

so that informed decisions can be made regarding funding Iraq's reconstruction and deciding when American forces can be redeployed.

First, the United States must bring the world community together to seek solutions in Iraq. Iraq's oil reserves, strategic location in the Middle East, and its potential to become a failed-state breeding ground for international terrorism dictate that the entire international community has an interest in Iraq's success. The administration and the State Department must make more of an effort to utilize America's considerable diplomatic resources in order to rally international involvement in Iraq.

In rallying support, the U.S. should start by talking to all of Iraq's neighbors, including Iran and Syria. Iraq's sectarian violence, while rooted in centuries old conflicts, is being at least partially fueled by Iran and Syria. Consequently, the United States must be willing to work with Iran and Syria as well as all other nations in the region and around the world. But talking does not mean ceding to all requests that these countries make. Iran must not become a nuclear power and Syria must not once again move into Lebanon. But the United States should be willing to engage with these and other nations if we are to move forward with international cooperation on Iraq.

As part of bringing the world community together, the U.S. should call an international conference on Iraq. This conference will work on putting together an international peacekeeping force that will replace American and other troops that are currently in Iraq. A second purpose of this conference will be to put together an international reconstruction plan for Iraq. Iraq still suffers from critical shortages in electricity and drinking water, while infrastructure such as oil wells and roads remain in a state of disrepair. Many Iraqis remain unemployed and impoverished, making them easy recruits for sectarian militias and terrorist groups. While Congress must be given more complete information and oversight over U.S. reconstruction aid being sent to Iraq so that American money can be spent more effectively, the international community must also be called upon to provide other aid and plans for Iraq's rebuilding.

Second, the United States should join with other nations to arrange a peace conference—akin to the meetings that led to the Dayton Accords—that will bring together Iraqi leaders to achieve important goals in national reconciliation, security, and governance. Broad-based pressure from a variety of international sources can make a difference in situations like Iraq's, as evidenced by the 1995 Dayton Accords that ended the war in Bosnia. Much like the current conflict in Iraq, the war in Bosnia was fueled by ethnic and religious divisions. However, after intense pressure from the international community, the warring parties came to the negotiating table in Dayton, Ohio and an agreement was reached. With similar international pressure applied to Iraqi leaders, and promises of international peacekeeping forces and increased reconstruction aid, it is my hope that Iraq's warring factions would peacefully come to the negotiating table. Peace discussions could take place in a country seen as a more neutral arbitrator than the U.S. such as El Salvador, which has proven its commitment to Iraqi stability by providing over 300 soldiers for peacekeeping operations. El Salvador would serve as a good

location because it is physically far away from Iraq and provides an easily secured environment. In addition, El Salvador has special standing because it has had experience with its own civil war and subsequent aftermath.

Third, the administration must be required to give Congress detailed reports on the situation in Iraq, especially in regard to security and progress on reconstruction. One of the reasons Iraq has reached this point is that the Republican Congress gave the administration free rein on Iraq policy without asking questions. The Democratic Congress must, and will, act differently. The start will be bringing the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, military commanders, the members of the Iraq Study Group, and other leading experts on Iraq to testify before congressional committees. Also, we must require from the administration a written, detailed report on the current security and reconstruction situation in Iraq with mandatory monthly follow-up reports.

Up to this point it appears that decisions regarding Iraq have been made based upon politics and not facts, political calculation instead of national interest. There is no place for partisan politics when it comes to the use of military force. The lives of our brave men and women should not be affected by political whims. That is why Congress must demand information from the administration. When Congress is fully informed we will be able to make intelligent decisions, based on our national interest, about when U.S. forces can be redeployed from Iraq. I believe that with congressional oversight and greater international involvement, U.S. troops will be able to start redeployment from Iraq in 2007, with or without the President's leadership.

Clearly, America needs a new direction in Iraq. President Bush is scheduled to announce his new plan very soon. Since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, nothing that this administration has done has yet proven to be successful in Iraq. But I will wait to hear the President and I will listen to the congressional hearings before I make a final decision on his proposal. However, if President Bush were to follow the three-point proposal laid out here, we would truly be moving forward in a new direction that will help stabilize Iraq and bring our troops home soon.

