to properly carry out the very assistance determined to be necessary by Secretary Rice, ensuring suffering and misery to the Palestinian people.

Later this week in this Chamber, we will be honored by the presence of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. In an interview last week, Prime Minister Olmert said the Palestinians "are the victims of their own extremist, fundamentalist, religious, inflexible and unyielding leadership, and we will do everything in our power to help these innocent people."

I strongly associate myself with the honest and courageous comments of the prime minister and his desire for security and peace. I oppose this bill because it is a missed opportunity to keep pressure on Hamas.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the chief deputy majority whip.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to salute the gentlelady from Florida on her unbelievable leadership in bringing this bill to the floor and her tireless efforts in the promotion of freedom and the rejection of terror around the world. I thank her for that.

I also would like to salute and thank Chairman HYDE for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor, and certainly the gentleman from California for his dedication to the rejection of terror and the promotion of freedom in such a tireless way and such an articulate manner here on the House floor. I thank the gentleman as well.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise today in strong support of H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act. The policy behind this piece of legislation is identical to that which undergirds the Bush doctrine. It is simple: Terrorism is evil and will not be tolerated. Murderous acts carried out by the terrorists must be stopped, and those who perpetuate this evil deserve nothing less than condemnation and destruction. That is why this legislation must pass.

Israel has been fighting a war on terror for more than 60 years. Presently, Israel finds itself in the unique position of facing a terrorist organization that is hiding behind the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority. Some have chosen to recognize Hamas, a terrorist organization, as a legitimate governing body for the Palestinian Authority. We in the United States Congress find this unacceptable.

Hamas believes that terrorism is a legitimate tool of political negotiation. Hamas does not hide from its endorsement of homicide bombings or its desire to use this tactic to achieve its goal of destroying Israel.

Make no mistake about it: Hamas kills. It murders. It maims. It orphans, and it robs. It blunts the future of innocence. It takes away the happiness of children, and it tears apart families. Hamas believes that this behavior is somehow acceptable.

Today, we must send a message to Hamas and President Abbas that the free nations of the world reject their desire to be recognized as legitimate leaders of their people. Both Hamas and Fatah's al-Aksa Martyrs Brigade have a record of terror and their leaders have a demonstrated lack of humanity by allowing these murderous activities.

Mr. Speaker, today the United States House of Representatives sends a strong message that our government does not and will not deal with terrorists, nor in this Congress should we or will we allow American taxpayer dollars to fund the terrorist activities.

Israel is engaged in a war on terror. It is a war that is part of that which is worldwide and in which we find ourselves engaged as well.

□ 1945

Make no mistake about it, the very freedoms that we hold dear are at stake, and we must never stop fighting this war until the last terrorist on Earth is in a cell or a cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I stand before you as the violence and pain of Palestinian terror was felt by my family. As Mr. LANTOS, the gentleman from California has said, last week, Daniel Wultz died of wounds he suffered in a homicide bombing in Tel Aviv in April. Daniel was my cousin. He and his family were visiting Israel celebrating the Jewish holiday of Passover.

Daniel and his father were eating lunch at a cafe in Tel Aviv, when a homicide bomber blew himself up at the restaurant. For 27 days Daniel fought for his life, but last Sunday he died as a result of his wounds. Daniel was passionate about his family, friends and the community around him. He was an excellent student and a member of the varsity basketball team at the David Posnack Hebrew Day School in Plantation, Florida.

He was active in the Chabad Lubavitch of Weston and hoped to pursue his religious studies further after

high school. He was a handsome, witty and compassionate young man, and did not hesitate to speak out against any injustice he encountered in his daily life.

He was devoted to the laws and teachings of Judaism and Tikun Olam, the Jewish ideal that we must work to make the world a better place. Daniel was a young man with a bright future. Now he is gone, robbed of his bright and promising future.

Daniel is survived by his parents, Sheryl and Tuly Wultz, and his sister, Amanda. I join my colleagues in sending our deepest sympathies.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again salute the gentlewoman from Florida and her efforts on this bill and want to say that I wholeheartedly supported her bill in its original form as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would draw the House's attention to page 8 of the bill and section 2 in which we speak about the exceptions to the prohibition of assistance in the Palestinian Authority, especially to section 620K of the law in which the bill provides for an exception to fund the President of the Palestinian Authority for nonsecurity expenses.

It is this provision, Mr. Speaker, that I hope that we will be able to limit and remove in the conference with the Senate. Hamas must renounce terrorism, destroy all terrorist organizations that are allowed to operate in the Palestinian Territory, and it must recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state. Hamas and the Palestinian President, Mr. Abbas, must understand that we in the United States Congress are serious about this policy.

We must make it clear to the world that the U.S. does not see terrorism as a viable tool for negotiations. This is a first step in the process. And I would like to bring to the attention of the House that I strongly disagree with one of the speakers from the opposition who stated that this bill does not provide for humanitarian efforts for emergency aid for the people in the Palestinian Authority. It does.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with the gentlewoman, to working with Chairman HYDE and the gentleman from California to strengthen this bill. I urge passage of this bill, and note that we all must stand for the absolute rejection of terrorism and absolutely no U.S. taxpayer dollar being spent for terrorist activities.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 45 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, invoking the Bush doctrine, the previous speaker talks about humanitarian assistance. One of the concerns that the Bush administration has in not supporting this bill is that it is too narrowly drawn, talking about "health," and not broader humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I will discuss that later in the course of the evening. Due to the mandatory nature of the bill, its lack of a general waiver, the executive branch thinks it is unnecessary. It al-

ready has ample authority to impose all its restrictions, and constrains the executive branch's flexibility to use sanctions as appropriate as tools to address rapidly changing circumstances.

These are the words of the administration. And I think the Congress would do well to consider them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, almost exactly a year ago, I joined a bipartisan group of Members in visiting the Hope Flowers School in the Palestinian village of al Khader, just outside of Bethlehem on the West Bank.

Hope Flowers teaches its students a curriculum promoting tolerance, non-violence, democracy and peaceful coexistence. Our bipartisan delegation witnessed the signing of a USAID agreement to renovate several classrooms and other key facilities at the school.

Projects like this are supported by the United States throughout the Palestinian territories. Other projects are paying for modern school books to ensure that fundamentalist propaganda has no place in Palestinian schools; potable water projects to prevent the spread of disease, economic development to improve job prospects for Palestinian youth, and construction of hospitals, schools, sewers, power grids and business centers.

These types of projects are critical to our interests, to Israel, and to the prospects for peace. They help prevent humanitarian crises and diminish popular discontent, and they also inculcate values like those taught at Hope Flowers.

They train peacemakers; they improve America's standing in the Middle East. Why would we want to eliminate programs like these? Are they not needed now more than ever? And yet that is exactly what H.R. 4681 would do. It would cut off U.S. assistance to the West Bank and Gaza.

Mr. Speaker, I stress, despite the way some proponents are trying to frame this debate tonight, the issue is not aid to Hamas or to the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority. Nobody on this floor tonight has any tolerance for Hamas.

The issue is rather the bill's ban on aid to all nongovernmental groups, private groups, and organizations, many of whom are diametrically opposed to Hamas's philosophy. Let me clarify some further misconceptions about this legislation. I am not speculating here, Mr. Speaker; I am referring to page 12 of the bill. I invite colleagues to read it.

Mr. Speaker, some have suggested the bill contains sufficient exceptions to allow humanitarian assistance to pass through. Not so. The bill makes an exception for health-related humanitarian aid, such as food, water and

medicine. But it makes no provision for other forms of humanitarian assistance, such as aid for the homeless or displaced families and orphans.

Mr. Speaker, some have pointed to Presidential waiver authority in the bill and suggested that it would allow critical assistance to reach Palestinians. Not so. Unfortunately, all aid beyond health-related humanitarian assistance would be prohibited unless the President, on a case-by-case basis, were to certify that assistance is required by U.S. national security.

And then he would have to consult with Congress 25 days in advance and submit a written memorandum explaining why such assistance benefits U.S. security. How many projects would survive such a gauntlet? Think about the kinds of aid programs that would be cut off, projects that focus on building democratic institutions and civil society, projects that promote economic development to stabilize the territories, projects that ensure that school curricula provide students with a progressive education rather than fundamentalist propaganda, curricula that teach tolerance and conflict resolution skills. Surely programs like this are in our interest.

Mr. Speaker, they are exactly what we need to reduce violence, to build the capacity of Palestinian civil society, and make progress toward a peaceful resolution; and yet they are exactly the programs that would be eliminated in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are other problems with the bill as well. It would significantly handicap any effort to engage the moderate elements in the Palestinian Authority, such as Palestinian Authority President Abbas, by opposing restrictions on visas, travel, and official Palestinian Authority representation in the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, because of these fundamental flaws in the legislation, it is opposed by several leading voices for Israel and Middle East peace, including the Israel Policy Forum, Brit Tzedek, Americans for Peace Now, Churches for Middle East Peace, a broad Protestant coalition, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Bush administration also opposes this bill. In a paper delivered to the House International Relations Committee, the State Department calls the bill unnecessary and says it unduly constrains the Executive's flexibility.

Mr. Speaker, there is no denying that Hamas's election victory was a significant step backward in the quest for a peaceful resolution to this conflict. There is no disagreement here tonight that we should send Hamas a strong message that the world will not tolerate its violent and irresponsible behavior.

But this bill goes far beyond sending that message. Instead, it sends the message that the U.S. wants to punish the Palestinian people for Hamas's action, a message that serves no good purpose.

We can unanimously support, and that is what we should be doing tonight, my colleagues, we can unanimously support legislation blocking assistance to Hamas, and to a Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority.

But if we adopt legislation that punishes the Palestinian people, instead of isolating the terrorists, we lose the moral high ground. Let us reclaim the moral high ground, signal our resolute opposition to terrorism and also our support for those Palestinian individuals and groups who are working for a peaceful and democratic future.

Mr. Speaker, we should defeat this bill and ask the IR Committee to bring back a bill truly reflective of American interests and values.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to my good friend and our distinguished colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, first the criticism of the procedure. This is a difficult and complex bill. It has no business being before us under suspension of the rules. It ought to be subject to amendment and unrestricted debate. It's not like we didn't have enough time.

And to show our commitment to democracy by muffling it here serves no good purpose. But we do have the bill before us. I plan to vote for it after some conversation in which I hope I can be joined by the gentleman from California.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain my basic reason. We were told when Hamas won that election, tragically, when the majority of the people of Israel were ready to make significant concessions, had already begun to do that, an historic moment when Israel was ready to make significant concessions for peace, they were totally repudiated. We were told, well, don't overinterpret that election, because the victory of Hamas, which in percentage terms wasn't as great as in the Parliament for a variety of reasons, but we were told that victory for Hamas was not simply from people who agreed with their rejectionist, hateful philosophy; but it was probably because they were so much better than Fatah at delivering services.

To some extent, we got the explanation, frankly, for congressional earmarks. Why do Members here like to earmark? Because they can go deliver the goods to people back home and then get votes from people who don't agree with them. That is, we all know, why we have earmarks.

Well, I don't want Hamas getting any more earmarks. I don't want to contribute to a situation where Hamas can deliver the goods because they are well funded, and then can convert the good will they earned with that money into votes for rejection.

That is why I fully support a strict refusal to fund Hamas. And people say, well, you will be punishing the Palestinian people. I have heard the argu-

ment before. There are a lot of differences, but there is one common thing.

When this House helped override the veto of Ronald Reagan against sanctions against the hateful, racist regime of South Africa, we were told by many that we would be hurting the people of South Africa, and that was true. The average South African, the average black South African who was victimized by apartheid was, in the short term, victimized by sanctions. And we did not apply sanctions only against the racists who ran the government; we applied sanctions against the whole country.

It is sometimes the case that appropriate public policy will have short-term negative effects. But here is our problem, as I say. We have been told that Hamas won that election in part because of its skill at delivering goods and services. That means if you support peace, it is very much in your interest not to aid Hamas's ability to deliver goods and services.

So I fully support the part of the bill that says, no aid for Hamas. I have to say to some of my friends, I do also want to warn the President, as some of my liberal friends have come here to defend his right for flexibility in the foreign policy, please be warned that that is a very temporary alliance.

□ 2000

Mr. President, please don't assume that your allies here arguing for your flexibility will last much longer than tonight. But I also am very skeptical of those who say, well, let's give the money so they can have better schools. Let's give the money so they can learn reconciliation, et cetera. No, I don't think a Hamas government is going to allow that. So I am very much in favor of this bill insofar as it says, no, we will not contribute to the further political growth of Hamas. I want that government to fail and fall. And that does mean, as it did with sanctions in South Africa, some short-term pain, although this bill, more than it has been described by its opponents, does allow for humanitarian aid.

Let me say for those of my liberal friends who mourn for the President's flexibility: Don't you know that whenever we grant waivers, no matter how complicated the process, they are waived? There is nothing about a requirement of a Presidential waiver that ever stops the President from doing what he has done. The President can certify that Abbas was pregnant if he had to to get the bill through, and he would do it. The history of waivers is they have been no obstacle to what policy is.

But here is my problem, and I would ask the gentleman from California to respond in this way, I agree that we shouldn't aid Hamas. But this bill says we should only aid any entity if it becomes democratic or has taken steps to become democratic and to become transparent. Now, I am all for democ-

racy and transparency, although their immediate benefit is a little unclear in the Middle East right now. But I believe that if there were a strict interpretation of this criteria, we could not have helped the Camp David Peace Agreement with Egypt which was neither democratic nor transparent, nor is Jordan, nor was the PLO and the PLA before Hamas.

Let me put it this way: If Abbas' team had won instead of Hamas, I believe there might have been an argument that they don't meet the criteria. So I would ask the gentleman from California, how strictly are we going to interpret these criteria? Can he give me some assurance that these criteria will not be so strictly interpreted that you would make it impossible to deal with the very imperfect regimes that we are going to have to deal with?

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LANTOS. If I may take the floor, I fully agree with the interpretation of my friend from Massachusetts. We are not looking for protection from Hamas. There is no perfection in any of the governments with which we have diplomatic relations and which we support with huge amounts like the government of Egypt. We are merely asking for minimal standards of civilized behavior, the termination of suicide bombings and the acceptance of their neighbor in peace.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentleman. Reclaiming my time, I hope as this process goes forward in the less restricted other body that we can clarify that and sharpen it. I will say that with regard to the international financial institutions over which the committee on which I serve has jurisdiction, we struck from the bill the requirement of democracy as a prerequisite for peace in the Middle East.

Let me also note, by the way, I was struck, the gentleman from Virginia lamented the inclusion in the provision in this bill which some of the opponents have denied existed. It is kind of an odd thing. The poor provision is attacked by people who don't like it and denied by people who do. That is the provision allowing aid to the president of the Authority. The bill does provide that the aid can go to President Abbas to make peace, not just for his personal security.

So I disagree with the gentleman from Virginia. It is that amendment and some of the other amendments that we have had in there. So I will be voting for the bill at this point in the spirit the gentleman from California has mentioned, namely that, yes, we say "no" to Hamas because we have no interest in funding Hamas so it becomes more politically popular in support of its rejectionism. But we do not interpret this bill as being an obstacle to negotiations of the sort that we have with Egypt, with Jordan, with

Arafat, certainly no winner of the civil liberties award from anybody.

With that assurance of the gentleman and the hope that we can refine this as it goes forward, I will vote for this bill.

Mr. LANTOS. We appreciate the gentleman's support.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). The Chair would remind Members to direct their remarks to the Chair, not the President.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE), a member of the International Relations Committee.

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

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and more to the point, I thank Representative ROS-LEHTINEN for her extraordinary leadership of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia where it is my privilege to serve. My heartfelt appreciation to Chairman Henry Hyde to demonstrate that the lion still roars. His leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor is meaningful and of global significance. And to my mentor and friend, the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) I rise with gratitude for your moral leadership again demonstrated on this floor this evening with your eloquent and powerful words.

