

weapons collectors. He is a true inspiration to our troops who serve to protect our freedoms.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING THE STATE CRIMINAL ALIEN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for fully funding the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, also known as SCAAP, at its authorized level for fiscal year 2008 at \$950 million.

This program, which reimburses State and local governments for the cost of incarcerating illegal immigrants, is vital to border States such as Arizona, where we disproportionately pay a higher amount than our fair share of incarceration.

Underfunding SCAAP places a significant cost burden on our local law enforcement, stretching their resources and hampering their ability to protect our communities.

All of the counties in my district, Pima, Cochise, Pinal and Santa Cruz, are reimbursed less than 10 percent of the amount of incarcerating illegal immigrants. This places an unfair cost burden on our local communities. Given the importance of homeland security and law enforcement, it is absolutely essential that we receive full funding for SCAAP. I believe that Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle would agree that reimbursement should be a Federal priority.

OPPOSE THE WAR FUNDING PROPOSAL

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do what is right and pass a clean supplemental.

The bill unveiled yesterday would tie our military leaders' hands at the very time they need our support the most. Some want to set a date certain. The reality is the only certain part of this plan is that President Bush has threatened to veto the bill, and critical funding for our troops would be needlessly delayed.

This plan is dangerous, and I would urge all of my colleagues to oppose this war funding proposal. Even Members of the majority party are reacting negatively to the proposal, as well they should.

Everyone agrees that we must make progress in Iraq. We also agree the Iraqi Government must step up and improve the situation. What the Republicans are going to stand against is tying the funds our soldiers need to do

their jobs to benchmarks thought up by special interest groups.

Our men and women in uniform deserve the best, and a haphazard approach is not it. We can do better. We must do better.

BETTER TREATMENT FOR OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, in my district, which stretches along the coast line from West Palm Beach to Fort Lauderdale, we have a number of veterans who have served in wars for this country, ranging from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan. These veterans have been served well in most cases by clinics in our district, such as the VA Hospital and other outpatient facilities in Fort Lauderdale. But like many places around the country, these facilities have their share of problems as well, largely due to a lack of adequate Federal funding. These facilities are not always able to see and treat the veterans as quickly as they would like to, and of course we all know what is going on at Walter Reed, mold seeping from the walls and ceilings, rats and roaches running freely. These conditions are fit for no one.

This is no way to treat our men and women in uniform who have sacrificed their families, their jobs, their lives, everything to serve our country. We must change the way we are treating our veterans when they return home, and that starts with providing critical funding for health care services and infrastructure needs. To ask them to sacrifice so much for us, only to find when they come home they are treated inadequately on so many fronts is nothing less than immoral.

BORDER PROTECTORS UNDER PHYSICAL ATTACK

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, more news from the second front: the border war with Mexico continues.

According to Reuters and NewsMax, illegals and drug cartels are increasing the tax on U.S. border protectors by the use of rocks, firearms, and even Molotov cocktails. Here is what Webb County, Texas Sheriff Rick Flores in Laredo says: "The attacks against us are becoming more brazen. Drug cartels are telling their people to go down fighting and do whatever is necessary to get those drugs through." He says, "Mexicans fire weapons from across the border at our law enforcement agents." In Arizona, illegals injure border agents by pelting them with large rocks and Molotov cocktails almost on a daily basis, according to one border agent.

And where are the two governments? Well, it seems Mexico could care less

what happens to American border agents since it encourages illegal entry, and our own U.S. Government takes the side of drug smugglers and illegals if border protectors allegedly use force to stop this invasion. Meanwhile, some in Washington fiddle the silly song of tolerance, amnesty and ignorance.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS PROVIDING NEEDED OVERSIGHT OF BUSH ADMINISTRATION FAILURES

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, accountability has returned to Washington after a 6-year absence.

This week alone, the new Democratic Congress has provided critical oversight of the administration's unacceptable neglect of our wounded soldiers. At a hearing earlier this week, some of my Republican colleagues said they have known about some of the treatment for several years, but they didn't realize it was this bad. And that is what oversight hearings are for. If you know there is a problem, you haul the Pentagon up to Capitol Hill to get answers.