HONORING WESLEY AUTREY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call attention to and to honor the recent heroics of Wesley Autrey, the selfless New Yorker who this past week jumped in front of a subway train to save a stranger that had fallen below.

As we begin the difficult task of putting America back on track, we can all draw inspiration from this 50-year-old Harlem father. The construction worker was with his two daughters waiting for the train when he noticed that film student Cameron Hollopeter had suffered a seizure. The Navy veteran and two other strangers immediately rushed to the 20-year-old's aid. Autrey helped stabilize him, sticking a pen in his mouth to prevent him from swallowing his tongue.

Yet, just when it appeared that he was fine, Hollopeter had a relapse and stumbled off the subway platform. With a No. 1 train fast approaching, Autrey made a split second decision to put this young man's life ahead of his own. He jumped down and pinned Hollopeter between the rails, shielding him from harm's way.

In the days since that split second decision, Autrey has been deservedly lavished with tons of media attention and honors. Not surprisingly, the humble Autrey has been caught off guard. He wasn't thinking of the fame or glory. All he could think about, he says, was his girls—six-year-old Shuqui and four-year-old Syshe. He didn't want them to see a man die before their eyes. He didn't want them to witness their father do nothing to stop the blood and the screams that could follow.

He asked himself, how will I be judged? Will it be said that I had the opportunity to help and just sat there to do nothing. His conscience wouldn't let him be still—and neither should any of us.

We live in a time of great imbalance. In the midst of great prosperity, far too many are struggling to just keep their head above water. Far too many are disconnected from opportunity and hope.

We must follow the example set by Mr. Autrey and not sit on the sidelines while injustice and tragedy unfolds before our eyes. We must ask ourselves: did we do all that we could to help our fellow brothers and sisters? What did we do to help better the world?

Wesley Autrey has done his duty. Now it's time to do ours.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2007 CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG/BUNDES RAT EXCHANGE

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, since 1983, the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag and Bundesrat have conducted an annual exchange program for staff members from both countries. The program gives professional staff the opportunity to observe and learn about each other's political institutions and interact on issues of mutual interest.

A staff delegation from the U.S. Congress will be selected to visit Germany from April 20 to 29 of this year. During this 2-week exchange, the delegation will attend meetings with Bundestag/Bundesrat members, Bundestag and Bundesrat party staff members, and representatives of numerous political, business, academic, and media agencies. Participants also will be hosted by a Bundestag member during a district visit.

A comparable delegation of German staff members will visit the United States for 2 weeks July 14 to 22. They will attend similar meetings here in Washington and visit the districts of Members of Congress. The U.S. delegation is expected to facilitate these meetings.

The Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Exchange is highly regarded in Germany and the United States, and is one of several exchange programs sponsored by public and private institutions in the United States and Germany to foster better understanding of the politics and

policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation should consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

In addition, U.S. participants are expected to help plan and implement the program for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States. Participants are expected to assist in planning topical meetings in Washington, and are encouraged to host one or two staffers in their Member's district in July, or to arrange for such a visit to another Member's district.

Participants are selected by a committee composed of personnel from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State and past participants of the exchange.

Members of the House and Senate who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should direct them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications may be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HB-28, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 21, 2007.

RECOGNIZING AUSTIN ABARR FOR
ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE
SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Austin Abarr, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 45, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Austin has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Austin has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Austin Abarr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am hon-

ored to represent Austin in the United States House of Representatives.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. WEINER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call upon my colleagues to address the very real threat to the security of rail passengers in America. I am a supporter of the 9/11 Commission Bill and commend the Speaker and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership in at long last implementing the basic reforms directed by the 9/11 Commission.