I rise today in strong support of the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act. As an original co-sponsor of the act, I come to this floor tonight saddened. I am saddened at what seems to be a diminishing opportunity for peace. In the wake of a world hopeful with the election of President Abbas, we saw it followed with the election of a legislative majority within the Palestinian Authority of a terrorist organization known as Hamas. I am saddened tonight by the story of Daniel whose family's loss will be remembered, not just as it was poignantly this evening by Congressman CANTOR on this floor as he spoke of his own flesh and blood, but will be remembered later this week as the Prime Minister of Israel comes with some of Daniel's family at his side.

The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) reminded us of the human cost about which we debate tonight, and the policies and the messages that we will send from this well to a waiting world will speak to real human loss, a loss of opportunity, a loss of promise, to the loss of Daniel. It has been said many times tonight, and I take my colleagues at their word, that the State Department has said that this legislation is "unnecessary."

But let me say, as one of 435 Representatives in the United States House of Representatives, that the world waits for the leadership of this Congress and this Nation, and they wait for moral leadership that is clar-

ion, and this serious debate tonight about which there are serious differences that I deeply respect, this debate tonight about the future of American financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority is such a debate.

Let us say plainly, Hamas is a terrorist organization that advocates for its political ideology the murder of innocent civilians. This Congress, this President, his administration and the American people have been clear, the United States does not support, negotiate or fund terrorist organizations, even those that have won a majority of a legislature. Tonight we will say clearly in this Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act: Not one penny for Hamas.

The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act promotes, however, a democratic Palestinian Authority that denounces and combats terrorism, de-arms and dismantles terrorist agencies, networks and facilities, and works to eliminate anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement and the commemoration of terrorists; one that agrees to respect the sovereignty of its neighbors and acknowledges, respects and upholds the human rights; and one at its very core that has agreed to recognize our cherished ally, the State of Israel, as an independent, sovereign, Jewish, democratic state.

Now, there are criticisms tonight well spoken and no doubt well intentioned that say that the administration and our country will lack the flexibility to meet the humanitarian needs on the ground. But I must say, Mr. Speaker, with the clear language of this legislation that I would argue otherwise; that this legislation excludes funding for "basic human health needs." There is also the allowance of security for President Abbas, and then perhaps the broadest exception that has even met with some criticism tonight, an exception for nonsecurity expenses that are "related to the facilitation of a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the Palestinian people and Israel."

Back in southern Indiana, we call that a hole that you could drive a truck through, and it is precisely the kind of flexibility that we need in these uncertain days. In these days, even in the last 24 hours, where we have seen nascent evidence of even a civil war emerging within the Palestinian Authority, as much as I might like a much more narrowly construed bill, I am prepared to endorse this legislation, carefully crafted for the exigencies of our time. I pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for all the people that live there.

Mr. Speaker, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act sends a clear signal once again that the United States will not tolerate terrorism, and we take a critical stand at this moment in history in advocating for meaningful reform to the very center of the Hamas charter. I salute my colleagues, both Democrat and Republican, for bringing this critical and moral legislation to the floor

of this Congress, and I speak my heartfelt condolences to Daniel's family. May we act in such a way that Daniel and his loss will soon, some day soon, be simply a part of a history of a time gone by, a history that will be remembered as other violent pages of the history of mankind have been remembered, with respect, with grief but representative of a time that is past. And that will be my prayer.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the Dean of the House.

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

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, this legislation should be considered under an open rule with lengthy debate and full opportunity to discuss it, not at 8 o'clock at night with the corporal's guard here on the floor.

I yield to no man in my support for Israel. I have voted for hundreds of billions of dollars for it over the years I have served here. And I yield to no man my position to terror and terrorism and terrorists. But that is not what is at issue here tonight.

The administration says this bill is not necessary. It points out that this bill constrains the administration in delivering meaningful diplomatic effort to resolve the problems of the Middle East. The Middle East's problems and the problems of the Palestinians and the Israelis will not be resolved by starving the Palestinians or by creating additional hardship. They are desperate people, incarcerated in walls, afflicted with high unemployment, suffering from health and other problems. The non-governmental organizations point out that this will strip them in substantial part of contributing to this. It will in large part almost totally strip the United States from the ability to address the needs of the Palestinian people and to address the humanitarian concerns which we have about them.

Peace in the Middle East is not going to be achieved at gunpoint. It is going to be achieved by negotiations, by people working together; and that process may be ugly, dirty and slow, but it is the only process that will work. To create additional hardship and suffering for the Palestinians is simply going to guarantee more desperate, angry men who are fully determined that they will go forth to kill Israelis or Americans or anybody else. Our purpose here tonight should be to look to the well-being of the United States, craft a policy which is good for this country. And that policy can only be one which is good for Israel and for the Palestinian people, one which is fair to all, one which puts the United States as a friend and an honest broker of peace to both parties where we can be so accepted.

□ 2015

To take some other course is simply to assure continuing hardship and a

continuing poisonous, hateful relationship amongst the parties in the area. When this Congress realizes that and when we, this Congress and the others here, will recognize that that is the way peace is achieved, then there will be a real prospect for peace. We can expect that the Palestinians will receive the justice that they seek. We can expect that the Israelis will achieve the security that they need and they want and they deserve and that we want them to have.

This legislation will do none of that. This legislation promises further angry men, more bitterness, more hate, more ill-will; and it assures that the thing which we must use to bring this miserable situation to an end, honest, honorable, face-to-face negotiation, will either not occur or will be moved many years into the future.

Think about it. The needs of Israel are not served by this resolution. The needs of the United States are not served by this resolution. The needs of the Palestinian people are not served by this resolution.

Let us vote it down and get something which makes sense and which serves the interests of all concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the resolution on the floor. I oppose Hamas. I oppose what they stand for. I oppose their use of violence, their targeting of civilians; their vision for the Palestinian people; their rejection of Israel; and most of all I deplore their rejection of peaceful reconciliation.

For all these reasons, and many more, I do not think that Hamas is a true partner for peace. But while Hamas may not be, the Palestinian people are. The vast majority of Palestinians want peace. The vast majority value peace, follow the law, oppose violence—and legislation like this only hurts the vast majority we need for peace.

I understand the House's desire to ostracize Hamas. But I do not understand how we keep making the same mistakes by punishing the very people we all say we want to help. The restrictions on aid in this bill will not hurt Hamas, they will receive plenty of money from Iran, but this will hurt the Palestinian people.

Under this bill assistance will be limited only to "basic health", a restriction we reject for almost every other nation. This bill would stop economic development assistance, sanitation assistance, environmental assistance—and most ironically, at a time when we are criticizing their choice of government—democracy assistance.

Make no mistake about it; their vote was to get back at our own repeatedly misguided attempts to punish rather than cajole, to batter rather than build trust, and to impoverish rather than to uplift. When we provided Mahmoud Abbas no deliverables and only hardships, it made Hamas's promises hard to ignore.

Our actions emboldened the Hamas, and we are about to do it again. My friends, passage of this legislation will create yet another failed state and humanitarian catastrophe in the Middle East. However, this one, unlike Iraq, will be surrounded by our staunchest ally in that region. If we destabilize Palestine we will destabilize Israel. If we help create chaos we weaken the chance for finding peace between Israel and her neighbors—and even threaten the very viability of the Jewish state.

If this legislation is signed into law we will lose once and for all the Palestinian people. Our rejection of them will create one clear victor—the government of Iran. If we pass this legislation, Iran will win by default. Instead of textbooks for Palestinian children being written by USAID they will be written by the Iranian Revolutionary Council. Schools will be built with Iranian oil money and our ability to influence peace will be weaker as a result.

What I find so strange is that this legislation is being championed by people who believe themselves to be the staunchest supporters of Israel. Mr. Speaker, in order to strengthen Israel peace needs to prevail in the region. In order to guarantee Israel's survival the Palestinians need to find prosperity and view the United States as a friend. This bill will only stymie those efforts. I ask my colleagues to vote no.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL), my good friend.

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

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member.

I am going to support this resolution when it comes to a vote tomorrow. I want to take this opportunity, if I may, to speak about some of the issues that have been raised during this very important debate, very critical debate. We have lowered our voices, really, and raised our commitment on all sides of this issue.

I represent one of the most diverse districts in the United States of America. When I was mayor of the city that was the center of my district, Paterson, where I have lived all my life, Jews and Arabs and Muslims and Palestinians, we worked together, we prayed together, and we still do.

The conflict is very serious, we know that. Building bridges is part of my bone marrow. You learn that when you are a mayor.

The conflict in Israel is the axis on which much of the Middle East and much of the Middle East politics spins, but let us not forget that what we do and say here has major implications across the globe. This is true in the Congress, as well as when the President speaks.

The United States is strongly committed to the security of Israel as a Jewish state. There is no question that our friend and ally has every right to defend itself against those who oppose freedom and democracy.

The record will show very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that I have not put my signature on every one of those pieces of legislation over the past 10 years, but I think this is different. Many of those pieces of legislation I think exacerbated the situation in the Middle East. The ranking member and I have talked about that many times. Not this time. This is a clear denunciation of Hamas, an organization motivated by hate, not pride.

The world community harbors deep trepidation regarding the rise of

Hamas. Having taken over the government of the Palestinian Authority, Hamas has reiterated its commitment to violence and the destruction of Israel. The charter of Hamas is quite clear about this. I have read that charter time and time again. It is unacceptable, and it is the duty of all nations to keep pressure on Hamas to renounce terrorism and recognize the State of Israel.

The resolution before us today is an effective and noteworthy vehicle for the Congress of the United States to send this message. The United States will not give assistance, financial or otherwise, to Hamas or any Hamas-controlled entity. Terrorism cannot be tolerated. We will not treat this government as legitimate as long as their current dangerous policies and rhetoric remain in place.

Many of us in the House are in favor of a peaceful, two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but this will be unattainable while Hamas refuses to renounce terror.

We do not want to punish the Palestinian people. We know that the overwhelming majority of Palestinians and the overwhelming majority of American Palestinians and Palestinian Americans do not adhere to the destructive philosophy of Hamas. Hamas must reject its charter which calls for the destruction of Israel. Nothing less is acceptable.

The United States must encourage the meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, planned for next week, a very critical time for this legislation, as an important way to keep a dialogue going between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

I will vote for this legislation because I feel strongly that the loudest message practicable must be sent to Hamas.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs).

(Mrs. CAPPs asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Oregon for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by paying special tribute to Chairman HYDE. This may be his last year of service in this House, but his legacy of trying to bring peace to Israel and the Palestinians will live on for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I must rise in opposition to this bill.

Let there be no mistake, Hamas is a ruthless terrorist organization. Unless Hamas recognizes Israel's right to exist and renounces terror, the Palestinian Authority should receive no direct U.S. assistance. Direct aid to the Hamas-controlled PA has been cut off. The basic goal of this bill has already been accomplished.

But H.R. 4681 goes well beyond this objective. It is a punitive measure aimed at punishing the Palestinian people. It will undermine U.S. national

interests. It will do nothing to strengthen Israel security.

I have two main objections with this bill. First, it places nearly insurmountable efforts to future U.S. efforts to engage Palestinians and Israel in peace-making. It lacks the normal Presidential national security waiver; and unbelievably, it would limit United States diplomatic contact with moderate, non-Hamas Palestinian officials. Why is this? These are the very leaders who recognize Israel and who support peace, and it makes absolutely no sense for us to undercut them at this critical time.

Second, except for very limited circumstances, this bill will cut off humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people at the very moment when a horrendous humanitarian disaster is looming.

The United States, our Quartet partners, and Israel are all hard at work at present to avoid catastrophe and to deliver assistance around Hamas to credible and transparent NGOs. H.R. 4681 goes in the opposite direction.

I simply cannot see how denying chemotherapy treatment for Palestinian children increases Israel's security or advances U.S. national interests.

Mr. Speaker, there is significant opposition to this bill in the pro-Israel community, and I highlight again, respected national groups like Americans for Peace Now, Israel Policy Forum, and Brit Tzedek strongly oppose this legislation. They tell us voting "no" on this bill is a pro-Israel vote.

Groups like Churches for Middle East Peace and the Conference of Catholic Bishops, with decades of experience providing humanitarian relief, they oppose it as well.

The State Department also opposes the bill, calling it unnecessary and criticizing its provisions as objectionable.

On Wednesday, we will welcome Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to this Chamber. Yesterday, this is what he told his Cabinet: "We have no intention of helping the Palestinian government, but I say we will render such assistance as may be necessary for humanitarian needs." He also dispatched his top two ministers for a substantive meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

If this policy of shutting the door on Hamas but opening it to Palestinian moderates and the Palestinian people themselves is good enough for the Prime Minister of Israel, it should be good enough for the U.S. House of Representatives.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 4681.

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

Before yielding time, I would like to just say a word about the avalanche of misrepresentations which we have heard on this floor.

This legislation does not in any sense provide any punishment for the Palestinian people, just the opposite. It is

carefully crafted and aimed at the terrorist organization called Hamas.

I did not know, Mr. Speaker, when I spoke about the 16-year-old young American citizen who was killed by Hamas that he is the cousin of one of our colleagues, and I would like to extend my condolences to my friend from Virginia who suffered this personal loss.

The avalanche of misrepresentations can only be ascribed to a sloppy reading of this legislation. It is extremely carefully crafted, and if, in fact, the issue would not be as serious, I would find it ludicrous that some of the sharpest critics of the Bush administration have suddenly found great affection for the Bush administration because, like all other administrations, it wants total flexibility.

It is ludicrous that the most virulent critics of the Bush administration suddenly find themselves in bed with the Bush administration. This is, to say the least, unseemly.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished Democratic whip, my good friend.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. LANTOS and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for bringing this legislation to the floor.

The premise of this bill is eminently reasonable, in my opinion, and one with which the American people, I think, strongly agree. In short, the United States of America should not, indeed it must not, provide assistance to a government run by terrorists whose very policy and purpose is the destruction of another nation.

All of us are concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people, who have suffered tragically for decades under the leadership of Arafat and now Hamas.

I share those concerns. I have been to Gaza. I have been to the West Bank. I have met with President Abbas and other Palestinian officials, and I have seen the deprivation, the frustration, and the lack of opportunity in the Palestinian territories.

I think there is not one of us on this floor who is not concerned about their plight, as we should be. However, our legitimate concerns for the Palestinian people must not obscure the fact that the Palestinian Authority is now controlled by Hamas, an organization designated as a terrorist entity by the United States and by the European Union. No one here, I understand, stands to defend Hamas; but it is a movement that is committed to the destruction of another nation, in this case our ally Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this balanced legislation is warranted.

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Among other provisions, it prohibits direct financial transfers to the Palestinian Authority. That is our policy; until the President certifies that

Hamas recognizes Israel's rights to exist, renounces terrorism, agrees to abide by previous PLO and PA agreements with Israel and the United States, and does not have a member of a foreign terrorist organization in a senior policy-making position.

And despite the prohibition of direct assistance, the bill includes exceptions, as it should. For example, the President still may provide assistance for nonsecurity expenses directly related to facilitating a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Furthermore, the bill restricts indirect assistance through non-governmental organizations unless the certification described above is made by the President.

However, let me add, this provision contains an unqualified exception for basic human health needs, such as food, water, medicine and sanitation services. I tell some of my friends, if that were not in here, I would have reservations, but those basic services are fully excepted in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is, I think, measured and balanced and demonstrates the refusal of the United States to reward terrorists for terrorism. It should not be, and I think it is not, punitive as it relates to the Palestinian people. It provides, as I said, for health needs, food, water, medicine and sanitation services. They are in need of those services, and we ought to provide them.