The old Republican Congress simply ignored these problems. That is not happening in the Democratic Congress. This week, we held four different oversight hearings so that we can find solutions quickly to ensure that what happened at Walter Reed never happens again.

This Democratic House has also held its first hearing this week on the scandal at the U.S. Attorney's Office, where politics once again trumps competence in the Bush administration. Eight U.S. attorneys were fired so the Bush administration could pad the resumes of other attorneys.

The days of incompetence without any accountability are over here in Washington. Real oversight has returned.

SCOOTER LIBBY

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, no town likes a scandal, real or invented, more than Washington, DC, and the latest news involving Scooter Libby has the Beltway crowd abuzz.

Madam Speaker, if Scooter Libby broke the law, he should be held to account. But with all the attention being paid to this scandal, I can't help but think of the double standard that seems to be at play here. Scooter Libby is being prosecuted for the exact same offense that ensnared former President Bill Clinton, lying under oath, perjury and obstruction of justice. But the same people today who are calling for Libby's head were insisting back then

that Bill Clinton's offense was no big deal. And the hypocrisy doesn't end there. Where was the liberal outrage when Sandy Berger was caught destroying classified documents and received a slap on the wrist? What about sweetheart land deals or refrigerated cash?

Madam Speaker, the American ideal is equal justice under the law. Let's enforce the law, and let's do so equally, regardless of politics.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 720, WATER QUALITY FINANCING ACT OF 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 229 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 229

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 720) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the five-minute rule and shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such further amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 0915

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 229 provides for the consideration of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007, under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the substitute reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, modified by the manager's amendment in the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment and shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended.

The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in part B of the Rules Committee report accompanying the resolution. The amendments may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendments, except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI, are waived. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

And I am pleased to point out, Madam Speaker, that under this structured rule, the six amendments made in order are split equally, three Republican and three Democratic.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 720 reauthorizes an important part of the landmark Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act protects our neighborhoods and water bodies from water pollution. Clean water is vital to the health of our citizens and to our country.

The bill before us today reauthorizes the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund by providing \$14 billion over the next 5 years to local agencies to fight water pollution.

We have come a long way in this country. We have the technology and the engineering experience to prevent

water pollution. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates a huge shortfall in funds available for wastewater improvements across the country. This shortfall is significant because, without considerable improvements to the wastewater treatment infrastructure, much of the progress made in cleaning up the Nation's rivers, creeks and streams and bays since the passage of the Clean Water Act is at risk.

Clean water is a top priority for the families in my district and throughout the Nation. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership over the past few Congresses has failed to support this part of the Clean Water Act. Although legislation was introduced in the Congress then, it never made it to the House floor.

President Bush and the White House also proposed slashing this Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund in his latest budget proposal. But, nevertheless, we are hopeful today that a bipartisan vote in support of this measure will send a signal to the White House that clean and healthy water is absolutely vital to our communities. In fact, in my hometown of Tampa, Florida, the Clean Water Act Loan Funds for wastewater improvements have vastly improved the water quality of Tampa Bay. The expansion in wastewater treatment significantly improved the quality of water running into beautiful Tampa Bay.

In past years, Tampa received over \$54 million for wastewater treatment plant expansion and thereby improved water quality. It has also played a role in significantly improving the water in our rivers, bays, creeks and streams as we are able to control the pollutants that run off into these vital water bodies.

This is the same story across the country for the improved health of our communities, on the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes and other water bodies throughout our country. Check with your local governments and your neighbors who live around and who are mindful of the quality of the water in our lakes, rivers and bays in your hometown.

Appearing before our Rules Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman JIM OBERSTAR said it best: "This is not just a good bill. It is a necessary one. The good health of our communities depends upon it."

And as a former county commissioner, I can tell you that the vast majority of costs in cleaning our water falls upon our local communities. And if we don't act now, we will be shifting a greater cost to future generations.

So I urge the Congress, Madam Speaker, to enact this rule and this important legislation to keep our communities, rivers, lakes and bays clean and, most importantly, to improve the health of our children, seniors, and all citizens.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.