But the 9/11 Commission's recommendations were but a first step. Since the Commission completed its work, the evolution of terrorism has continued in countries around our planet, and we cannot turn a blind eye to the vulnerabilities that we face in this Nation—particularly those vulnerabilities that are being routinely targeted by terrorists in other parts of the world. Most notably, as demonstrated by the bombings in Madrid in 2004, London in 2005, and Mumbai in 2006—the passenger rail and transit system in this country is a high-risk target and we must address this critical security need immediately.

We rightfully have devoted extensive efforts towards securing aviation, but now it is time to devote significant resources towards one of this country's most vital economic assets.

Each weekday, there are 11.3 million passengers using some form of rail and mass transit. That's more than 5 times as many people taking air passenger trips. At New York's Penn Station alone—there are over half a million people passing through; that is more passengers than at our two busiest air hubs—Chicago and Atlanta—combined. And yet, on average, we have spent \$9 per air passenger compared to 1 penny per rail and mass transit passenger.

The Secretary of Homeland Security often states that it is the management of risk and not the elimination of risk that is the core principle for DHS—and the management of risk requires the prioritization of risk based on three key components: threat, vulnerability, and consequence.

Passenger rail facilities have a high passenger density, which creates the potential for a spectacular attack that is intended to instill fear—we know this is what our enemies look for when planning attacks. We know that they have already mounted vicious attacks in Madrid, London, and Mumbai over the last 3 years, and even before 9/11—in Paris and Tokyo. This threat is real, it is serious, and it is not going away.

We also know that if anything were to happen to disrupt our passenger rail system, the economic consequences and impacts on our way of life would be devastating.

Finally, we know that most of our major passenger rail facilities are old, in some cases falling apart, lack modern security enhancements built into the station design, and would

be unable to recover quickly from even a minor attack. They have not been retrofitted, reinforced, or rebuilt in ways consistent with today's threat environment.

Thus, our passenger rail system is clearly at a high risk based on all three components—threat, vulnerability, and consequence. And this risk must be managed better.

Now some people argue that because the rail system in our country is open and dynamic and therefore impossible to secure like other parts of the transportation system, that we should not spend a lot of money trying—that it becomes a “slippery slope.” To the contrary, to do nothing in the face of such demonstrated high risk is irresponsible.

Rail and transit authorities have made efforts to improve security. However, authorities are having a difficult time identifying resources that can be used for capital improvements. In fact, between 2001 and 2003 over \$1.7 billion was spent on security efforts for rail and transit by state and local authorities, but 75 percent was used just for overtime and other labor-intensive security operating expenses. While these measures are a key part of securing open facilities like rail stations, their costs leave very little money for the much needed capital investments in security.

The American Public Transportation Association estimated that it cost State and local transportation authorities nearly \$1 million a day during the 36 days of high alert status after the July 2005 London bombings—and this number does not even include the costs incurred in the additional efforts of New York and New Jersey's random searches.

No matter what we may have planned, the fact is that we will end up devoting tremendous resources should there be a rail attack. I would rather see us be strategic in our investments than be reactive every time a new threat is evident. Targeted investments in capital security enhancements at our most critical, high-risk locations will serve us during normal and heightened alerts and can possibly reduce our operating costs by leveraging the capability of people on the scene.

The Federal Government does not have to do this alone. We constantly hear about the importance of public-private partnerships, yet we have few positive examples to point at. The rail system has the opportunity to leverage the investments of private developers who seek to benefit from transit-oriented development. As we address capital security investments in passenger rail facilities, Congress should acknowledge and even encourage these public-private partnerships by providing a way for private developers to be guaranteed that the Federal Government's commitment to long-term projects is real. The current homeland security annual grant cycle is a road block for these larger projects, and it is critical to our Nation's security and fiscal well-being that we take advantage of such investment opportunities as they arise.

From 9/11 through 2005 we have spent approximately \$20 billion on aviation security, but only \$500 million on rail and transit security. We can and must do better than this. I call on my colleagues to join me in this Congress to address the critical issue of capital investments in our rail passenger security.

After Madrid and London, we can have no more excuses.