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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 (Ms. SHEA-PORTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 12, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CAROL SHEA-PORTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, 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.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GLOBAL WARMING AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, House Speaker NANCY PELOSI is to be commended for her creation of the special Select Committee on Global Warming and Energy Independence. I am honored to be chosen by her to join a strong field of my Democratic colleagues chaired by Congressman ED MARKEY, a long-time advocate for realistic policies on energy and climate change. He will be joined by Members with special areas of expertise and dedicated commitment to the environment.

HILDA SOLIS, a renowned environmentalist not just in Congress, but dating back to her days as a California legislator. EMANUEL CLEAVER, with important municipal experience as Mayor of Kansas City, and one who has been working with the community of faith, particularly evangelical Christians who are worried about our stewardship of God's handiwork.

My Northwest colleague, JAY INSLEE, is strong, an environmentalist with keen interest and expertise and energy. STEPHANIE HERSETH, who has been a leader particularly in reducing the carbon footprint in the all-important agricultural sector. Even our two Members newly elected to Congress; JOHN HALL may be famous as a musician, but for years he has been involved with advocacy and leadership in the energy arena. And JERRY MCNERNEY is a successful alternative energy businessman and engineer who probably has more technical knowledge than anybody else in Congress.

I was perplexed somewhat by the Republican appointments, not so much about who is there, but who isn't. There are a few people in the Republican Caucus who have been outspoken about their concerns of climate change, global warming, their understanding of the science, people who are not in denial, but they were passed over for membership. There are some Republican Members who have been outspoken critics, for example, of the Kyoto treaty. Well, you know, this whole effort has moved beyond Kyoto. The world has moved on.

While for 12 years Republican leadership in Congress refused to move forward, there are 320 cities who have gone ahead with their own post-Kyoto initiatives. There are hundreds of counties and universities. Last month, 10 major companies here in Washington, D.C. announced that they would meet or exceed the standards. They can't afford to wait for the Federal Government. The people who are still hung up over Kyoto have never produced a viable alternative and are being left behind by people who do understand and who do care.

It is not that we don't know what to do; cut carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency. Girl Scouts, neighborhood associations and campus conservation teams can tell this administration and Congress what to do. Why, the Bush Administration could just approve the higher energy efficiency standards for appliances. There are 34 of them that have been stalled, they could stop dithering and start acting.

And it is not that we can't afford to do this; we cannot afford to act. Those energy efficiency standards will actually save consumers money while they encourage new product development.

We are on a very dangerous trend line. Ask people in Alaska, where roads are buckling from melting perma-frost and coastal villages are eroding. Ask ski operators about the impact of global warming. Look at impact of extreme weather events on our disaster budgets. We will face far higher costs in the future if we don't act now, take action like private companies, cities across America, and governments around the world.

There are opportunities for field hearings and parliament exchanges for this new committee. I would hope that we could entice them to visit the Pacific Northwest. With Congressman JAY INSLEE and my colleague GREG WALDEN from Oregon, we can demonstrate that the Northwest in the last quarter century has saved 3,000 average megawatts equivalent to building eight giant coal power plants, but at only half the cost. We can bring them to Portland, Oregon, where as a member of the City Council in 1990 we adopted energy efficiency standards to achieve

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at least $1 million savings within 10 years. We reached that goal in 5 years ahead of schedule, and we continue to increase the efficiency and get the benefit, $2.5 million last year, 20 percent saving in energy cost.

There is land-use planning, broad transportation choices, people living closer to where they work. All these are among the reasons that Portland's greenhouse gas emissions since 1990 on a per capita basis have fallen by 12.5 percent, unlike probably any other American city.

So my congratulations to the Speaker. My thanks for having a chance to play a role as we use this select committee for the Federal Government to help catch up with the rest of the world.

U.S. SERVICES INDUSTRY ESSENTIAL TO GLOBAL ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, when we look at the issue of globalization and the rapid economic rise of countries like India and China, critical questions about the continued competitiveness of the U.S. economy are understandably raised. Are there industries where we still have a comparative advantage? Can we compete with countries that have more than a billion people? Will the power of our innovation maintain our global economic leadership? These are complicated questions that demand a thorough analysis of our economy, our strengths and our weaknesses and the policies we are pursuing. I have explored some of these very issues in recent weeks from some remarks I have been making here in the House.