But what we ought not to do and what we ought never to do is to give aid and comfort to terrorists or to terrorist organizations or to terrorist governments. Because if we do so, that will encourage others to commit heinous acts of terrorism, as were done here, as are done in Israel, and have been done around the world.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD). (Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time. I think this is not a carefully crafted bill. I think this is, as much as I respect the chairman and the ranking member, and I do respect the chairman, I have known the chairman for the 20 years I have been in politics, and I respect the ranking member, but I think the approach that is offered in this bill is what I would characterize as a meat-axe approach.

This does not help common ordinary citizens. What it does is it hurts common ordinary citizens. There is no other way around it. You can protest as much as you want about Mrs. CAPPS and what she said, but she is right. Common ordinary citizens, common ordinary Palestinians are going to be hurt by this, because the funding is going to be cut off for educational services, for health services, for the services that these people need very badly.

And what we have now, it looks to me like at least a couple hundred Secretaries of State, as reflected in this

bill. Do you all know more than the Secretary of State? Do you know more than the President? Do you think your policy is better than the administration's policy? Yes, you do. Well, I don't happen to agree with that. I really don't.

And I ask Members, I may be the only Republican to vote against this. I am obviously going to be the only Republican to speak against it, but I ask Members who represent large Arab populations in their districts to think about this. This hurts the Palestinian people. There is no other way to put it. And I do not know why you are doing this. In the name of protecting Israel? I just think this is a bad idea, and I don't understand why it is being done.

I would say this: The new prime minister of Israel is in this country. In a day or two, he will be walking down this middle aisle. And if he were able to vote and have a card that would allow him to vote as he walks down, he would vote against this bill. He has recognized that it is a bad bill. And if he had the opportunity to put his voting card as he walks down, he would vote against it, as would a large part of this administration. Why? Because it hurts common ordinary people. That is why.

If you are going after Hamas, go after them, but don't restrict the funding that helps people. The reason that Hamas won the election is the Palestinians didn't have the right people on the ballot and didn't work the ballot in order to do it. And Hamas has gone out into those communities and provided services, and they have endeared themselves to the Palestinian people while the leadership of Palestine has been pocketing a lot of money. That's the reason they won the elections. They ran better elections. But why fault the people for that? And why take this kind of funding away from common ordinary citizens?

Now, for all of you that come out on this floor all the time and talk about what we should be doing and what we are cutting and what we are not cutting, this is an opportunity to say to common ordinary citizens in Palestine: We care about you. We care about your health care. We care about education. We care about your opportunity for jobs and to really be able to do the things you want to do.

But if you vote for this, we say: The heck with you. We care more about sending a message to Hamas leadership than we do about the people of Palestine. I think that is what the message is. This will not hurt the leadership of Hamas. It will not. Because they are going to have the money and the resources that they need, and they will say what they want, but it will hurt common ordinary people.

Vote "no" on this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this matter be extended by 60 minutes, equally divided. Perhaps the opponents of the bill would have an opportunity to read the legislation. And I would

like to yield half of my time to Mr. LANTOS, and ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, the chairwoman of our committee, and I want to applaud her and Congressman LANTOS, two Members who cut through the partisan rancor of this institution to act with clarity against murderous intolerance.

Mr. Speaker, we sometimes may ask the question: If I was alive in 1939, what would I have done? If I was alive in 1939, would I have recognized the coming danger to America? If I was alive in 1939, would I have seen the seeds of genocide? But we do not live in 1939. We live in 2006, and many of the dangers we see today have parallels in history.

Across the sea now, there is an intolerant dictator rising who says that one Holocaust is not enough. The people in Israel rightly fear a new intolerant Islamic mullah who might say that another 6 million should be murdered.

The Iranians have many allies in the world. None of their allies are better than Hamas, leaders trained by tyrants, funded by murderers and utterly clear in their political program. One of the lessons of history is that dictators say what they are going to do and then do what they said. And Hamas has told us that they are for killing innocent civilians, and they have done that. They tell us that they support international terrorist attacks, and they have done that, too. Hamas has told us that they wish to drive our democratic allies in Israel into the sea, and we cannot let them do that.

Democracies are best when they defend each other, and the best way to defend our allies is to support moderate Arabs willing to join in peace. So we did that. The United States, the Congress, this House over the last many fiscal years, provided hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to support moderate Arabs.

We in this House funded the rise of Yasir Arafat. We created the Palestinian Authority. We embraced the ineffective government of Mahmoud Abbas. And each of these efforts, at a cost of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars from the United States, have failed. And so now we see Hamas taking power, a Hamas that what it does not get politically is taking militarily. Yesterday, Hamas tried to assassinate a top key official who works for President Abbas. A civil war is breaking out on the West Bank because Hamas does not have enough power yet and is willing to kill anyone in their way.

Mr. Speaker, I do not support this bill just because I support our allies in

Israel. I support this bill because Hamas has claimed responsibility for the murder of 26 American citizens. Those American citizens include: David Applebaum of Ohio; Nava Applebaum, also of Ohio; Alan Beer of Ohio; Marla Bennet of California; Benjamin Blutstein of Pennsylvania; David Boim of New York; Yael Botwin of California; Dina Carter of North Carolina; Janis Ruth Coulter of Massachusetts; Sara Duker of New Jersey; Matthew Eisenfeld of Connecticut; Tzvi Goldstein of New York; Judith Greenbaum of New Jersey; David Gritz of Massachusetts; Dina Horowitz of Florida; Eli Horowitz of Illinois; Tehilla Nathanson of New York; Malka Roth of New York; Mordechai Reinitz of New York; Yitzhak Reinitz of New York; Malka Roth of New York; Leah Stern of New Jersey; Goldie Taubenfeld of New York; Shmuel Taubenfeld of New York; Nachshon Wachsmann of New York; Ira Weinstein of New York; and Yitzhak Weinstock of California.

My colleague from New York talked about the common people that this would hurt. Common Americans have been killed by Hamas, and their blood is on the fingers of Hamas leaders. It is time for us to call it as we see it: intolerant murderous leaders, people who in other uniforms at other times we have seen before; and for us to cut off their funding, to say that the only Hamas moderate is a Hamas radical out of money and bullets, and for us to say that we wish this government, this Hamas government to fail, that in its place a more moderate government will rise, and at that time, it will be the time for the United States to support it and not a minute before that.

And I want to take one more personal privilege to say to the gentleman from California, Mr. LANTOS: Thank you. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for your history. And thank you for cutting through all of the rhetoric and giving us clear direction to use your eyes and your experience to teach us of how the past can inform the future so that it does not happen again.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, before I recognize the gentleman from Ohio, I would yield myself 5 minutes, because I have been sitting here reflecting on my good friend from California's comments about people who suddenly are the best friend of the administration who have been critical of them.

Well, I have only been here 10 years, not as long as my distinguished friend, but one of the things I have tried to do with Republican and Democratic administrations alike, when it comes to foreign policy, is to attempt to be supportive when I agree but to be clear that when I disagree, when I think they are wrong, to stand up.

I take a back seat to no one in terms of my opposition to this administration's reckless conduct in Iraq. I have been consistent on that from the beginning. One of the concerns I had about this administration was their disdain

for nation-building. You will recall the rhetoric of then Governor Bush.

But part of our obligation as Members of this chamber is to be supportive when we can. Because in the conduct of foreign policy, it would be nice if it did stop at the water's edge. I appreciate that the administration has changed its position on nation-building and has actually requested more assistance than it looks like this Congress is going to give them for foreign aid.

□ 2045

When they were willing to work with us in water and sanitation, I embraced that. I think we should reinforce positive things that we can agree on. That is what the American public wants. I do not think we should be reflexive and negative.

The administration has raised a legitimate concern about flexibility, about being able to implement it, and these are consistent with Republican and Democratic administrations in the past in terms of not wanting sanctions to go on forever and wanting to have the flexibility to respond, not after 25 days of consultation according to very, narrow little channels, but to be able to act responsibly to practice diplomacy.

The history of this House of Representatives is not very illustrious when it comes to many of these questions. Congress has sort of flitted around and has been subjected to the pressures of the moment and has not always been a constructive ally.

As we know, this House passed a draft by only one vote immediately before World War II. Lots of simple, commonsense straight-ahead solutions that we have been involved with have not always been the best and most carefully crafted.

I come forward not being a fan of this administration in many areas, in many areas, but in this one, as I listen to them, as I look at the requested flexibility, as I look at independent experts, as I hear from religious leaders back home and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, I see a wide range of people that support the concerns that the administration share with us.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LANTOS. I appreciate my good friend yielding, and allow me to point out the fatal flaw in your logic. We are not discussing the fact that some of us occasionally support the administration, and you just expressed great delight that on this issue you find yourself on the side of the administration.

The issue logically is flexibility. The people who have criticized this administration most vigorously over the years have claimed that the administration is riding roughshod over the Congress, not asking for more flexibility. This is a spurious argument. This is a phony argument. This administration, as do all administrations,

wants flexibility. They do not want congressional restraints.

Our legislation provides for restraints because we are a co-equal branch of government, and we wish to express the policies that we want to see our government pursue.

To claim that on this issue the administration should have total flexibility is contrary to the interests of the Congress as a body.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, to respond to my distinguished colleague, nowhere here have I said I want the administration to have unrestrained flexibility. Not once. And I am not expressing delight that we are on the same side.

What I said was when I find I am in agreement, I look forward to ways to work with them. When I see them move in directions I wish they had done with Afghanistan and Iraq, for heaven's sake, I am going to move in this direction with the stakes so high. With all due respect, it is not a question of giving unlimited flexibility to the administration. I have never said that, am not interested in it.

There is a framework here in terms of the sanctions that we are talking about, things like extending beyond the narrow definition of health to deal with humanitarian assistance and environmental cleanup. There are a whole host of things that could have been dealt with here in the ambit of this legislation.

I share with my good friend an interest in having this administration be more accountable to Congress and come forward and answer our questions. I would like oversight about what is going on in Iraq and what is going on in Afghanistan. Heaven knows I would.

But that does not mean that we ought to have unnecessarily restrictive and burdensome activities that are going to work against what I think are the interests of the Israeli people, the Palestinians and citizens of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I include for the RECORD a statement by Americans for Peace Now relative to H.R. 4681 and also a statement by Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace.

[From Americans for Peace Now]

H.R. 4681: GRANDSTANDING ABOUT PALESTINIANS, AT THE EXPENSE OF U.S. AND ISRAELI INTERESTS.

Tomorrow the House is expected to suspend the rules and take up H.R. 4681, the "Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006." This legislation would impose sweeping sanctions against the Palestinians in response to the victory of Hamas in the January Palestinian legislative elections.

Hamas' victory in the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) was

regrettable. It is imperative that the international community (including the U.S.) make a concerted and coordinated effort to pressure Hamas. However, H.R. 4681 represents a case of Congress using a blunt instrument where a surgical tool is needed. In doing so, the bill risks undercutting such efforts, harming U.S. national security, and undermining those Palestinian officials and activists who recognize Israel, reject terror, and support a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This legislation is fundamentally flawed and deserves to be rejected by the House. APN urges Members—including those who have cosponsored and/or plan to vote for the measure—to speak out on the House floor and submit statements for the record drawing attention to the many serious problems with H.R. 4681.

APN talking points on H.R. 4681:

H.R. 4681 unnecessarily risks U.S. national security. The U.S. can maintain a tough line against Hamas without compromising our own national security or unreasonably tying the President's hand in the conduct of foreign policy. Rejecting terrorism is not incompatible with ensuring that U.S. national security interests remain the primary concern of U.S. foreign policy.

H.R. 4681, however, irresponsibly and unnecessarily subjugates U.S. national security interests to political grandstanding. It does so by eliminating the President's authority to waive sanctions in the interests of U.S. national security—a waiver that is a standard component of virtually all U.S. sanctions legislation. This waiver, which has only rarely been invoked, represents minimal flexibility for the President to waive sanctions on assistance when U.S. national security interests are at stake. It is unfathomable that Congress would decide that, in the wake of the Hamas election, the President no longer needs or can be trusted with such authority. Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine scenarios under which U.S. national security might clearly call for direct, quick assistance—for instance, following new Palestinian elections or in the wake of a natural disaster. Moreover, the Bush Administration has already put in place tough new restrictions on aid to the Palestinians, clearly indicating the uncompromising stance this Administration is taking in response to the Hamas victory. APN urges Congress to demand that a real national security waiver be added to this bill, enabling the President to waive the various sanctions if he deems it to be in the national security interests of the U.S. to do so.

H.R. 4681 risks undermining Palestinian moderates and strengthening extremists. In response to the Hamas victory, we should seek to strengthen those Palestinians who reject violence, recognize Israel, and support a two-state solution. In doing so, we put pressure on Hamas to reform, and we strengthen those Palestinians who, we hope, will replace Hamas if it fails to reform.

H.R. 4681, however, undermines these positions and the Palestinians who hold them, by providing no political horizon for an alternative leadership to strive to reach. Under this bill, the PA—even if replaced by more welcome leadership—will likely be unable to meet the reform requirements in the short- or medium-term, especially outside the context of progress towards a peace agreement. Thus, even if new elections were held and won by a different party, all sanctions would remain in place until the other reform requirements had been met. APN urges Congress to demand that a "sunset clause" be added to H.R. 4681, providing a political horizon for moderate, reasonable Palestinian political leaders and activists, and sending a

signal of real support and hope to the Palestinian people. [A sunset clause is like an "expiration date" for legislation, stipulating a date or event after which Congress will either let the legislation lapse, renew the legislation, or amend it in some way.]

H.R. 4681 loses sight of the real priorities. H.R. 4681 seeks to precondition U.S. relations with the PA—and impose sweeping sanctions—based on the demand that the PA meet a list of requirements that include wide-ranging reforms unrelated to the election of Hamas. Important as these reforms may be, neither the U.S. nor Israel has ever considered them a prerequisite for engaging with the PA (or, for that matter, the PLO, Jordan, or Egypt, in the context of their agreements with Israel). Adding these reforms as preconditions for engagement loses sight of real priorities—like saving lives—and undermines the incentive for the most critical demands to be taken seriously. For example, under this bill, if Hamas renounced terror, changed its charter, acted decisively against other terrorist organizations, disarmed its own militants, and recognized Israel, but had not yet made substantial progress toward replacing all textbooks with "materials to promote tolerance, peace, and coexistence with Israel," all sanctions would remain in place. APN urges Congress to reject preconditioning U.S. relations with the Palestinians on requirements that are unrelated to the specific issues raised by the Hamas election; rather, Congress should set focused, meaningful performance benchmarks.

H.R. 4681 loses sight of U.S. strategic interests. A serious response to the Palestinian elections should clearly target Hamas and its control of the Palestinian Authority. Effective sanctions should clearly differentiate such targets from, for example, elected members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) who are not affiliated with Hamas or any other terrorist organization—political leaders and activists who, running on platforms that included rejection of terror, recognition of Israel, and support for a two-state solution, beat Hamas candidates in the January election.

However, H.R. 4681 not only fails to distinguish between Hamas and the PA, and the non-Hamas members of the PLC, it explicitly defines the PA as including the entire PLC—extending sanctions to longtime supporters of peace with Israel (like PLC member Salam Fayyad). Moreover, the bill includes extraneous sanctions that, while ostensibly aimed at Hamas, will in fact have zero impact on Hamas, but only serve to punish Palestinians who recognize Israel and reject terror, and make it difficult or impossible for the U.S. to talk to them. These include restrictions on visas (Hamas members are already barred by law from obtaining visas), limits on freedom of movement for officials of the PLO in the U.S. and sanctions on PLO representation in the United States (Hamas is not a member of the PLO a group that recognizes and has signed agreements with Israel), and an entirely superfluous attack on the United Nations that does not even make the pretense of having anything to do with Hamas. In the interests of U.S. national security, including our concern for Israeli security, it is vital to open the door for dialogue and engagement with alternative leaders and representatives of the Palestinians. APN urges Congress to reject provisions of this bill that will have no real impact on Hamas—except, perversely, to strengthen them while undermining moderate Palestinian political leaders and activists, and making it more difficult for the U.S. to engage with alternatives to a Hamas-led government, like President Mahmoud Abbas or the PLO.

