

become addicted to alcohol than someone who starts drinking at age 21. Yet the Federal Government spends about 25 times more annually to combat youth drug use than to prevent underage alcohol use. In other words, we spend \$1.8 billion on combating heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, compared to \$71 million for underage drinking.

Most people know that alcohol is a gateway drug. It leads to all of these other drugs directly, and it appears to be much more fatal and more dangerous when you look at the raw numbers.

Television ads for alcohol products outnumber responsibility messages by 32 to 1. In other words, you will see 32 ads promoting alcohol, and many of those ads are very attractive to young people, for every one that talks about responsible use of alcohol. From 2001 to 2003, the alcohol industry spent \$2.5 billion on television advertising their product, and only \$27 million on responsibility programs.

Underage drinkers currently account for 17 percent of all alcohol sales in the United States; and in my State, Nebraska, underage drinkers consume 25 percent of the alcohol sold.

Young people tend to binge drink. They do not drink socially. Ninety-two percent of the alcohol consumed by 12- to 14-year-olds is consumed when they are having five or more drinks in a row, which is called binge drinking, or, more often, drinking to get drunk.

Recent studies have found that heavy exposure of the adolescent brain to alcohol interferes with brain development. We will take a look at this poster. On the right is a young person 15 years of age who abstains from alcohol, who was asked to do a comprehensive memory test. On the left is a young person who is a binge drinker who is sober at the time and asked to do the same test. You see the amount of cortical activity, the amount of brain activity firing in the young person who is an abstainer compared to the one who uses and abuses alcohol.

So there is quite a difference in this regard, and I would present a hypothesis of mine and that is that a great many young people who drop out, a great number of young people who do very poorly in school are affected dramatically by alcohol, binge drinking, and alcohol abuse.

There are a couple of other things on this poster that I think are worthy of note. There are roughly 3 million teenagers who today are full-blown alcoholics. Alcohol, as we mentioned, kills about six times more people than all other drugs combined. The total cost of underage drinking to the country is \$53 billion a year. \$53 billion a year. It is a huge expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, we have introduced legislation, Congresswoman ROYBAL-ALLARD, Congressman WAMP, Congressman WOLF and Congresswoman DELAURO, and Senators DEWINE and DODD have introduced the Sober Truth

on Prevention of Underage Drinking, the STOP Act, which would, number one, create a Federal agency coordinating all of the Federal programs aimed at underage drinking. Right now we have underage drinking programs spread across 12 agencies. They are not coordinated. Sometimes they duplicate each other and are not very effective. So we would want those coordinated.

Secondly, it authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults. The number one indicator of whether a young person will use alcohol and abuse alcohol is parental attitudes. So many parents really believe the myth if a young person is using alcohol, then they will not use marijuana, they will not use cocaine, they will not use heroin, when exactly the opposite is true. Because anymore, a person that abuses one substance will abuse another, and alcohol usually leads to further abuse.

The Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act, STOP Act, would:

Create a Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate the efforts and expertise across agencies for underage drinking;

Authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults;

Parents are the number one influence on underage drinking;

Parents & friends purchase 65 percent.

Provide additional resources to communities and colleges and universities to prevent underage drinking;

1,700 college students die each year

70,000 rapes or sexual assaults

Increases Federal research and data collection on underage drinking.

So we hope that we can have support for this act. We think it is important, and we urge its passage.

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.)

PROBLEMS WITH HOUSE OFFSHORE DRILLING BILL

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the offshore oil drilling legislation that passed the House last month has a lot of problems. One of its biggest failings is that the bill overrides and ignores the long-standing, bipartisan objection to new drilling off the California coast.

The people of California have repeatedly made it clear that they oppose this wrong-headed approach. In fact, opposition to this legislation is unanimous in California that even in the middle of a highly charged race for Governor, the Democrats and Repub-

licans are on the same page on this one issue. State Treasurer Phil Angelides, a Democrat, opposes the House bill, pointing out that it would remove the critical protections for California's coastline and also financially punish States that decide to protect their environment and coastal economies by continuing to oppose offshore oil drilling.

The Republican Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, sent another letter to the Senate this week restating his opposition in no uncertain terms. In his newest letter, which I am submitting for the RECORD, he writes: "Our coast is not for sale, and no amount of promises of money or other incentives will alter my position on that."

Well, I am disappointed that so many Members of the House voted against California's interests last month. Our State's Senators have strong records of spelling for the people of California, so I am not concerned about them. But I do want to make sure that the Senators from around the country realize that any legislation that opens the California coast to drilling will be a non-starter in our State and should be rejected.

As the Governor wrote: "Anything short of upholding the current moratorium in perpetuity would be unacceptable to Californians." Governor Schwarzenegger also wrote something very interesting: "California has the most aggressive energy efficiency measures in the Nation. Because of our efforts, California's per capita energy use has remained nearly flat, while the nationwide energy use has increased by nearly 50 percent."

What the Governor is telling the people of this Nation is that had you made the same choices that we made starting back in 1974 with the first fuel crisis, you would have been able to save a huge amount of energy in this country. While California has continued to grow, our per capita use has remained flat, and that is 50 percent better than the rest of the Nation. That means that not only do California consumers save a great deal of energy and they reduce the pollution to the atmosphere; they also save a great deal of money.

As the other body considers the legislation that was passed out of this House this last week, I hope they will remember that energy conservation and innovative alternative approaches will guarantee us far more energy independence in the future than the short-sighted House bill that will require the ruining of the coastlines of this great Nation.

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.)