Actually, as we look at the very positive indicators we have in the U.S. economy, we are thriving because of our engagement in the worldwide marketplace. Because of the complexity of these issues, we need a rigorous, open and honest debate. But today I want to talk about an economic issue that is not at all complicated, Madam Speaker; a matter of benefits that is so clear and widespread that it may be the one single globalization issue that is too simple to refute, and that is the issue of our services industry.

Services have become absolutely crucial to our economic growth, employment and international trade. This sector represents nearly 80 percent of both economic output and private employment in this country. Services are essential inputs into the production of virtually all products that we make, sell, buy or consume. The price and quality of services influence cost and productivity in all other sectors of the economy, including manufacturing and agriculture.

Because our economy has come to rely on efficient, innovative and effective services, the industry has grown to become the largest part of our economy. In fact, services account for 78 percent of private sector GDP, or in excess of $8.5 trillion.

This tremendous growth can be seen in our workforce as well. Since 1993, the services sector has added roughly 25 million new jobs to our economy, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that virtually all new employment in the United States over the next half decade will be in the area of services.

While the issue of job creation is absolutely critical to the strength of our economy, the issue of job quality is absolutely critical to standards of living. Again, the services industry is at the cutting edge, creating jobs that pay very well. Services jobs pay an average of $51,045 annually. In many service industries, ranging from professional services, management services, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, financing, insurance, information services and others, the average compensation levels are significantly higher than that. These are the types of jobs that constantly offer the opportunity to learn new skills, develop expertise and continue to climb the economic ladder. These are not the hamburger-flipping jobs that the service industry has been maligned for in the past. These are high-quality, high-paying jobs that offer the chance of advancement and an ever-increasing quality of life, and they are the backbone of our economy.

Just as the service industry has thrived here at home, it is tremendously competitive in the worldwide economy as well. Madam Speaker, U.S. financial services, express delivery, telecommunications, entertainment, audio-visual services and IT are achieving exceptional success around the globe. With 95 percent of the world's consumers outside of the United States, their presence in foreign markets is crucial for their global competitiveness.

Today, the U.S. is the world's largest service exporter. U.S. services exports have reached nearly $400 billion annually, with a trade surplus of about $66 billion. Our services companies have built this record, even though faced with high and complex barriers in many key foreign markets. The service sector remains one of the most tightly closed and controlled industries within our trading partners around the world. The removal of these barriers is crucial to our continued competitiveness.

As services become more liberalized, they will have an even more powerful effect on the competitiveness of our entire economy. When it comes to the issue of globalization, services are a clear example of American competitive advantage and global leadership.

Some facets of the globalization debate involve complex issues and challenges that require a great deal of careful consideration and analysis for us to fully understand them. But the U.S. service industry stands out as a clear, irrefutable example of how the U.S. economy thrives through global engagement, and it is a powerful and compelling indicator of how much our economy has to gain by expanding that engagement with the rest of the world's consumers, producers, workers and investors.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue to pursue an economic agenda that empowers U.S. companies and entrepreneurs to harness the power of the worldwide marketplace to grow our economy right here at home.

PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor to commend my colleagues' attention to a resolution that I recently introduced honoring the work of pregnancy resource centers.

According to the nonprofit Guttmacher Institute, about half of American women will face an unplanned pregnancy, and at current rates more than one-third will have an abortion by the time they are 45 years old. Of the women who have had abortions, 90 percent indicate they would have preferred other options had they simply known about them.

The tragedy and irony in many situations is that most women are flooded with a pro-abortion message, but are rarely offered any other message of choice. Rather, unknowing clients are led to believe that abortion is the only solution to their problem.

Through costly advertising, young women go into abortion clinics and they are assured that help is only a few hundred dollars away. Harmful consequences of abortion are minimized or simply ignored. Alternatives, like parenting or adoption, are not encouraged; in fact, they are very rarely mentioned. Sadly, my colleagues, it is only later that they learn there are indeed alternatives.