APN urges Congress to reject this bill's misguided effort to attack the UN, especially at a time when Israel is asking the UN to play a greater role in providing services to the Palestinians. This attack has nothing to do with the Hamas election or UN activities in the West Bank and Gaza, and instead risks sending the message that the real goal of this bill is to assail Palestinians in every possible forum. APN is the premier Jewish, Zionist organization working to enhance Israel's security through peace. APN believes that strong U.S. leadership is the best hope for reducing Israeli-Palestinian violence and bringing about a political process that can eventually pave the way for security and peace for Israelis and Palestinians.

Brit Tzedek v'Shalom—Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace

Brit Tzedek v'Shalom urges representatives to vote no on H.R. 4681. Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace, is the nation's largest Jewish grassroots peace organization with a network of over 34,000 supporters who are committed to Israel's well-being through a negotiated two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006, fails to serve the long-term interests of either the United States or Israel. Despite improvements over the original version, H.R. 4681 weakens moderate pro-peace Palestinians and emboldens extremists, ties the President's hands in dealing with emergency security crises, and drastically cuts critical US assistance to the Palestinian people. While there is international consensus that Hamas must renounce terrorism, recognize Israel, and abide by all previous agreements, this legislation goes well beyond those demands and undermines the U.S. role in bringing Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table towards the end of achieving a two-state resolution of the conflict.

Specifically, H.R. 4681: Obstructs a return to negotiations. H.R. 4681 requires an impossible-to-achieve Presidential certification, composed of an overly extensive number of requirements, in order to bypass the bill's many sanctions. This standard of certification goes well beyond the Quartet's demands, setting unprecedented preconditions for U.S. engagement with the Palestinians. Because these demands are unachievable in the near term or outside the context of a peace process, they prevent a return to negotiations and provide little incentive for Hamas to moderate its stance towards Israel.

Without the Presidential certification, whose requirements as noted above are nearly impossible to meet, this bill prohibits all direct aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA), with the small exception of a very limited Presidential waiver for funds to support independent elections and the peace process. Current law already forbids direct U.S. funding to the PA but allows the President much broader discretion in waiving this prohibition in the interests of national security. Limiting this waiver undercuts the Administration's ability to offer the PA incentives in addition to sanctions or to respond to unexpected security or humanitarian crises.

At a time when the UN is reporting an impending humanitarian disaster in the West Bank and Gaza, H.R. 4681 restricts U.S. assistance to the Palestinian people delivered through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). While the bill makes a small exemption for "basic human health needs," it still creates onerous pre-notification requirements for all other NGO assistance to the Palestinian people. These NGOs address pressing humanitarian needs and help de-

velop Palestinian civil society. A humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territories will only increase support for extremism, thereby endangering Israel and further destabilizing the region.

H.R. 4681 restricts US diplomatic relations by prohibiting visas and travel (with limited waivers) for all members of the PA and the PLO regardless of whether or not they have connections to Hamas. In this respect, the bill prevents the US from fully engaging and bolstering moderate Palestinian leaders, such as President Mahmoud Abbas, who recognize and support peace with Israel. Existing US law already forbids members of Hamas and other foreign terrorist organizations from obtaining visas or having diplomatic relations with the United States.

As American Jews, we share profound dismay at the election of Hamas to the Palestinian Authority. Yet in this challenging hour, we urge you to maintain a cautious approach to the new Palestinian government, so as to preserve the future possibility of bringing Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table—which is the only path to achieving true peace and security for both peoples.

Vote No on H.R. 4681.

Mr. KUCINICH. I want to extend my condolences to the family of our colleague Mr. CANTOR and also thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her leadership and her commitment to attempting to create peace, as well as to speak directly to my dear friend, Mr. LANTOS.

I think it is fair to say Israel has no greater champion in the Congress, and the American people have no greater champion for human rights than Mr. LANTOS. His escape from the Holocaust is a story worthy of being taught in all of our schools.

I am here to ask: Is the past prologue? Is war and violence inevitable, or do we have the ability to create a new future where nonviolence, peace and reconciliation are possible through the work of our own hearts and hands?

I would not take issue with my friend Mr. LANTOS' informed experience, and I join him in defense of Israel's right to survive. Mr. LANTOS is my brother. The Israelis are our brothers and sisters. The Palestinians are our brothers and sisters. When our brothers and sisters are in conflict, when violence engulfs them, it is our responsibility to help our brothers and sisters end the violence, reconcile and fulfill the biblical injunction to turn hate to love, to beat swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks.

These are universal principles that speak to the triumph of hope over fear. We must call upon Hamas to renounce terror. We must call upon Hamas to disavow any intention for the destruction of Israel.

This ought to be a principle of negotiation with Hamas, not separation from the aspirations of the Palestinian people to survive.

I think we can speed the cause of peace by calling upon Israel to accept the Palestinians' right to self-determination and economical survival and humanitarian relief, for food, medical care, for jobs.

I ask, how can we arrive at a two-stage solution if we attempt to destroy

one people's government's ability to provide? A two-state solution, I believe, can be achieved with our mutual, thoughtful patience and support.

At a time when the U.N. is reporting a pending humanitarian disaster in the West Bank and Gaza, I believe this legislation would restrict U.S. assistance to the Palestinian people delivered through nongovernmental organizations. We know that, today, up to 80 percent of all Palestinians, particularly in parts of the Gaza strip, live at or below the poverty line. Unemployment stands at 53 percent of the total workforce.

Just as I join my good friends on both sides of the aisle in speaking out against violence against Israel, I object in the strongest terms to any measure that will increase the humanitarian crisis of the Palestinian people. It is true that the recent Palestinian legislative elections have created a tense situation in the international community. It is a situation that demands thoughtful and deliberate action in pursuit of peace. Despite the best intentions of those who wrote this legislation, I do not believe this legislation will advance peace between the Palestinian and the Israeli people.

There are people in this Congress of goodwill and good intention who want to see both the Palestinian people and the Israeli people survive. Let us continue to work towards that end.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), my good friend and a distinguished senior member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and the chairman of the subcommittee for bringing this measure to the floor.

As for Mr. LANTOS, the distinguished ranking member, I have to say I absolutely marvel at his eloquence in the opening statement that he made.

The very fact that he is, is important. The very fact that he is and is here is proof positive that if people of goodwill are determined to stand up to the forces of evil, that the forces of good can win out, and not unless that happens.

And those forces of evil, whether they be called the Nazi Party or the Hamas Party, each of which came to power in uncontested democratic elections, each of which have in common the destruction of an entire people and were uncompromising in their attitude, in their philosophy, in their belief; how do we compromise with the notion of administrations and evil forces whose goal is the destruction of another people? Where do you begin to compromise unless they denounce those goals, which has not happened in either case?

Mr. Speaker, with 295 cosponsors of this bill, there is not really much of a question about how the House is going to act. The bill will pass overwhelmingly. The only question is how many Members will be lured into opposition

to this measure by good intentions, false claims and by shrill prophecies of doom.

A "no" vote on this bill will not benefit the Palestinian people. Read the bill. The bill already allows humanitarian aid to flow under congressional scrutiny. And with the President's judgment, it can continue to go to nongovernmental groups.

A "no" vote will not benefit Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. The bill already creates a clear opening to keep him relevant and involved to becoming a channel for pursuing peace.

A "no" vote will not support the peace camp in Israel. Israelis just went to the polls and put Prime Minister Olmert into power with a government that strongly supports congressional efforts to sanction and block assistance to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority.

□ 2100

I sat here in amazement as my good friend from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) said things that were absolutely unbelievable. The politician people, what do they have to do with Hamas? Duh. They elected them.

Elections have consequences. People have to live with that. They can't elect a terrorist government whose purpose is to destroy another people and then say they have nothing to do with it.

That makes no sense at all. A "no" vote will not impress our allies in the Quartet either. The United States and other members of the Quartet remain in lock-step in rejecting any funding for the Hamas-led PA and are working, as this bill does, to find alternative approaches to assist the Palestinian people, and that is who we intend to help.

For someone to say that the Prime Minister of Israel is going to walk down this aisle, and if he had a voting card would vote for Hamas is an absurdity. It defies the imagination.

It is one of the many things that opponents of this legislation carefully, carefully constructed, have been saying mischaracterizing this bill. If you think that the Prime Minister of Israel would vote to give aid to Hamas, then you must be on another planet, and you should vote "no."

A "no" vote will do only one thing. It will give hope to the terrorist Hamas. It will give them hope that the wall of opposition in the West is cracking. It will give them hope that their embrace of terrorism will not have to be abandoned in order to govern. It will give them hope that support for Israel is not as strong as it seems. It will give them hope that with tenacity and will their terrorist objectives will succeed.

No Member of this House wants to send that message. No Member of this House supports Hamas. But make no mistake. A "no" vote will be used again and again to show that the path of Hamas is correct and that compromise will come only from the West, and there is no price to be paid by those who espouse terrorism. We can-

not afford to send that message, even in the smallest, most unintentional way.

Let us recall for a moment just what the international community has demanded of Hamas, three words. All Hamas has to do is to say three words: Israel, peace and agreement. Israel, Hamas has to accept the existence, just the existence, of a U.N. member state.

Peace, that there has to be two states for two people and that they will live side by side in peace and agreement. Hamas has to accept the resolution of the conflict, which will only be achieved by peaceful means and that agreement will be honored.

This is not a difficult list, three words. Hamas could win the international community over. Hundreds of millions of dollars would begin to flow to the Palestinian people. Salaries could be made, projects could be started, roads could be built, schools could be constructed. Before you say no, those few people in the House who will, ask yourself why they will not say those three words. Why won't they?

The answer is that Hamas thinks that their religion forbids it. They believe that they are engaged in a holy war that can only be resolved with the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people and to put their population in exile or subjugation.

There can be no compromise, according to them, of their view. Cease-fires, temporary borders, negotiations for Hamas or just way stations on their path to the ultimate destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. They will not waiver, and we must not waiver.

Hamas has made clear again and again that they will not be held answerable for the hundreds of innocent civilians they slaughtered with bombs. They will not be held accountable for their overt racism and vile anti-Semitic bigotry. They will not be punished for all the times they shatter the fragile peace or destroy a nascent trust.

All they have to do is say those three words. A "no" vote tells them they don't have to. A "no" vote says hold fast. A "no" vote reassures them that they will not have to say Israel, peace and agreement.

Until they do, we must assure that they bear the full brunt of responsibility forever the condition of the Palestinian people. Not a humanitarian crisis, but a firm sanction of the United States against the government born of terror, bred on violence, and bound for ruin. Contrary to this leading report, this bill absolutely cannot and will not be used to deny humanitarian aid.

The bill will not allow, with proper oversight, the Presidential confirmation that it serves our national security interest, continued assistance through properly screened and audited nongovernmental organizations. The

bill provides a clear channel for President Mahmoud Abbas to show our continued appreciation for his vocal support for the peaceful two-state solution. This bill constitutes a carefully crafted balance.

Some wanted it stronger; others wanted it more flexible. But the bill is strong enough to prevent American money from subsidizing a government run by terrorists and flexible enough to allow the administration to engage with Palestinians who are willing to seek peace.

Members will have a choice. Let the perfect be the enemy of the good, and in doing so undermine the peace they seek, or stand firm against doing business as usual with a governing entity controlled by a terrorist organization.

I know some Members are conflicted. There have been mixed signals, even misleading information about this legislation. I want to be perfectly clear. The pro-Israel vote is "yes." The pro-Palestinian vote is "yes." The pro-peace vote is "yes." The pro-engagement vote is "yes." I thank the House for their attention.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, as I yield the gentleman from New York 4 minutes, I would give myself 30 seconds to make two observations.

One, there will be no aid to Hamas, whether this bill passes or not. It is against United States law to give assistance to a terrorist organization.

Second, I would reference the exact language of the word where the exemption is assistance to meet basic human health needs, not broad humanitarian. The language of the bill is actually quite clear.

Madam Speaker, I yield to my friend, Mr. HINCHEY, for 4 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Oregon for yielding me this time.

I also want to express my admiration, respect and affection for the gentleman from California, who is the sponsor of this legislation. But I do disagree with him on the effects that this legislation would have.

I am a strong supporter of the State of Israel. As such, I believe it is important to maintain independent and principled positions on Middle East issues. I believe that that requires a "no" vote on resolution 4681.

Hamas' victory in the elections for the Palestinian legislative council was indeed regrettable, and Hamas government's failure to condemn, much less take steps to prevent acts of terrorism is abhorrent. It is appropriate that the international community, including, of course, the United States, make a concerted and coordinated effort to pressure Hamas.

However, H.R. 4681 risks undermining such efforts, harming United States national security and undermining those Palestinian officials and activists who do recognize Israel, who do reject terror, and who do support a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

H.R. 4681 subjugates U.S. national security interests to political grandstanding. It does so by eliminating the President's authority to waive sanctions in the interests of United States national security, a waiver that is a standard component of virtually all U.S. sanctions legislation.

H.R. 4681 risks undermining Palestinian moderates and strengthening extremists by providing no political horizon that an alternate Palestinian leadership can strive to reach.

H.R. 4681 preconditions U.S. relations with the Palestinian Authority and imposes sanctions based on criteria that are unrelated to the issues raised by the Hamas elections, and 4681 makes it more difficult for the United States to engage with alternatives to a Hamas-led government like President Mahmoud Abbas or the PLO. This proposal, unfortunately, is itself extreme, and as such, I believe, would do no good.

Rather, it will strengthen the position of extremists and increase the violence and destruction which has become more prevalent as the result of the expression and implementation of policies such as those contained in H.R. 4681.

I believe that we should defeat this proposed legislation and instead focus on something that would be more productive to achieve the kinds of solutions that we need to the problems that exist in the Middle East.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, Hamas' political victory in the January election presented an opportunity for this Islamic jihadist group to lay down its arms, to renounce terrorism, to recognize the State of Israel, and to dismantle its militant infrastructure, to become an entity that could lead the Palestinian people to peace, to prosperity, to security with the Jewish nation.

But, unfortunately, much like its predecessor, who never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity, Hamas has instead continued its violence, has aligned itself with pariah states and with state sponsors of terrorism that seek to extend their extremist, hateful ideology throughout the region and, indeed, throughout the world. Hamas has chosen to dedicate its resources and its energy to supporting continued terrorist attacks against Israel rather than to helping the Palestinian people.

It is its choice, so Hamas can spend its money on suicide and homicide attacks; but it is up to the United States to support and provide for the needs of the Palestinian people. It is our responsibility, instead of Hamas'.

Previous speakers in opposition to the bill have said, Madam Speaker, that this bill will deny chemotherapy to cancer victims. It is preposterous; it does not. That it would hurt the common Palestinian citizen. No, it does not. That it would undermine the Pal-

estinian reformers by denying democracy. No, quite the opposite. That it has unbearable roadblocks to non-government organizations to provide assistance to the Palestinian people. Absolutely not.

The bill requirements are to ensure that humanitarian aid goes to the intended recipients for the intended purposes, oversight. The United States must make it unambiguously clear that we will not support such a terrorist regime, that we will not directly or indirectly allow American taxpayer funds to be used to perpetuate the leadership of an Islamic jihadist group that is responsible for the murder of hundreds and the wounding of scores of innocent Israeli civilians, of U.S. citizens and other foreigners throughout the years.

It has been almost 4 months, Madam Speaker, since this Islamic jihadist extremist won a majority of seats in the Palestinian parliamentary elections. We have made our conditions clear, but Hamas' commitment to bloodshed has remained unabated.

□ 2115

Hamas' leaders have expressed their support for rockets being launched from Gaza into Israel, and stated that the recent attack, a bombing that killed nine innocent people and wounded 60 at a Tel Aviv restaurant, was "justified." Their words, not mine.

