

We all remember the firefighters who lost their lives in the Twin Towers. And we remember the havoc in New Orleans during Katrina.

In light of that, Mr. Speaker, in light of the Republican leadership's unwillingness to move legislation on inter-operability, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1251, offered by Mrs. LOWEY of New York.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the settled guidelines previously cited, that request cannot be entertained.

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#### IRAN

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Hans Blix, former chief U.N. weapons inspector, cautioned the U.S. before it attacked Iraq that Iraq was not an imminent threat. He was right. Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction. Now America is more vulnerable than ever because of this administration's pathological deceptions.

Yesterday, Dr. Blix said Iran is not an imminent threat and we should open up direct talks with Iran, not attack Iran. He is right again.

Last week Intelligence Committee staff reports' deliberate distortion of the degree of Iran's uranium enrichment was exposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Nevertheless, according to credible reports, the administration has had covert operations in Iran, selected 1,500 bombing targets, and is preparing a naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, which will set the stage not only for a war against Iran, but also for \$5 a gallon gasoline.

Meanwhile, the State Department and the Department of Defense will not even appear in classified briefings to discuss the plans for a war against Iran.

Wake up, America. There is another war being planned.

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#### BIOFUEL ACT

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on this House to pass legislation to end America's dependency on foreign oil.

Earlier this week, I attended the opening of Piedmont Biofuels in Pittsboro, North Carolina. This plant is already producing thousands of gallons of B-100 biodiesel made from soybeans grown in my home State. This plant is a model for the future of our energy independence.

The technology exists today that can turn our crops into biofuels. What we don't have is the infrastructure to facilitate the use of these fuels.

My colleagues and I have introduced H.R. 5372, the BIOFUEL Act, to ramp up this infrastructure immediately.

The legislation will facilitate the increased production of vehicles that run on biofuels and provide tax credits and incentives to gas station owners who update their equipment to be able to sell these fuels.

The legislation also increases research and development into biofuels, investing in cutting-edge technology that will utilize energy from sources such as agricultural waste and byproducts.

Now is the time to end America's dependency on foreign oil. The answer to our energy needs is growing in our fields.

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#### THE DO-LESS-THAN-DO-NOTHING CONGRESS; NO RECESS UNTIL ACTION TAKEN ON 9/11 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, one duty we share as Members of this body is a solemn responsibility to make certain that we do everything possible to ensure the safety of the American citizens that we are elected to represent. Unfortunately, when it comes to homeland security and learning from the tragedy of September 11, this Republican Congress has failed miserably.

The independent and bipartisan 9/11 Commission put forth a report with recommendations for keeping our Nation secure. Despite their suggestions, the Bush administration and the Republican Congress have failed to pass or implement all of the recommendations for homeland security. In fact, the commission recently gave the administration and this Republican Congress five Fs and 12 Ds on homeland security.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats have been fighting to pass the 9/11 Commission's recommendations and to ensure the safety of our ports and airports. However, Republicans are preparing to adjourn for the campaign season without taking up these security measures.

So I ask unanimous consent to take up and pass and implement all of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the settled guidelines previously cited, that request cannot be entertained.

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#### RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE; WE SHOULD INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE TODAY

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when are the House Republicans going to allow a minimum wage bill to come up on the floor where we actually vote on the minimum wage? It needs to become law.

As health care, groceries, energy, housing costs skyrocket for average consumers, House Republicans would rather help their CEO friends than average Americans who are just trying to make ends meet.

Today, full-time workers who earn the minimum wage are only bringing home \$10,700 a year. The average corporate CEO makes that much money during his first 4 hours of work for the year. This is simply not fair. Yet, for months, House Republicans have refused to allow a clean minimum wage vote on this House floor. Do House Republicans really expect that a family can live on less than \$11,000 a year?

The Democrats want to take the Nation in a new direction, one where the needs of all Americans are addressed. We want a clean vote on the minimum wage.

And, Mr. Speaker, in light of the Republican leadership's unwillingness to move legislation on the minimum wage, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 2429, the legislation to increase the minimum wage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the settled guidelines previously cited, that request cannot be entertained.

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#### HIV/AIDS

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, recent estimates indicate that there are 40,000 new AIDS infections each year in the United States.

African American men and women were disproportionately overrepresented among new AIDS diagnoses in 2004. African American women accounted for 67 percent of new AIDS diagnoses among women; and African American men accounted for nearly half, 44 percent, of new AIDS diagnoses among men. Today, African American women represent a staggering 71 percent of all the AIDS diagnoses among women.

Though African Americans comprised 17 percent of the teenage population, age 13 to 19 years of age, by the end of 2004, they represented 70 percent of all the HIV/AIDS cases among teenagers, age 13 to 19 years of age. Just more than one in ten, 13 percent and 15 percent, were represented by Latino and whites respectively in the same age groups.

The Congressional Black Caucus has decided that we are going to increase our efforts. Since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the Congressional Black Caucus has and will continue to assume a leadership role in addressing the issue through AIDS education and other actions. We are increasing our efforts to insist on personal responsibility, mandatory testing, outreach and education, advocating for increased funding, more legislation.

I have introduced H.R. 6038. This is a bill that would require routine testing of those entering prison, with counseling and treatment and referrals and follow-ups for those who are leaving.

We are going to conquer this epidemic.