Desperately trying to spread this message to young women are the 2,500 pregnancy resource centers across the United States. Through education and support, pregnancy resource centers meet women's emotional and physical needs. They provide one-on-one counseling regarding the facts about adoption, abortion and parenting so that the client may make a wise and informed decision about her pregnancy. Centers are dedicated to helping each woman resolve her situation in a way that equips her with better life skills for her future. Practical help, like parenting classes, support groups, education and job skill classes are offered through many pregnancy resource centers as well. Maternity clothes, baby needs and even temporary housing is also offered. Some pregnancy resource

centers have full medical services on their premises, and unlike abortion clinics, these centers offer support for women suffering from post-abortion syndrome.

For those women who have undergone an abortion, the devastation can be real and ongoing if she does not receive help. Most centers are committed to the healing, body and soul, of women who have suffered from an abortion. They offer medical and counseling services and stand alongside these women in the healing process.

Life-affirming pregnancy centers provide an example of love and compassion to women and their unborn babies. These centers have been upholding the values of all human life, born and unborn, for several decades. Women are increasingly turning to these centers for physical, psychological, emotional and of course spiritual help. They are always treated with the utmost dignity and respect and provided with accurate, up-to-date information in order to make informed decisions about their pregnancy, sexual health and relationships. Because everyone should have access to this information, all services are free of charge.

I am honored to represent one such center in my hometown of Ocala, Florida. The Women's Pregnancy Center has been serving the people faithfullly in Marion County for 22 years. This center serves nearly 1,500 women a year of all ages and backgrounds. They serve these women and men faithfully and discreetly.

My colleagues, in today's culture abortion is too often the first thought for women facing unplanned pregnancy, but there are alternatives, and pregnancy resource centers can provide them. These centers are not only the most strategic and effective, but often the most needed of the forces engaged in the defense of the unborn. It is fitting that we recognize these courageous and struggling agencies that seek to bring purpose to the surprises of life. Never are these needs greatest than in the smallest of family, a mother and her growing baby.

I invite my colleagues to join me in providing support for the more than 2,500 crisis pregnancy centers around the United States of America. The good work of these centers merits our recognition, and their compassionate staff deserve our admiration and praise.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this resolution and demonstrate their support for pregnancy resource centers and their tens of thousands of volunteer staff who are encouraging the protection and value of all human life in America.

THE FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP AT WALTER REED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I felt the need today to rise and to briefly express my deeply felt dismay over the failure of leadership concerning the problems at Walter Reed.

We have witnessed a disservice to the men and women in uniform to whom we owe such a deep debt of gratitude. It is simply inexcusable. We can and must do a better job by our injured troops, especially after asking them to do so much for us.

I was glad to see actions to hold the Army and hospital leadership accountable, and the President's choice to create the Dole-Shalala Commission. Both Senator DOLE and Secretary Shalala have the experience to craft solutions to improve the situation. I know they will be independent and offer a sound assessment of the problem with good solutions.

Ultimately, our troops deserve the best. This is a bipartisan issue, and I look forward to working diligently on it.

We must not rest until our troops are assured of the medical treatment that they so rightfully deserve.

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 50 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. SALAZAR) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, source of wisdom and love, we bless You and praise You for all the natural and human resources showered upon this Nation.

Raise up in our midst people who will respond to those most in need or suffering, that true religion may flourish in our land and deeds of charity with the rule of justice may create a new humanity across the face of the Earth.

To You be all praise and glory now and 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 Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota 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.

TRIUMPH OF SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Friday the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia overturned one of the most unfair laws on the books. The Court upheld second amendment rights and struck down D.C.'s misguided law prohibiting handgun ownership.

For too long D.C. residents have been denied the fundamental right to protect themselves and their families. This ruling is truly a victory for law-abiding, gun-owning citizens in the tradition of the late Rick Daniel, who championed the success of concealed weapons permits in South Carolina.

I find it ironic that our Nation's capital, a symbol of American freedoms and rights worldwide, has had one of the most restrictive gun control laws in the country. Despite these oppressive measures, D.C. has maintained one of the highest murder rates in the Nation. Sadly, last July, 13 people were killed in 12 days.

I applaud the court for defending the Constitution and returning to D.C. residents their right to bear arms.

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

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

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

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to add my voice to those deeply disappointed by conditions found at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The physical infrastructure and administrative problems revealed are absolutely inexcusable. As a Nation and as a military, we have a responsibility to provide both top-quality acute care and top-quality outpatient treatment.