Since the elections, the leaders of Hamas have officially expressed their refusal to change a single word in its charter. Their hate-filled covenant is Hamas' most valued document. It focuses on killing Jews and destroying Israel.

I would like to read some of the words that are included in the charter of Hamas and that accurately depict the group's violent views: "The time of Muslim unity will not come until Muslims will fight the Jews and kill them; until the Jews hide behind rocks and trees, which will cry, 'O Muslims, there is a Jew behind me. Come on and kill him.'"

The Islamic extremists running the Palestinian Authority have made it very clear, crystal clear, that they do not intend to moderate their vicious views nor seek a peace agreement with Israel. They may speak of a long-term cease-fire, but this is only a temporary means to regroup and rearm for yet more terrorism.

A two-state solution envisioned and proposed by the Quartet is not part of Hamas' agenda, because it runs contrary to the core principles of this terrorist group that says, "The land of Palestine from the river to the sea is considered an Islamic endowment, and no Muslim has the right to cede any part of it."

So our actions here tonight and the vote tomorrow must be clear and it must be firm. We must work toward eradicating such Islamist jihadist hatred and the extremist ideology that feeds it, or we will compromise our own

immediate as well as long-term security interests and the stability and the security of our allies in the region.

In an effort to promote U.S. national security and foreign policy priorities and to help ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars do not reach the hands of Hamas and other Palestinian terror groups, I introduced, with my good friend the ranking member of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. TOM LANTOS, this bill that is before us tonight, Madam Speaker. It has 295 cosponsors, and it opposes the provision of assistance or political recognition to any entity under the tutelage of a terrorist organization such as Hamas.

This bill does prohibit direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority, but it has exceptions, and we have talked about them. Many of the people who have spoken here tonight want to overlook those exceptions. It does seek to prohibit travel to the United States by members or associates of terrorist entities, it provides for the United States to withhold contributions to the United Nations proportional to the amounts the United Nations provides to these duplicative Palestinian-related entities that are directly tied to the Palestinian Authority, and it calls for the Palestinian Authority to be designated as a terrorist sanctuary under the 9/11 bill.

But it is not just about what is right for the U.S. in terms of our priorities and our allies, Madam Speaker. It also is about honoring the memory of all who have died at the hands of Hamas and other Palestinian jihadist groups.

That is why tonight we have spoken about and we have given our condolences to our good friend from Virginia, Mr. CANTOR, whose 16-year-old cousin, Daniel Wultz from South Florida, close to my congressional district, died 2 weeks ago after suffering these fatal injuries caused by an April 17 suicide bombing in Tel Aviv while he was having lunch with his father. Daniel fought courageously for 27 days for his life, but the injuries were far too severe.

Our thoughts and our prayers go not just to Daniel, but also to all who have lost family members and friends to Hamas and other jihadist groups, and the list is, unfortunately, too long for us to mention all of their names. We want to pass this legislation to help ensure that we in Congress have done everything possible to prevent another Daniel Wultz from dying at the hands of these extremists.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to render their full support to this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Oregon, Mr. BLUMENAUER, for yielding me this time, and to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, a staunch supporter of human rights, for coauthoring this legislation with our dear, dear and respected colleague from the State of California, Congressman TOM LANTOS, who is the once and future chair of this committee, I am sure, some day, and to say, as many others have stated this evening, we respect your life. Many of us love you and love your family.

Perhaps some of us have a deeper understanding of some of the tribulation that you have faced in your own life because our families have faced the same. We had relatives in what is now the nation of Ukraine, but in the Soviet Union, our uncles, who were sent to the gulag for over 20 years by Joseph Stalin. One died and one survived, miraculously, after 20 bitter years. So I think our family shares a deep personal understanding of what despotism and terror is.

I rise this evening because I have to say that this act, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act, I fear will result not in less terrorism, but in more. I do not really believe it is in the interest of the United States, of Israel or the world to further radicalize elements in the Palestinian population, and I do believe this bill will do exactly that.

It is not in the interest of the government of the United States nor Israel nor the world to make it impossible for Palestinians to become more educated and to learn how to govern an emerging nation. Indeed, if our current policies as a world were so intelligent, they would not have yielded a Hamas to the point where it actually won an election and other elements of Palestinian society were so crippled and so inept and so disorganized that they were not able to govern in a way that an emerging nation state would.

I have asked myself during the gruesome Soviet period, what glimmers did we have, what connections did we have, what elements were we able to nurture that even provided a road forward?

I think of our family's East European heritage in Poland and enduring the most repressive times in Poland. This country found a way to support a non-governmental organization in the form of Solidarity, and there were church groups working and there were other groups that provided just small glimmers of light.

I remember a dear, dear friend, Reverend Martin Hernati born in the homeland of Congressman LANTOS, who said to me, "MARCY, I am walking through a tunnel. It is very dark in the tunnel and I see no light at the end of the tunnel, but I must keep walking."

I remember Cardinal Mindszenty in the nation of Hungary, locked up in the U.S. embassy for many years, as a sin-

gle man, a single individual, as a symbol to the West.

I thought about the "Refuseniks" in the Soviet Union, how we connected with them, helping them to publish their works, helping to hear a voice from inside a closed society, and I asked myself, in this situation, what are the parallels? What are the parallels?

In this bill, no one wants to support Hamas. All we are asking for is the right to amend this bill to find other non-governmental groups that we can help to support, to help educate, to help inform, to help teach, in the hope, even though we are all walking through the tunnel and we see no light at the end of the tunnel, that we give the ordinary person, the moderate, and there are some moderates, some hope, some ability to connect.

I read from the statement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who say in opposition to the current form of this bill, "A further deterioration of the humanitarian and economic situation of the Palestinian people compromises human dignity and serves the long-term interests neither of Palestinians nor of Israelis who long for a just peace.

"Non-governmental organizations have a long history of helping the world's most vulnerable people. Their humanitarian role should be respected. While this work is not easy," and surely the gentleman from California knows it is not easy, surely the gentlelady from Florida knows it is not easy, "it is essential. It deserves Congress' continued support."

I would hope that with the Prime Minister of Israel coming here this week, that we would have a proposal that would take the Quartet and actually somehow have discussions, even a resolution, to try to restart the failed peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Wouldn't that be a great moment? Wouldn't it be worth being here and serving here? We need resolutions that will not radicalize, that will not divide, that will make peace possible.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding, I want to thank my good friend from Ohio, Ms. KAPTUR, for her thoughtful and very serious comments, as I want to express my appreciation to all of my colleagues who have spoken against this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to my good friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the distinguished senior member of the International Relations Committee.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding to me, and I would say that all the compliments that have been heaped upon him and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN during this debate are certainly well-deserved.

Madam Speaker, some of our colleagues here who say they are voting "no" also tell us that they are good friends of Israel. Well, to Israel, I would say that with friends like that, she certainly doesn't need any enemies.

Israel and the civilized world and the United States do have enemies. The enemy is called terrorism. And in the Middle East, terrorism has another name. It is called Hamas.

We have to deal with things, Madam Speaker, as they are, not as what we wish them to be. The Palestinians elected a terrorist organization, Hamas, to run their government and be their leaders. We are told by people who oppose this bill, oh, the poor Palestinian people. This legislation hurts the poor Palestinian people.

Well, let me tell you what hurts the poor Palestinian people: The government they elected, Hamas. That is what hurts the Palestinian people.

This bill has been called inflexible and stringent and other such nonsense. Not true at all. And I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill. This bill is flexible. Humanitarian aid is allowed. Some of us have some questions about that, quite frankly, because money is fungible and can be moved around, and we don't want money that is being given under the guise of humanitarian aid to be transferred and used for other things, and we know Hamas is capable of doing that.

We are told by some of the opponents that the bill has consequences. Sure it does. Elections have consequences. Nobody denies that the Palestinian people went to the polls and voted for Hamas. But when you vote for someone, there are consequences, and this is the consequence of electing a terrorist organization as your leadership.

□ 2130

Now we are asking Hamas to do three things, it has been said many times here before. I want to repeat them. Three things. They have to say that they are opposed to terror, that they are ending their support for terror.

They have to recognize Israel's right to exist. They have to recognize previous agreements that were signed by previous Palestinian governments. What is so difficult about that? How can we ask Israel to sit and negotiate with a group that does not recognize their right to exist, with a group that wants to destroy them and kill them, and have another Holocaust? This is nonsense.

All this bill does is simply say that we will be cutting off aid to Hamas. And for my colleagues who say that the administration does not want it now, we should not do it because the administration does not want it, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and I were sponsors of the Syria Accountability Act.

The administration at first opposed it. Do you know why? Administrations always oppose bills like that because administrations do not think that Congress should play any role in the conducting of foreign policy.

Well, we do. We are here. We have a right to pass laws that express the desires of this Congress and the desires of the American people. So it is nonsense to say that the administration opposes

it and therefore we should go along. The administration opposed the Syria Accountability Act, and ultimately we persuaded it to go along and support the bill.

This bill passed, as was pointed out, in the International Relations Committee 36-2. I was proud to be one of those 36 people. And I think that tomorrow this bill will pass overwhelmingly. This Congress has got to send a strong message that it opposes terror. It opposes terror whether it is Hamas, it opposes terror whether it is al-Qaeda, it opposes terror whether it is Hezbollah. All terrorist groups must be opposed. That is what this legislation does. That is what this legislation says.

The United States and Israel are strong allies in the fight against terror, and this legislation will go a long way in saying to Hamas, we will not do anything with you or help you in any way as long as you do not renounce terror.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) 5¾ minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I want to also express my gratitude to Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, my very dear friend on the other side of the aisle, and of course my very special friend and mentor, Mr. LANTOS. His eloquence was almost matched today by Mr. ACKERMAN and Mr. ENGEL. They did a remarkable job. And I do not believe I can equal theirs, but I would like to speak on behalf of this piece of legislation.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and I am hoping for its immediate passage. Like some of my colleagues, I also want to express my sincerest sympathy to my colleague and good friend on the other side of the aisle, Mr. CANTOR, for the unnecessary loss of his 16-year-old cousin, Daniel. I am heartsick about that, and did not know until this evening that he had died.

This bill, Madam Speaker, is not about punishing the Palestinian people. This bill is about reasonable demands for United States assistance. There are three requirements on the Hamas-led PA to receive and to continue to receive financial aid from the United States.

You must recognize Israel's right to exist. They must denounce and combat terrorism, and they must accept the roadmap and other past agreements. These are the three simple requirements that must be met in order to receive continued financial aid from the United States.

The problem the Palestinians have, as I have said so many times before is not money, the problem has been and continues to be a complete failure of leadership.

If one was tuning in tonight and listened to some of my colleagues, they would think that the United States has been rather stingy with the Palestinians. But I would like to enlighten those that do not know, that since the

1993 Oslo Accord, the United States has given more than \$1.8 billion to the Palestinians. In that same time we have given over \$130 million directly to the Palestinian Authority.

After decades of aid and billions of dollars, it boggles my mind that there is no economic self-sufficiency and no improvement to the quality of life for the Palestinian people. Why is this? Because the desperation of the Palestinian people is not about money, it is about the Palestinian Authority failing to do what any responsible government would have done with several billion dollars, provide security for its people, build infrastructure, improve health care, provide economic opportunities, improve education and move their people into the 21st century.

The money is not going to housing. Palestinians continue to live in wretched conditions in refugee camps with corrugated roofs in dilapidated ramshackle huts. The money is not going to schools. If it was, the Palestinian children would be sitting in classrooms being trained as the next generation of doctors and engineers who would lead their people in the 21st century.

The money is not going to security. Rather than imposing security, the Palestinian Authority forces first attacked the Israelis, now they are attacking each other as Gaza is close to civil war.

The Palestinian Authority under Fattah was corrupt and morally bankrupt. Is there any wonder that the Palestinian people turned to Hamas, the most dangerous terrorist organization operating today, to have their basic needs met?

Year after year, we have given hundreds of millions of dollars to the Palestinians despite no accountability, no modern financial controls, no transparency, and no actual knowledge of where our tax dollars are going, and the continued attacks on innocent Israeli women and children.

I am an original cosponsor of this legislation. However, it is substantially weaker than the one that I originally authored. In my opinion, we should be eliminating all aid to the Palestinian Authority, not granting the administration broad-based exemptions to continue to fund this regime.

The legislation grants direct aid to Abu Mazen for nonsecurity expenses. It also grants direct aid for his personal security detail. Abu Mazen is a powerless and ineffective leader. Since being elected president, he has had every opportunity to create peace with the Israelis and establish a Palestinian State.

When he had the power he would not or could not take the first step to disarm the terrorists and end the violence against Israel. Now he is the President of nothing. Why is the United States continuing to prop him up? Why are our tax dollars being used to support this guy in the first place?

This bill also grants a broad-based exemption for indirect aid through the

NGOs within the West Bank and the Gaza. Why should Americans be forced to foot the bill when the PA is unable to provide us an accounting for literally billions of dollars that we have spent?

Madam Speaker, it is time for the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian people to stop blaming Israel and the United States for their utter failure to provide for their own needs. Yassar Arafat stole millions of dollars from his own people.

If Hamas needs money to provide basic services for the Palestinian people, let them hunt down Yassar Arafat's widow and get the millions of dollars that her husband stole from his own people. The problem is a lack of leadership, a lack of vision, a lack of hope for the future, lack of civilized behavior, not a lack of money.

Until Hamas agrees to recognize Israel's right to exist, denouncing and combating terrorism and accepts the roadmap and other past agreements, not only should we not be giving one more dime, we should be asking for a refund from the Palestinian Authority.

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

Madam Speaker, as I prepare to conclude my presentation and yield back my time this evening, I truly have enjoyed the give and take that we have had this evening under the leadership of our subcommittee chair, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, the work that has been done by staff members on both sides of the aisle, the passion, the emotion, the concern, and the professionalism that we have witnessed.

I personally have appreciated it. I think it is a healthy give-and-take that we have had. I think it is an important debate. It is not the last word that we are going to enjoy. I would simply make a couple of points in closing. I continue to be concerned that we not talk past one another. There is going to be, under existing United States law, no aid for Hamas. It is illegal to give assistance to a terrorist organization. Hamas certainly is.

And they are not going to be entitled to aid regardless of what happens with this bill. I continue to be concerned that the language of the bill is not, as some of my friends who have spoken on the other side of the aisle refer to, talking about how humanitarian aid can go through. That is not what the bill says. It is health that is the automatic pass-through.

Education, as has been referenced, is not a part of the automatic exemption. This lack of flexibility is one of the reasons why this bill is opposed by Americans for Peace Now, the Israel Policy Forum, Brit Tzedek, Shalom, Churches for Middle East Peace, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The bill sets permanent and inflexible limits on the United States's ability to be involved with Israel and Palestine, whether or not Hamas is in

power. And that is a mistake. It goes far beyond dealing with the ramifications of January's elections, and Hamas's rise to power, essentially Palestinian moderates and institutions that have nothing to do with Hamas.

Most independent observers feel that that is counterproductive and it may well end up backfiring and actually providing further strength to the extremists. I listened to the delightful exchange between Mr. LANTOS and Mr. FRANK on the floor earlier. I always marvel watching two parliamentary masters go back and forth. I listened to Mr. FRANK's argument tying it back to earmarking. And it was a thoughtful and amazing argument.

But one of the concerns I have, given the nature of Hamas, and listening very carefully to Mr. FRANK's words, is they are going to claim credit any way they can for anything that happens, much as we see political processes generally do that.

It is important that in our desire to stop Hamas from either assistance or a foothold for claiming credit, that we are very surgical about what we do for the Palestinian people, and the ability to move forward with peace.

Madam Speaker, I think it is important for us to review the administration's concerns. They have stated that they feel it is unnecessary, as the executive branch already has ample authority to impose all its restrictions. It does constrain the executive's ability in the flexibility to use sanctions as appropriate to address rapidly changing circumstances, which we all sincerely hope happen for the positive in this troubled area of the world.