LEAVE ISSUE OF SAME-SEX
MARRIAGE TO THE STATES

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, today we debated a constitutional amendment drafted not to protect my marriage or my family, I see no reasonable way to argue it would, but rather to explicitly deny a portion of our society the right to marry and the benefits that accompany that kind of partnership.

I do not advocate the legalization of gay marriage, but our Constitution is simply not the proper place to set this kind of social policy. I believed back in 1996 when I voted for the Defense of Marriage Act and I still believe today the decision about whether to recognize gay marriage should be left to the States.

I can't help but wonder why we are doing this. What are we so afraid of? Gay men and women pass through our lives every day. They are wonderful teachers and leaders and role models who happen to be gay, and sometimes we don't even know they are gay. There are brave men and women buried in Arlington National Cemetery who happen to be gay.

I wouldn't be a Member of Congress today if it weren't for an extraordinary teacher I had in high school 40 years ago. I learned years later he was gay and that he had to commute from Connecticut to Washington, D.C. to be with his partner every weekend, in part to protect his privacy and his job.

When I went to college, my understanding of gay people was impacted again by my wife's best friend. One day she told us that she, too, like my wife and I, had found the love of her life. We were eager to meet the boyfriend she was so madly in love with. But we soon learned her love was not a he, but a she. Once we got over our surprise and our ways of thinking about relationships, we were able to sincerely rejoice in the joy they brought each other because we knew what a dear and good person our friend is.

My perception of gay people evolved further during my first campaign for Congress when I worked with a magnificent young man named Carl Brown. He became my friend, and he gave me another gay face to know. Carl has since passed away from AIDS, but I remember him as a person of exceptional dignity and grace.

My teacher, my wife's best friend, and Carl helped me understand their lives and I think made me a better person in the process.

The Constitution of the United States, which established our government, grants us free speech and gives all citizens the right to vote, should not be dishonored by this effort to write in discrimination. I am clearly sensitive to some of my colleagues'

concerns about potential biblical and social implications of legalized same-sex marriage, but I oppose this proposed amendment because I believe the Constitution is not the proper instrument to set or reject such policy. That debate should happen in our State legislatures.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICAN NEEDS A NEW DIRECTION TO COMBAT TERRORISM

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because I believe that America needs a new direction to secure our country and combat terrorism. We need a new direction so our children and our children's children will live in a safer and more secure world.

On May 1, 2003, President Bush declared that Iraq is free, that major combat operations in Iraq have ended. Yet in more than 3 years since, our world has not become a safer place, and our military families continue to suffer. More than 130,000 U.S. troops are serving in Iraq and more than 10,500 members of the selected Reserves have been deployed more than three times. Ninety-seven percent of the National Guard combat and special operations battalions have been mobilized since September 11, 2001, and the average tour of duty for National Guard members is 342 days.

□ 1945

Two thousand five hundred fifty-three of our men and women have paid the ultimate price. That includes 11 members that I represent from East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley: Private First Class Jose Casanova, age 23. Lance Corporal Manuel Ceniceors, age 23. Lance Corporal Francisco Martinez Flores, age 21. Sergeant First Class Kelly Bolor, age 38. Lance Corporal Benjamin Gonzalez, age 23. Corporal Jorge Gonzalez, age 20. Sergeant Atanacio Haro-Marin, age 27. Specialist Leroy Harris-Kelly, III, age 20. Corporal Stephen Johnson, age 24. Corporal Rudy Salas, age 20. And, lastly, Marine Corporal Carlos Arellano, age 22.

Another 10,327 have been injured, not including more than 8,500 who have been injured so badly that they cannot return to action. I strongly support our servicemen and women that have performed admirably under these very difficult conditions. These conditions

have been worsened by the lack of needed supplies, and our men and women continue to serve without a plan to secure the peace.

Today, the Government Accountability Office testified that Congress had appropriated \$430 billion to the Department of Defense for the global war on terror. According to the GAO, and I quote: "Neither the DOD nor the Congress reliably know how much the war is costing Americans."

The GAO also testified that the U.S. can expect to incur significant costs for an unspecified time in the future, requiring decision-makers to consider difficult trade-offs. As the Nation faces increasing long-range fiscal challenges, we have seen some of the trade-offs already.

Critical programs remain unfunded and underfunded by this administration, and our veterans and their families are the ones that are suffering. There are \$3 billion worth of gaps in needed services for our Nation's veterans. The number of new veterans waiting for health care appointments at the VA, the Veterans Administration, has risen by 400 percent over the last 2 years.

Funding for Homeland Security is suffering too. And as a result, because of the administration's misguided policies, first responder grants have been slashed by 59 percent, and only 5 percent of containers entering the U.S. ports are screened, and there are 800 fewer border patrol agents than what was authorized in the 9/11 Commission Act.

Afghanistan is also suffering from the Bush administration's misguided policies. Secretary Rumsfeld wrote in a letter today that the United States maintains its strong commitment to Afghan's success. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership, he said.

Yet the people in Afghanistan are not feeling that commitment. Between November 2003 and April 2006, the number of insurgents has quadrupled from 5,000 to 20,000. The average number of daily attacks by insurgents has climbed by more than 70.

The Afghan Defense Minister recently stated that Afghanistan needs five times the number of security forces to address the issue of a resurgent Taliban. And without them, Afghanistan is in real danger of collapse. If his warnings were not enough, just today the Taliban recaptured two towns in the southern province of Pakistan's border.

Despite the increasing conflict in Afghanistan, despite the lack of a plan for peace in Iraq, despite the lack of accountability for government contracts, and despite the trade-offs on homeland security, important first responder programs, the administration wants the United States to stay the course.

I could not disagree more. War and military might alone does not show strength in foreign policy rooted in a