#### REPUBLICANS PAD THE PROFIT MARGINS OF DRUG COMPANIES IN FLAWED PRESCRIPTION DRUG LAW

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, there is no question where the loyalty of Washington Republicans rests when it comes to prescription drug coverage for America's seniors. Their loyalty rests in the boardrooms of the Nation's huge pharmaceutical companies.

One need only look to last Friday for proof. In pharmacies around the country, many seniors heard the bad news. Their drug purchases would not be covered under Medicare part D because they had reached the "donut hole." These seniors lost coverage because they had already spent \$2,250 on their prescriptions, and they won't qualify again until their expenses reach \$5,100 for the year.

I heard from my constituent, Pauline, who said: "I'm sure somewhere along the way the 'donut hole' phenomenon was described, but obviously was passed over in the tons of Medicare D explanations. All I know is that last month what I paid was \$20 and it now costs me \$96, and that was only on one prescription. What adds insult to injury is that we must now pay the premium, too, while we lose our benefits. Prior to Medicare part D, it was costing me approximately \$400 for all my prescriptions; so I am now faced with full freight, inflated pharmacy bills due to the 'donut hole.'"

Actually, Pauline will never get out of the donut hole. It is really a black hole for her.

So shame on Congress, Mr. Speaker, if it recesses before requiring the Secretary of HHS to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices for seniors and persons with disabilities.

#### THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to tell just part of the Herculean and steadfast efforts, the story of the CBC to control HIV/AIDS and reverse its tragic toll in our communities.

I came here 10 years ago and cut my congressional teeth working with and learning from MAXINE WATERS and Lou Stokes as we created the Minority AIDS Initiative. In 1998, the Clinton administration responded to our call for a state of emergency with an investment of \$158 million, which grew to \$400 million.

Despite our repeated calls to action under this administration, funding has been stagnant; capacity-building in communities of color, the hardest hit, has been lost; and we have been bur-

dened by political and ideological policies that caused lives to be destroyed or lost. So today African Americans are more than 50 percent of new HIV and AIDS cases, and our death rate is almost three times that of whites.

We are again in crisis. We need a state of emergency for our health. Each and every CBC member has always and will continue to do their part here in our districts and, with BARBARA LEE, across the world. We call on Congress and the President to respond.

#### AIDS

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, 25 years after the start of the devastating global HIV/AIDS pandemic, this disease is still devastating black America. Among young people, among women, among men, African Americans are most at risk of getting infected with HIV and developing AIDS and dying of this disease. Enough is enough.

Over the last 5 years, this Republican-led Congress has done nothing to recognize this pandemic and the scope of this problem. We need to focus our efforts on the spread of HIV and AIDS in our prison system and provide routine but rigorous HIV testing, linked with treatment, to all incarcerated individuals, and support Congresswoman WATERS' H.R. 6038, the Stop AIDS in Prisons Act.

We need to pass my bill, H.R. 6083, the JUSTICE Act, to allow condoms, yes, condoms, in our prisons and to demand accountability in stopping the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among incarcerated individuals.

Mr. Speaker, this is a state of emergency. Let us declare it. We must declare it. We must declare resources to confront it. The entire Congress needs to support more funding for the Minority AIDS Initiative, beginning with a minimum of \$610 million for the Minority AIDS Initiative. Let us declare this state of emergency.

#### REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP IGNORES LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION SPENDING BILL

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans want to recess the House at the end of this week, but we should not leave town when there is serious business that the Republican leadership has failed to complete.

Why won't the Republican leadership let this House vote on the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill? This bill was reported out of committee on June 20. Here we are, 3 months later, still waiting for the Republicans to bring this critical bill to the House floor.

Does the Republican leadership, the Republican majority in this House, be-

lieve that funding for our public schools, our students, financial aid, health care systems, senior citizens, workers, and our youngest children simply does not matter, isn't important, that it is somehow okay to let this bill just sit around?

This Republican majority is out of touch and, come November 7, hopefully will be out of power. Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to stay in town another day or two to finish this bill to help our kids, to help our senior citizens, to help our workers.

And in light of the Republican leadership's failure to move an agenda to help the American people, I ask unanimous consent to bring H.R. 5647 to the House floor for immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers, as recorded on page 734 of the House Rules Manual, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the gentleman's request until it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

□ 1045

#### A LITTLE TRUTH GOES A LONG WAY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, are you impressed by these irresponsible and childish and petty partisan antics of the minority today? It is divisive, disgraceful, does a disservice to our body and to our Nation.

Now, I understand that it is that crazy political season, but a little truth will go a long way. Leadership on the other side has voted against the Deficit Reduction Act and responsible spending, has voted against pension reform and welfare reform, has voted against border protection and immigration reform, has voted against higher education reauthorization, has voted against the 9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act.

Mr. Speaker, the American people see through this charade, these political antics, and I call on my colleagues to respect each other, to respect the Congress, and to respect our Nation and to act responsibly and join us in making Americans safer and more prosperous.

#### THE DO-LESS-THAN-DO-NOTHING CONGRESS

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, we have all heard about the do-nothing Congress of 1948 that met only 101 days. Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sad to report that this Republican-led Congress will go down in history as the do-less-than-nothing Congress.

Today is only the 78th day that we have met for legislative business. And