Their concerns about the mandatory nature of the bill's sanctions, the relative absence that relates to activities absent an unachievable certification, a lack of a general waiver authority on its key ban on assistance, and that these limitations should be time limited.

The administration has also raised the concern that the exemption for "basic human health needs" is too narrow and should be broadened to "basic human needs". Indeed both sides on the floor this evening often used those two terms interchangeably, but they are very different under the bill.

But I do think we have reached the point where both my leg and my store of information here has been exhausted. I wanted to make one last point, because there has been reference this evening to the joy of serving with Mr. LANTOS.

I never cease to marvel, when we are in the midst of this, that he adds a dimension to the debate that I think is very important. I never cease to learn something in the course of what happens in the committee or here on the floor. Reference has been made to him as the only Holocaust survivor who has walked these halls.

And it adds a dimension, not just to this debate, but one that carries through in activities in Asia, in Africa, in the bigger picture across the world.

□ 2145

But there is one other accolade because Mr. LANTOS is a professor, and I appreciate the scholarly approach he brings that tempers his experience and his emotion that makes this a learning experience. And I truly believe that as a result of his input this evening that this has been a valuable learning experience for me, and I think it has enriched the record. Whatever happens with this legislation as it goes through the course of the legislature, as I do not doubt that it will pass tomorrow, that we will all be a little more knowledgeable as a result of this, and I think, in the long run, we will be able to do our jobs better, and for that, I thank him.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding the balance of our time to my good friend from Texas, let me express my deepest appreciation to my friend from Florida, who has done her usual extraordinary job, for her principled statement and impeccable logic. We are all in her debt.

I want to express my deep appreciation to my very good friend from Oregon for his unduly gracious comments which I deeply appreciate. And I want to thank all of my colleagues who have spoken on all sides of this issue. This has been an excellent debate, and it is appropriate that it should be wound up by one of our best debaters, my friend from Texas, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE. I yield her the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is recognized for 3¼ minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. The gentleman is very kind. Before I start, may I ask for additional time from the distinguished gentlelady from Florida, 1½ minutes. I thank the distinguished gentlelady very much.

Madam Speaker, let me thank Mr. LANTOS for his extreme kindness to yield to, in essence, a non-member of this great committee this time. Let me acknowledge my good friend from Florida for her leadership, and also I might add my appreciation to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon for bringing his vast perspective to this debate. I believe this is what democracy is all about.

Certainly I could not stand here tonight and not add my appreciation for Chairman HYDE who I believe has worked over the years to seek a level and a plateau and a place of, if you will, harmony and bipartisanship.

Tonight is a very difficult time for many of us. And, in fact, I think we have had an enormously thoughtful debate. We find ourselves this evening, as I offer my sympathy to the family of Congressman CANTOR for his loss, we find ourselves on the piercing horns of dilemma, and they are piercing outside. That is that we find ourselves fighting for peace between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, and we find ourselves fighting for the existence and recognition of the State of

Israel and the acceptance by the world of a two-state position that has been authored and supported by so many, including the now ailing former Prime Minister Sharon.

I was in Israel just a few months ago visiting Prime Minister Sharon at the Hadassah Hospital, listening to a variety of individuals pontificate about the pending election and having some small iota of hope that Hamas, if elected, would assume the realm of leadership and stand up and acknowledge we want two states, we reject terrorism, and we reject any idea that Israel should not exist. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

This reminds me of the time that Dr. King led as he moved into the time when more groups began to circle and intervene in "the movement" as we called it; and he welcomed the youngsters and those who had provocative and different thoughts. He knew that the ultimate end was what they all cherished, and that is the elimination of the shackles of segregation and racism and the divide of this country that was then black and white. But Dr. King had to make a very important decision, whether or not this movement required his standing firm on denouncing violence. So he had to reject some of the groups who came to the circle of the movement. He had to stand for non-violence. He had to stand for the movement being one that we could seek the plateau of freedom without violence. And so I stand here today because I want to at least express the fact that those of us who argue for the opportunities around the world, for the peace around the world, for the elimination of the shackles of the Sudanese people and who claim that we want that kind of fierce and absolute pressure on government, have to be able to understand this legislation. I want divestiture and sanctions in Sudan. And so, clearly, I have to understand that there are times when we must intervene in order to make the point so that freedom might live.

I hope President Abbas will meet with the prime minister, the new prime minister of Israel. I hope that they will find a common ground and a way to promote peace. But at the same time, I think it is important that we make a firm stand to find in our hearts and our minds the ability to stand up to Hamas and ask them to reject violence but also to say these three words: Israel can exist. That is what we are asking for tonight.

I guess I speak as one who has a great kinship and friendship with many Muslims around this Nation and this world. Particularly, I speak tonight to those Palestinian Americans who are frustrated and confused by legislation such as this. I beg of them to link arms with all of us and demand of the Hamas that they rid themselves of this violence so their children can learn, so the sick and the feeble can be taken care of. But I do thank the authors of this legislation for putting these exceptions in,

and they can be read clearly that health and humanitarian needs can be taken care of and educational needs can be taken care of with the consultation of this Congress. This is a very difficult time. There are hard choices to make and I would argue that the Arab League has been, if you will, absent from the team. The Arab League has been absent from this process.

So as I close, let me say that there is fault everywhere. We can blame anyone and everyone. But it is clear what has to be done. That is the denouncing of violence. I want to say to our friends here in America, Palestinian friends and others, you can be part of this solution. We are not here to undermine the children of Palestine or the women or the families or those who are sick, but we are here to heal the land and to cause an opportunity for peace so that two states can live along with each other.

I cannot be a hypocrite tonight, and as I cry out for Sudan, I must cry out for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. I hope this legislation will begin the debate, and I hope the Arab League and others will join us in this fight for freedom.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to support, and express my views, on H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act.

For the last few months, we have watched the Middle East transform once again, and every day, we have witnessed history in the making.

Israel experienced the end of an era when the Honorable Ariel Sharon was disabled by a powerful stroke. Israel also resurrected its government into an entity focused on stability and the necessity of safety. The Palestinian Authority successfully elected a new government in the spirit of democracy.

I had the opportunity this past January to visit Israel, to once again tread the soil of the Holy Land, and meet with state officials to discuss the ramifications of Mr. Sharon's illness, and prospects of peace in the Middle East. At the time, apprehension toward the upcoming Palestinian elections was tangible, and the Israeli elections were not too far in the future. All of Israel and the Middle East knew that this was a turning point.

Now, however, we have a conundrum. Where we want to encourage and celebrate a democratic election, we are dismayed that the party elected has a history that disappoints hopes of peace and a mutually beneficial resolution in the near future.

Until we can achieve a two-state solution with lasting peace, we must address the fact that the government now in power has not met the baseline requirements for returning to the discussion table.

Over the last few months, we have seen the Palestinian people elect a government that promised more organization and resilient public administration, as well as less corruption and abuse of its citizens. However, the charter of Hamas remains committed to the destruction of the nation of Israel, and the supremacy of the Islamic faith around the world. The Palestinian Authority is struggling to deliver the stability it promised on the campaign trail.

H.R. 4681 states that it shall be U.S. policy to promote the emergence of a democratic

Palestinian governing authority that denounces and combats terrorism, upholds human rights for all people, and has agreed to recognize Israel as an independent Jewish state.

The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006 would freeze aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and nongovernmental agencies (NGOs) unless for educational needs and overridden by the President, operating in the West Bank and Gaza so long as Hamas, or any other terrorist group, is a part of the Palestinian government. The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act puts in place a stringent benchmark that must be met by the PA before America resumes aid. The aid will not be resumed until the President certifies that the PA is not controlled by and does not include terrorist groups and that the PA has demonstrated substantial progress towards a number of specified goals. I know we can have peace if people of good will—no matter what their faith help denounce violence and begin to work for two peaceful states.

I hope that this bill will not be misinterpreted as stifling the Palestinian Authority or harming the Palestinian people. This bill has been carefully written to make a compelling statement against any government that would challenge the sovereignty of another nation, and yet preserve the international aid and support to a people in need of stability.

We welcome Prime Minister Ehud Olmert this week to address a Joint Meeting of Congress. I hope that, while he is here, we may discuss actions that will serve to dissuade stakeholders from violence, and actions that will be a catalyst toward peace and stability in the Middle East.

One event occurred this week that fills me with hope: Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt, achieving the highest-level public talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in months. While the discussion focused on ideas for alleviating Palestinian humanitarian problems, both sides said it could lead to a first Olmert-Abbas summit. I am pleased that conversations between the governments continue, and I hope that we do, indeed, see such a summit in the coming months.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues who have participated in this debate and most especially my dear friend from California (Mr. LANTOS). He is always on the right side of all of these issues. Thank you, Mr. LANTOS, for your friendship and your leadership.

Madam Speaker, Hamas has a choice to make. It can be part of our broader post-9/11 policy of being with peace-loving, freedom-loving, democratic nations, or it can be with the Islamic terrorists. Yet, this is what Hamas' choice has been.

On its commitment to terrorism, the security forces head says, "We have only one enemy, they are Jews. I will continue to carry the rifle and pull the trigger whenever required to defend my people."

On refusing to recognize Israel, the Hamas spokesman says, "I believe that

the question of recognizing Israel will never be at any time on the agenda of the Hamas movement, the PLC or the Palestinian government.”

The foreign minister has said, “Even if the U.S. gave us all its money in return for recognizing Israel and giving up one inch of Palestine, we would never do so even if this costs us our lives. Our right to pursue the resistance will remain as long as the occupation continues over our lands and our holy sites.”

This is the leadership of Hamas. So we have a choice, Madam Speaker. Allow American taxpayer dollars to help support Hamas and other Islamic extremists or prevent such a manipulation of U.S. funds and ensure that they help promote our U.S. interests. I hope that our colleagues make the right decision tomorrow, and I hope that they will help us pass this bill.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to exercise restraint and perspective in our consideration of H.R. 4681.

President Bush’s Administration has already stated the bill is “unnecessary as the Executive branch already has ample authority to impose all its restrictions and it constrains the Executive branch’s flexibility to use sanctions, if appropriate, as tools to address rapidly changing circumstances.” With that kind of endorsement, we must ask ourselves what this legislation seeks to accomplish.

Additionally, the so-called Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006 limits diplomatic visas to members of the Palestinian Authority and would tie the hands of the foreign policy community when it comes time to negotiate peace between the PA and Israel. How many times has peace been brokered on American soil? Eliminating dialogue does not help to advance peace in the region. Peace only comes through mutual understanding.

Reasonable, even intelligent people can, and frequently do, disagree on how best to achieve peace in the Middle East, but, peace must be the goal of our foreign policy tools, whether they be by the stick or by the carrot.

Peace cannot come from punishing the Palestinian people. Even Israel’s Foreign Minister knows that. He states in Reuters, that, “Israel is prepared to release Palestinian tax revenues into a proposed aid mechanism being set up by Middle East mediators to avert the collapse of the Palestinian health sector . . .”

Instead, this legislation seeks to accomplish exactly what President Bush’s Administration and the Israeli Foreign Minister realize is counterproductive. I can tell you that after 30 years in Congress, I have seen legislation succeed and fail. This legislation is rigid, and unnecessary.

To put it plainly, when you take from people who already have nothing, you breed trouble, you don’t combat it. How easy will it be for Al-Qaeda to tell a man whose child is dying that the doctors are no longer there because the Americans took them away? How easy will it be to recruit a whole new generation of listless, impoverished youths?

Madam Speaker, I reject the idea that this legislation will combat terrorism. I reject it because we have history as our teacher.

The best nation-building, goodwill act that the United States has ever produced was the

Marshall Plan after World War II. By rebuilding Europe, America continues to be stronger. Yes, there were communist factions that the United States deplored, but we knew the need was real, and punishing the whole for the acts of the few was wrongheaded in the extreme.

Today, our actions must be motivated only by our intense desire to achieve a just and lasting peace. The compassion and charity of the American people should be reflected in this legislation, though sadly, they are silenced.

Madam Speaker, make no mistake, a vote cast in favor of H.R. 4681 is not a vote for peace, it is not a vote for America and it is not a vote that I will cast.

I urge my colleagues to cast their votes against this unwise and unproductive resolution.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation.

Earlier this year we watched as the Palestinian people went to the polls and voted into power a group that has employed car bombings, suicide bombings, mortar attacks, Qassam rocket attacks, and assassinations to achieve its stated goal of destroying Israel.

Last January, Hamas—the radical Islamic Palestinian organization that has sought to expel Jews and destroy the state of Israel to establish an Islamic Palestinian state based on Islamic law—won a majority of the seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council.

This group has been recognized by the United States and the European Union as a terrorist organization, and has committed hundreds of acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens since its creation in 1987.

I fully support the democratic process, but the views of Hamas are at odds with that process and its principles, and I do not believe we should continue providing funding to a group that’s stated purpose is the destruction of another democratic country.

This legislation sends a message to Hamas, but protects humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people by continuing U.S. assistance through NGOs and USAID.

H.R. 4681 also gives the President authority to waive many of the provisions of the bill if Hamas changes its stance or a new Palestinian Authority government emerges.

We cannot allow U.S. taxpayer dollars to get in the hands of a Hamas-controlled government to be used against Israel, and this bill will prevent that from happening while protecting humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people.

Madam Speaker, we need to send Hamas a message that we will not stand by while it continues to endorse terrorism and violence.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4681.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, in conclusion I reject the claim that our bill does not allow our government to support worthwhile projects for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. In fact, it makes every possible allowance for such projects, consistent with U.S. national interests.

First of all, our legislation makes an explicit exception for supporting the basic human health needs of the Palestinian people.

Second, it includes a waiver that requires the President only to certify that such assistance furthers our national security interests. That is not an unreasonably high standard to

meet, Madam Speaker, given our need to ensure that such projects do not in any way benefit Hamas, either politically or economically.

Nor, Madam Speaker, is it too much to ask that the consultation period be a bit longer than usual—25 days instead of 15—given this unprecedented situation, in which we would provide aid to a people whose government is controlled by terrorists. This is new territory, and we owe it to the taxpayers to proceed cautiously. Indeed, we cannot be sure that the new Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority will not exert control over schools and other institutions currently run by non-governmental organizations.

In this unusual and potentially explosive situation, it seems to me the very least we should ask is that our assistance to the Palestinian people clearly further our national security interests. This is our minimal obligation to our constituents.

We will insist on this basic standard, Madam Speaker, and we will give assistance for appropriate purposes—and I am quite sure the level of our assistance will continue to be greater than that of any Arab nation, including those who have been wallowing in ever-increasing windfall profits over the past three years.

Also, Madam Speaker, H.R. 4681 cuts off U.S. contact with those who represent terrorism, not those who represent democracy.

H.R. 4681 establishes a policy that the U.S. should not negotiate or have substantive contacts with terrorist organizations such as Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

H.R. 4681 explicitly recognizes that working with Palestinian moderates is in U.S. interest by allowing assistance to be provided to President Abbas to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

H.R. 4681 allows travel to the UN and gives the President an authority to waive this restriction to allow Palestinian moderates who are in the Palestinian Legislative Council to come to the United States to visit.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4681.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I attach an exchange of letters between Chairman HYDE and Chairman OXLEY concerning the bill H.R. 4681 “Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006.”

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
Washington, DC, May 15, 2006.

HON. HENRY J. HYDE,
Chairman, Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to confirm our mutual understanding with respect to the consideration of H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006. This bill was introduced on February 1, 2006, and referred to the Committees on International Relations, Judiciary and Financial Services. I understand that committee action has already taken place on the bill.

Section 9 of the bill as introduced falls within the jurisdiction of this Committee and could be the subject of a markup. However, in response to a request from this Committee, I thank you for your agreement to support in moving this legislation forward the modification of section 9 to remove from the certification requirement for international financial institutions a determination of the President that the Palestinian Authority has taken effective steps and

made demonstrable progress toward “ensuring democracy, the rule of law, and an independent judiciary, and adopting other reforms such as ensuring transparency and accountable governance.” Given the importance and timeliness of the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act, and your willingness to work with us regarding these issues, further proceedings on this bill in this Committee will no longer be necessary. However, I do so only with the understanding that this procedural route should not be construed to prejudice the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Financial Services on these provisions or any other similar legislation and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to my committee in the future. Furthermore, should these or similar provisions be considered in a conference with the Senate, I would expect members of the Committee on Financial Services to be appointed to the conference committee on these provisions.

Finally, I would ask that you include a copy of our exchange of letters in the Congressional Record during the consideration of this bill. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to call me. I thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

MICHAEL G. OXLEY,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, May 15, 2006.

Hon. MICHAEL G. OXLEY,
Chairman, House Committee on Financial Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter concerning H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-terrorism Act of 2006. As you noted, this bill has been referred to both of our committees as well as the Committee on the Judiciary. The Committee on International Relations has filed its report on the bill (109-462, Part D). I concur that provisions within Section 9 of the bill, as introduced, fall within the jurisdiction of this Committee and could be the subject of a markup in your committee. In order to expedite consideration of the bill by the House, I am willing to modify language in Section 9 relating to international financial institutions.

Based on the agreement to modify the manager's amendment to reflect our understanding, I appreciate your willingness to forgo a committee markup of the bill. I understand that this waiver should not be construed to prejudice the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Financial Services on these provisions or any other similar legislation and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to your committee in the future. I also agree that, should these or similar provisions be considered in a conference with the Senate, I will request the Speaker to name members of the Committee on Financial Services to the conference committee on these provisions.

As requested, I am inserting a copy of our exchange of letters in the Congressional Record during the deliberation on this bill. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

HENRY J. HYDE,
Chairman.

Mr. HYDE. Madam Speaker, the election of Hamas to a majority within the Palestinian Legislative Council and to the formation of a terrorist organization-led government in the Palestinian Authority poses a serious challenge to the United States and its allies. The Committee on International Relations has crafted an excellent response to that chal-

lenge. The bill which is before the House today is based on a proposal by our colleagues, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and TOM LANTOS.

The fact that the Palestinians voted, albeit by a plurality and not a majority, to put Hamas in power in the Palestinian Authority does not mean that the United States has to support that government. The Palestinian people must live with their own decisions; the United States need not, and should not, deal with, let alone support, terrorists—whether elected or not.

The legislation we have before us today provides a series of firewalls to prevent funding under the Foreign Assistance Act from flowing to the Palestinian Authority, from which it could support, or be seen to be supporting, the Hamas' terrorist leadership of the Palestinian Authority. It also provides for ways, subject to appropriate findings and consultation with the Congress, to get funding to the Palestinian people through the funding of non-governmental organizations.

We have provided exceptions, subject to certain certification and consultation requirements, for—among other things—assistance to the President of the Palestinian Authority. Mahmoud Abbas, the current Palestine President, is clearly not a terrorist, and having worked with him, we must make it possible for him to be protected, if required, and to be an effective negotiator. He still has a lot of institutional power under the Palestinian constitution, and he should be encouraged and enabled in exercising that power responsibly.

Under the Foreign Assistance Act, it will be possible to provide assistance, even to a terrorist-dominated Palestinian Authority, to deal with health emergencies such as avian flu. That sort of assistance should flow, and indeed flows today.

Finally, we establish, by statute, a policy that officials of the United States should not negotiate with members of terrorist organizations such as Hamas and that our government should oppose funding the Palestinian Authority, under the current circumstances, through International Financial Institutions.

With that brief outline of the bill's key points, Madam Speaker, I would like to express my thanks to Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. LANTOS for their efforts.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill and in support of peace and prosperity for all the people of the Middle East.

For years, the international community has tried to work with Israelis and Palestinians to forge a lasting peace in the Middle East. But the election of Hamas to control the Palestinian Parliament was a shock to all of us, and the announcement that their party would rule alone disheartening.

It remains to be seen whether participation in the democratic process can truly have a moderating effect on organizations that have supported terror. But until we see evidence to that effect, we are forced to deal with the world as it is—and in that world, Hamas is a terrorist organization.

Hamas uses violence against the innocent to further its political objectives. It does not accept the Roadmap, and it does not recognize the right of Israel to exist. Clearly, we cannot support—with our words or with our deeds—such an organization.

At the same time, we must recognize that most Palestinian people voted for Hamas not

because they support terror, but because they were desperate for a better quality of life. Hamas was providing basic services that their existing government was, for whatever reason, unable to provide.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that supporting this bill is not a rejection of the Palestinian people. America's position is clear: we support a two-state solution in accordance with the Roadmap.

And although we cannot and should not support Hamas, we must not abandon the Palestinian people. We must continue to support humanitarian aid—including health, education, and civil society initiatives—to ensure that the next generation of Palestinian children can know something other than violence, desperation, and hatred. Only then will we have any hope of achieving true peace.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4681, the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006. I was deeply concerned when I learned that the Hamas party was elected to take control of the Palestinian Authority. In FY 2005, the United States appropriated \$275 million to the West Bank and Gaza, with \$50 million of that funding going directly to the Palestinian Authority. But now, with Hamas in control of the Palestinian Authority, not one dollar of taxpayer money should go to this terrorist organization. The Palestinian people have every right to elect a terrorist organization to control their government—and the United States has every right to eliminate any financial assistance for it.

Under H.R. 4681, the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority would become eligible for United States foreign assistance only when Hamas renounces violence, dismantles the terrorist infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza, recognizes Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and accepts all previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

Hamas is responsible for countless homicide bombings that have killed hundreds of Israeli citizens. They have waged a terror war with the sole intent of murdering innocent people. Hamas is responsible for some of the most horrific terrorist attacks in recent years, including the March 2002 Passover Massacre that killed 30 people; the June 2002 Patt Junction Massacre which killed 19 people; and the 2003 Jerusalem Bus attack which killed 23 people. And recently, Hamas backed the April 2006 bombing of a Tel-Aviv restaurant that killed 9 people.

The Hamas Charter reads: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”

Hamas' victory further jeopardizes the peace process and creates greater instability in the region. I have no confidence in Hamas as a responsible leader of the Palestinian Authority nor do I believe the terrorist group wants peace with Israel. I urge the new government to proceed with caution and exercise restraint as it assumes power. Any provocation on their part will rightly be met with fierce resistance by the Israeli people.

H.R. 4681 does allow for humanitarian assistance, including providing funds to Fatah party member Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority. Under this bill, the Palestinian People may be eligible for additional aid on a case-by-case basis. While strong against Hamas, this bill is not need-blind to the people of Palestine. Just recently,

the United States sent \$10 million worth of pharmaceuticals to local clinics in the Gaza Strip on May 10.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, the founding charter of Hamas reads, "Israel will rise and will remain erect until Islam eliminates it as it had eliminated its predecessors." Madam Speaker, when your enemy says he is going to kill you, you better pay attention.

The Hamas victory in Palestinian parliamentary elections is of great concern to me and many others and presents a major challenge to the peace process. Hamas ran a campaign primarily based on cleaning out the corruption of the Fatah party. The Palestinian people responded to this pledge, but sadly in the process elected a terrorist government.

Unless Hamas recognizes the State of Israel's right to exist, ceases incitement and permanently disarms and dismantles their terrorist infrastructure, there is no hope for peace. The bottom line is neither our government nor Israel can meet with or provide assistance to a government led by this terrorist organization.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4681, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5384, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during debate on H.R. 4681), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-477) on the resolution (H. Res. 830) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5384) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPUBLICANS OFFERING ENERGY SOLUTIONS

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, many Americans are concerned about gasoline prices. They can rest assured that

House Republicans are focused on their concerns and are working very hard to lower the costs of gasoline over the mid and long term.

Republicans introduced and passed the Gasoline for America's Security Act which will ban price gouging and increase U.S. fuel supply by encouraging new refineries while at the same time promoting conservation efforts. The bill passed the House but still needs immediate attention in the United States Senate.

Republicans also passed the Energy Policy Act which reduces the cost of energy, reduces our reliance on foreign oil sources, encourages the use of alternative power sources and improves our electricity transmission capability. The bill also provides relief to our hardworking farmers by providing tax incentives and money for research and development by ethanol and biodiesel energy sources.

In addition, House Republicans have repeatedly supported legislation to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration.

The Democrats, on the other hand, have opposed building new refineries, have opposed drilling in ANWR and, in fact, voted against both of these bills.

Madam Speaker, Republicans have worked hard to address America's energy needs. And the Democrats? They vote "no" on every solution.

□ 2200

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. DRAKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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.)

UNDERAGE DRINKING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, underage drinking flies under the radar screen for most people. Alcohol is legal and widely accepted by adults, and yet many times we do not realize the devastation that this is causing for young people.

The average at which young people begin drinking is 12.7 years of age, and that age is declining annually.

Binge drinking is something that is very common among young people. On average, teenagers drink more by double what adults drink per sitting and per consumption.

Teens who start drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to be-

come addicted to alcohol than someone who starts drinking at age 21 or later.

Prevention efforts have been, I would say, very minimal. The Federal Government currently spends about 25 times more annually to combat youth drug use than to prevent underage alcohol use.

Alcohol is a gateway drug. Usually those who begin to use cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine do not start with those drugs. They start with alcohol. Television ads for alcohol products outnumber responsibility messages by 32-1. In other words, those ads that promote the consumption of alcohol are 32 times more prevalent than those ads that urge restraint, responsible drinking or discourage underage drinking. From 2001 to 2003, the industry spent \$2.5 billion on television advertising and promoting their product and only \$27 million, a mere fraction, on responsibility programs.

Underage drinkers currently account for 17 percent of all alcohol sales in the United States, and that is a huge margin. In my State, Nebraska, underage drinking accounts for 25 percent of all alcohol sales, and of course, those sales are all illegal.

Recent studies have found that heavy exposure of the adolescent brain to alcohol interferes with brain development. In other words, drinking at age 10 is qualitatively and quantitatively different than drinking at 21 or 25 or 30 or 35 or whatever because of developmental aspects.

This is a brain scan showing a brain scan of two 15-year-old young men. The scan on the right is a 15-year-old male, heavy drinker, a binge drinker, the person who is sober at the time of the brain scan, drinks regularly, binge drinker. The 15-year-old young person brain scan on the left is someone who is an abstainer, someone who does not drink at all. These young people were asked to perform memory tests, and you see the brain scan on the right showing minimal brain activity, as compared to the young person doing the same memory test on the left. So we see what excessive exposure to alcohol does to brain function.

Many young people drop out of school, who do not perform well in school, are simply people who are heavy drinkers. An estimated 3 million teenagers are full-blown alcoholics at the present time, and that is about six times more than those who are addicted to other kinds of drugs.

Alcohol kills six times more young people than all illicit drugs combined, all other illicit drugs. Underage drinking costs the United States roughly \$53 billion annually. So this is something, again, that I mention that oftentimes people are simply not aware of.

The bill that we have introduced in the House that we think is relevant to this problem is called the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act, the STOP Act, and what it would do is create a Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate efforts

directed at underage drinking. Right now, we have multiple programs aimed at different types of substance abuse alcohol is one of those. Some of those programs are in the Department of Justice, some are in Education, some are in Health and Human Services, but there is practically no coordination of these programs. Sometimes they duplicate each other. Sometimes these programs do not work well, and so we feel there needs to be some coordinating commission that coordinates all of these programs, particularly those that are aimed at alcohol abuse by young people.

It also authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults. You say, well, why would you direct it to adults. Well, the main thing is that the attitude of parents is the number one predictor as to whether a young person will abuse alcohol as an underage drinker or not, and so many parents many times feel if a young person is using alcohol, that pretty much prevents them from being involved with heroin or cocaine or methamphetamine, when exactly the opposite is true. Someone who starts abusing alcohol at an early age is much more apt to be addicted to all kinds of substance, and therefore, we feel there is a lot of drug awareness that has to occur with drugs.

It also provides additional resources to communities and colleges and universities to prevent underage drinking. At the present time, annually 1,700 young people, college students, die each year on the college campus because of alcohol abuse. It is the leading cause of death on the college campus. This is double the rate that we have had for deaths in Iraq. So we feel that this is critical.

Also, it increases Federal research and data collection on underage drinking.

THE SIXTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HEROIC BATTLE OF CRETE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise proudly today to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Crete, a World War II event of epic proportions that profoundly impacted on the determination of many countries to resist the aggression of Nazi Germany. This is a story of the sacrifices made by a battered but brave group of individuals thrown together in a combined effort to halt the domination of a smaller, weaker nation by a larger, more powerful aggressor.

Amidst the cataclysm that engulfed the countries of Europe at the time, it seems now preposterous that a small island dared to stand up to the aggressor to preserve its freedom and defend its honor. Today, more than half a century later, the heroic events that took place in the Battle of Crete remain etched in the memory of people around the world. In

commemoration of this anniversary, and for the benefit of future generations, I will share a brief account of these events as they unfolded.

In early April 1941, the German army rushed to the aid of their defeated ally, Italy, and invaded Greece. Following a valiant struggle, Greek forces had been pushed entirely off the continent and were forced to take refuge on the island of Crete.

The German army then looked covetously across the sea to Crete because of the British airfields on the island, which could be used by the Allies for air strikes against the oil field of Rumania, thereby denying this vital war commodity to Hitler's forces now preparing for their attack on Russia. If captured, it would also provide air and sea bases from which the Nazis could dominate the eastern Mediterranean and launch air attacks against Allied forces in northern Africa. In fact, the Nazi high command envisioned the capture of Crete to be the first of a series of assaults leading to the Suez Canal. Hitler intended a short, one month, campaign, starting in March. On successful completion, his troops would be reassembled to Russia.

Crete's defenses at the time had been badly neglected due to the deployment of Allied forces in North Africa. GEN Bernard Freyberg of the New Zealand Division was appointed by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill as commander of a small contingent of Allied troops which had been dispatched to the island a few months before and re-enforced by additional troops who had retreated from the Greek mainland.

Early on the morning of May 20, 1941, Crete became the theater of the first and largest German airborne operation of the war. The skies above Crete were filled with more than 8,000 Nazi paratroopers, landing in a massive invasion of the island, which was subjected to heavy bombing and attacks in what became known as "Operation Mercury."

Waves of bombers pounded the Allied positions followed by a full-scale airborne assault. Elite paratroopers and glider-borne infantry units fell upon the rag-tag Allied soldiers and were met with ferocious resistance from the Allied troops and the Cretan population.

Although General Freyberg had decided not to arm the Cretans because they were believed to be anti-royalist, they fought bravely with whatever was at hand during the invasion. As soon as the battle broke out, the people of Crete volunteered to serve in the militia. Centuries of oppression and several revolts against Venetians and Turks had taught them that freedom is won and preserved by sacrifice, and there was hardly a family without a gun stashed somewhere in the house. For the first time, the Germans met stiff partisan resistance.

War-seasoned men joined the regular troops in the effort to repel the invader. Old men, women and children participated and used whatever makeshift weapons they could find. They pointed their antiquated guns at the descending German paratroopers. They used sticks, sickles and even their bare hands to fight those soldiers already on the ground. Most of them were illiterate villagers but their intuition, honed by the mortal risk they were facing, led them to fight with courage and bravery. "Aim for the legs and you'll get them in the heart," was the popular motto that summarized their hastily acquired battle experience.

Seven days later, the defenders of Crete—though clinging to their rocky defensive positions—knew that they would soon be overrun. The evacuation order was given, and nearly 18,000 men were rescued. These valiant survivors had bought the Allies a week's precious time free of Nazi air and sea attacks based from Crete. More importantly, they inflicted severe losses on the German airborne forces, the showpieces of the Nazi army. Although well-armed and thoroughly equipped, the Germans didn't break the Cretans' love of freedom.

Although the Germans captured the island in 10 days, they paid a heavy price. Of the 8,100 paratroopers involved in this operation, close to 4,000 were killed and 1,600 were wounded. So injured were the German units that they never again attempted an airborne assault of the magnitude launched at Crete. Hitler may have won the Battle of Crete, but he lost the war. The German victory proved a hollow one, as Crete became the graveyard of the German parachute troops. In fact, it is a lesson taught in almost every major military academy in the world on what not to do.

In retaliation for the losses they incurred, the Nazis spread punishment, terror and death on the innocent civilians of the island. More than 2,000 Cretans were executed during the first month alone and thousands more later. Despite these atrocities, for the 4 years following the Allied withdrawal from the island, the people of Crete put up a courageous guerrilla resistance, aided by a few British and Allied officers and troops who remained. Those involved were known as the Andartes (the Rebels).

Cretan people of all ages joined or aided the Andartes. Children would pile rocks in the roads to slow down the German convoys. They even carried messages in their schoolbooks because it was the only place that the German soldiers never looked. These messages contained information critical to the Andartes who were hiding in the mountains and would come down for midnight raids or daytime sabotages.

The German terror campaign was meant to break the fighting spirit and morale of the Andartes. Besides the random and frequent executions, German soldiers used other means to achieve their goal. They leveled many buildings in the towns and villages, destroyed religious icons, and locked hundreds of Cretans in churches for days without food or water, but nothing worked. These actions only made the Cretans more ferocious in their quest for freedom.

Even in the face of certain death while standing in line to be executed, Cretans did not beg for their lives. This shocked the German troops. Kurt Student, the German paratrooper commander who planned the invasion, said of the Cretans, "I have never seen such a defiance of death."

Finally, the Cretan people participated in one of the most daring operations that brought shame and humiliation to the German occupation forces and exhilaration and hope to the enslaved peoples of Europe. Major-General Von Kreipe, commander of all German forces in Crete, was abducted from his own headquarters in April 1944 and transferred to a POW camp in England.

The German troops had never encountered such resistance. Hitler had initially sent 12,000 troops to Crete, thinking that the occupation

would be swift. By the end of the 3½ years of occupation, Hitler had sent a total of 100,000 troops, to confront a little more than 5,000 Cretan Andarte fighters. These German troops could have been deployed somewhere else. More German troops were lost during the occupation of Crete than in France, Yugoslavia and Poland combined.

Most importantly, as a result of the battle in Crete, Hitler's master plan to invade Russia before the coming of winter had to be postponed, which resulted in the deaths of many German troops who were not properly prepared to survive the harsh Russian winter.

As we Americans know from our history, freedom does not come without a price. For their gallant resistance against the German invasion and occupation of their island, Cretans paid a stiff price. Within the first 5 months of the Battle of Crete, 3,500 Cretans were executed and many more were killed in the ensuing 3½ years of occupation.

Mr. Speaker, there are historical reasons why we Americans appreciate the sacrifices of the Cretan people in defending their island during the Battle of Crete. We have a history replete with similar heroic events starting with our popular revolt that led to the birth of our Nation more than two centuries ago.

We must always remember that as long as there are people willing to sacrifice their lives for the just cause of defending the integrity and freedom of their country, there is always hope for a better tomorrow. May we take inspiration from the shining example of the people of Crete in ensuring that this is indeed the case.

FORMER STATE SENATOR JOE BURTON AND GEORGIA'S VOTER ID LAW

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my State of Georgia on its new voter ID law which hopefully will be fully implemented soon. Additionally, I rise today to honor a friend and former Republican colleague in the Georgia State Senate, Joe Burton of DeKalb County.

Though retired, Senator Burton was one of the legislature's greatest proponents of voter identification reform, as well one of the legislative architects of this reform. While he may no longer be in the Georgia State Senate, the passage of this voter ID reform legislation can be directly attributed to his efforts.

Madam Speaker, Senator Burton, like most of us, realized open and fair elections are critical to the preservation of our democratic form of government. Every citizen has not only the right but, in many ways, the obligation to choose their leaders through the electoral process.

However, to ensure the integrity of our elections, we must verify those who vote are actually registered voters and the person they claim to be. Preventing election fraud and taking reasonable precautions to do so are fundamental in reassuring us all that our election results are a legitimate expression of the will of the people.

Last year, Madam Speaker, the Georgia legislature passed, and Governor Sonny Perdue signed into law a comprehensive voter identification bill. This bill requires an individual to produce a photo ID in order to vote rather than 1 of 17 different forms, including utility bills, bank statements, mail, and various non-photo licenses, which in no way guarantee that the possessor of the document is actually the identified person.

Madam Speaker, this law hit a slight speed bump when a Federal appeals court maintained an injunction on the voter ID law pending certain changes. Thankfully in the opening weeks of this year's legislative session, the Georgia legislature and the governor quickly passed a bill making all the necessary changes ensuring every Georgian can obtain a free photo ID in each and every one of Georgia's 159 counties.

Madam Speaker, this path to reform has not been an easy one. Legislators on both sides of this issue feel very passionately, and throughout this debate, emotions ran high, and they will probably continue to run high until these reforms are enacted and the law's opponents can see these reforms actually help, not hinder, voters.

While this law may have a few more legal tests to pass, it has been reviewed by the Department of Justice throughout the process. I remain confident that, given a fair hearing, this law will stand all legal tests and will provide all Georgians with a more fair electoral process.

Madam Speaker, strengthening voter confidence in the electoral process will only encourage more people to vote. I know this, and I know Senator Burton knew this when he helped lay the foundation for this reform in the Georgia Senate. Now, with a Republican majority in the Georgia legislature and a Republican governor, these nonpartisan reforms will become a reality to strengthen the integrity of our elections for the sake of all Georgians.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. George MILLER of California 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 gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL 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 gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY 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 gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE 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 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.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman 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 SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ROHRABACHER 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 gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio 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 gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK 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 gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DUNCAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and May 23 on account of official business in the district.

Mr. CAPUANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of his son's graduation from Boston College.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and May 23 on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Mr. RUPPERSBURGER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. SNYDER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. GIBBONS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and May 23 until 5:00 p.m. on account of personal reasons.

Mr. GRAVES (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. REHBERG (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today through 5:00 p.m. May 23 on account of personal reasons.

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. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STUPAK, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GINGREY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, May 23, 24, 25, and 26.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, May 24.

Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, May 23, 24, and 25.

Mr. ROHRBACHER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 23, 2006, at 9 a.m., for morning hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7598. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: FuelSolutions (TM) Cask System Revision 4 (RIN: 3150-AH86) received April 25, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7599. A letter from the Deputy Director, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Administrative Changes to Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Regulations Due to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 [T.D. TTB-44] (RIN: 1513-AA80) received April 26, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7600. A letter from the Administrator, Office of Workforce Security, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes to UI Performs — received April 4, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7601. A letter from the Federal Register Certifying Officer, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Withholding of District of Columbia, State, City and County Income or Employment Taxes by Federal Agencies (RIN: 1510-AB06) received January 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7602. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Announcement of Rules Implementing American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 Section 415 Modifications of the Subpart F Treatment of Aircraft and Vessel Leasing Income [Notice 2006-48] received May 4, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7603. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Administrative, Procedural, and Miscellaneous (Rev. Proc. 2006-20) received April 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7604. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Low-Income Housing Credit (Rev. Rul. 2006-14) received April 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7605. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicare Program; Conditions for Payment of Power Mobility Devices, including Power Wheelchairs and Power-Operated Vehicles [CMS-3017-F] (RIN: 0938-AM74) received April 5, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

7606. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicare Program; Medicare Graduate Medical Education Affiliation Provisions for Teaching Hospitals in Certain Emergency Situations [CMS-1531-IFC] (RIN: 0938-A035) received April 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

7607. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicare Program; Payment for Respiratory Assist Devices With Bi-level Capability and a Backup Rate [CMS-1167-F] (RIN: 0938-AN02) received January 30, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly

to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

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. BARTON of Texas: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 5359. A bill to amend the automobile fuel economy provisions of title 49, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to set fuel economy standards for passenger automobiles based on one or more vehicle attributes (Rept. 109-475). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 5441. A bill making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. 109-476). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 830. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5384) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. 109-477). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 9. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965; with an amendment (Rept. 109-478). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BARTON of Texas (for himself and Mr. DINGELL):

H.R. 5438. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to transfer the National Disaster Medical System to the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. SMITH of Texas:

H.R. 5439. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide for limitation of remedies in cases in which the copyright owner cannot be located, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas:

H.R. 5440. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to clarify the jurisdiction of the Federal courts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 5441. A bill making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

By Mr. EHLERS (for himself, Mr. HOLT, Mrs. BIGGERT, and Mr. BOEHLERT):

H.R. 5442. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require the use of science assessments in the calculation of adequate yearly progress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. NEY (for himself, Ms. WATERS, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. SHAYS):

H.R. 5443. A bill to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KNOLLENBERG:

H.R. 5444. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PRICE of Georgia (for himself, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 5445. A bill to provide clarification relating to credit monitoring services; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. JINDAL:

H.R. 5446. A bill to direct the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to report to the Congress on the effects of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma on the fisheries and fish habitat of the United States; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. JINDAL:

H.R. 5447. A bill to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to establish a regional economic transition program to provide immediate disaster relief assistance to the fishermen, charter fishing operators, United States fish processors, and owners of related fishery infrastructure affected by a catastrophic regional fishery disaster, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. JINDAL:

H.R. 5448. A bill to establish the Louisiana Hurricane and Flood Protection Council for the improvement of hurricane and flood protection in Louisiana; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. LATOURETTE:

H.R. 5449. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify bargaining requirements for proposed changes to the personnel management system of the Federal Aviation Administration; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. EHLERS (for himself, Mr. BOEHLERT, and Mr. GILCREST):

H.R. 5450. A bill to provide for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, 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 Mrs. MILLER of Michigan (for herself and Mr. REHBERG):

H.R. 5451. A bill to prevent congressional reapportionment distortions; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. DUNCAN (for himself, Mr. PITTS, Mr. GINGREY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. WAMP, Mr. GOODE, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HAYES, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. EVERETT, Mr. SOUDER, Mr.

DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. FORD, Mr. HERGER, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, Ms. FOX, Mr. POE, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. BUYER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. CANNON, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. JENKINS, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

H. Con. Res. 411. Concurrent resolution commemorating the anniversary of, commending, and reaffirming the national motto of the United States on the 50th anniversary of its formal adoption; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. POMBO, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CANNON, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. ACKERMAN):

H. Con. Res. 412. Concurrent resolution commemorating the thirty-ninth anniversary of the reunification of the city of Jerusalem; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. KAPTUR:

H. Res. 831. A resolution to support the goals of an annual National Time-Out Day to promote patient safety and optimal outcomes in the operating room; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 98: Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
 H.R. 115: Mr. DOYLE.
 H.R. 136: Mr. WHITFIELD.
 H.R. 202: Mr. SANDERS.
 H.R. 558: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 559: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
 H.R. 676: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. MEEHAN.
 H.R. 713: Mr. FORD.
 H.R. 745: Mr. EDWARDS.
 H.R. 759: Mrs. MCCARTHY.
 H.R. 881: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
 H.R. 1227: Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
 H.R. 1249: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1315: Mr. CONAWAY.
 H.R. 1425: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 1548: Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Ms. LEE, and Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 1558: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
 H.R. 1578: Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 1598: Mr. BOSWELL.
 H.R. 1749: Mr. FORD.
 H.R. 2121: Ms. HOOLEY.
 H.R. 2328: Mr. ISTOOK.
 H.R. 2498: Mr. BOOZMAN.
 H.R. 2808: Mr. KLINE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SABO, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. WAMP, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. BUYER, Mr. CHOCOLA, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. GUTKNECHT, Mr. LINDER, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. TERRY, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. WU, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. TANNER, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. JENKINS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. HART, Mr. WALSH, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. PETRI, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. PETRI, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. REGULA, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts,

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. MCNUITY, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. PORTER, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. KING of New York, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. EHLERS, and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 2939: Mr. MARSHALL.
 H.R. 2963: Ms. MCKINNEY.
 H.R. 3063: Ms. LEE.
 H.R. 3282: Mr. CRENSHAW.
 H.R. 3547: Ms. CARSON.
 H.R. 4023: Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. COBLE, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 4033: Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. COBLE, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. EHLERS.
 H.R. 4197: Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Mr. SERRANO.
 H.R. 4259: Mr. HIGGINS.
 H.R. 4704: Ms. LEE.
 H.R. 4747: Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SHERWOOD, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PLATTS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. CARSON, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. GOODE, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
 H.R. 4755: Mr. FORD.
 H.R. 4854: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
 H.R. 4890: Mr. CRENSHAW and Mr. HYDE.
 H.R. 4942: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.
 H.R. 4953: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
 H.R. 4974: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 4982: Ms. HART.
 H.R. 4992: Mr. EDWARDS.
 H.R. 4997: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
 H.R. 5067: Mr. ALEXANDER.
 H.R. 5134: Mr. SOUDER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
 H.R. 5150: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FARR, and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.
 H.R. 5159: Mr. PLATTS and Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire.
 H.R. 5201: Mr. HEFLEY.
 H.R. 5230: Mr. WELDON of Florida.
 H.R. 5249: Mr. FERGUSON.
 H.R. 5250: Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 5289: Mr. ALEXANDER.
 H.R. 5291: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. ALEXANDER.
 H.R. 5316: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
 H.R. 5333: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. SNYDER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 5346: Mrs. SCHMIDT.
 H.R. 5347: Ms. HARRIS and Mr. RENZI.
 H.R. 5399: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mrs. EMERSON.
 H.R. 5401: Mr. POMEROY and Mr. CARNAHAN.
 H.R. 5423: Mr. TOWNS.
 H. Con. Res. 338: Mr. PENCE, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. POMBO, and Mr. SHIMKUS.
 H. Con. Res. 380: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
 H. Con. Res. 393: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Ms. MCKINNEY.
 H. Con. Res. 401: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Ms. ESHOO.
 H. Con. Res. 408: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BASS, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TIAHRT, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. KUHL of New York.

H. Res. 466: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
 H. Res. 763: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H. Res. 784: Mr. PAYNE.
 H. Res. 785: Mr. WAXMAN.
 H. Res. 790: Ms. MCKINNEY.
 H. Res. 799: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. McNULTY.
 H. Res. 826: Mr. WOLF and Mr. SABO.

minister the National Animal Identification System.

H.R. 5384

OFFERED BY: MR. LATHAM

AMENDMENT No. 16: Strike section 741 (page 78, lines 8 through 17), and insert the following new section:

SEC. 741. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act shall be used to pay salaries and expenses of personnel who implement or administer section 508(e)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(e)(3)) or any regulation, bulletin, policy, or agency guidance issued pursuant to such section for the 2007 and the 2008 reinsurance years, except that funds are available to administer such section for policies for those producers who, before the date of the enactment of this Act, had in effect a crop year 2006 crop insurance policy from a company eligible for the opportunity to offer

a premium reduction under such section for the 2006 reinsurance year.

H.R. 5384

OFFERED BY: MR. KENNEDY OF MINNESOTA

AMENDMENT No. 17: Page 9, line 10, insert after the first dollar amount the following: “(reduced by \$500,000)”.

Page 19, line 8, insert after the first dollar amount the following: “(increased by \$500,000)”.

H.R. 5384

OFFERED BY: MR. HOLT

AMENDMENT No. 18: Page 5, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(reduced by \$3,145,000)”.

Page 17, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$3,145,000)”.

Page 17, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$3,145,000)”.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 5384

OFFERED BY: MR. PAUL

AMENDMENT No. 15: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new sections:

SEC. ____ . None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to implement or ad-