The fine doctors and nurses in Iraq; at Landstuhl, Germany; and at Walter Reed provide excellent medical care that has saved countless lives. But it is clear that a lack of leadership and administrative initiative at the top created these shameful conditions.

The American military has historically entrusted the ultimate responsibility and accountability to those in command. I was pleased that the Army leadership followed that proud tradition, and I am hopeful that Walter

Reed's new commander, Major General Eric R. Schoomaker, will rebuild trust in the Army's medical service. I am also hopeful that a number of corrective actions announced last week by Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker will help ensure each soldier receives the care which he or she deserves and that no one, no one, falls through the cracks.

AL GORE

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, our former Vice President, Al Gore, hasn't gotten so much attention since he invented the Internet.

But behind the Oscars, behind the left's unending praise, behind the fawning media coverage lies the truth. And, unfortunately, that truth is pretty inconvenient.

It seems that one of the biggest violators of Gore's own environmental doctrines is Al Gore himself. While he jets around on the global warming celebrity circuit telling everyone else how to live a greener life, his own home in Tennessee is consuming nearly 20 times the energy of the average American home.

Gore defends this conspicuous consumption by purchasing carbon emission offsets. But he buys those offsets from a company he helped create and he currently chairs.

Mr. Speaker, global warming may or may not be an inconvenient truth. But apparently for Al Gore, practicing what you preach is the most inconvenient thing of all.

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.

AMENDING THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING ACT OF 1991

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1068) to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1068

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

SECTION 1. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Title I of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the title heading, by striking ''**AND THE NATIONAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION NETWORK**'' and inserting ''**RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**'';

(2) in section 101(a)—

(A) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(A) provide for long-term basic and applied research on high-performance computing;

''(B) provide for research and development on, and demonstration of, technologies to advance the capacity and capabilities of high-performance computing and networking systems;

''(C) provide for sustained access by the research community in the United States to high-performance computing systems that are among the most advanced in the world in terms of performance in solving scientific and engineering problems, including provision for technical support for users of such systems;

''(D) provide for efforts to increase software availability, productivity, capability, security, portability, and reliability;

''(E) provide for high-performance networks, including experimental testbed networks, to enable research and development on, and demonstration of, advanced applications enabled by such networks;

''(F) provide for computational science and engineering research on mathematical modeling and algorithms for applications in all fields of science and engineering;

''(G) provide for the technical support of, and research and development on, high-performance computing systems and software required to address Grand Challenges;

''(H) provide for educating and training additional undergraduate and graduate students in software engineering, computer science, computer and network security, applied mathematics, library and information science, and computational science; and

''(I) provide for improving the security of computing and networking systems, including Federal systems, including research required to establish security standards and practices for these systems.'';

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(C) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph—

(i) by striking subparagraph (B);

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (C) as subparagraphs (D) and (F), respectively;

(iii) by inserting before subparagraph (D), as so redesignated by clause (ii) of this subparagraph, the following new subparagraphs:

''(A) establish the goals and priorities for Federal high-performance computing research, development, networking, and other activities;

''(B) establish Program Component Areas that implement the goals established under subparagraph (A), and identify the Grand Challenges that the Program should address;

''(C) provide for interagency coordination of Federal high-performance computing research, development, networking, and other activities undertaken pursuant to the Program;''; and

(iv) by inserting after subparagraph (D), as so redesignated by clause (ii) of this subparagraph, the following new subparagraph:

''(E) develop and maintain a research, development, and deployment roadmap for the provision of high-performance computing systems under paragraph (1)(C); and''; and

(D) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated by subparagraph (B) of this paragraph—

(i) by striking ''paragraph (3)(A)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)(D)'';

(ii) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) provide a detailed description of the Program Component Areas, including a description of any changes in the definition of or activities under the Program Component Areas from the preceding report, and the reasons for such changes, and a description of Grand Challenges supported under the Program;'';

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''specific activities'' and all that follows through ''the Network'' and inserting ''each Program Component Area'';

(iv) in subparagraph (D), by inserting ''and for each Program Component Area'' after ''participating in the Program'';

(v) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''applies;'' and inserting ''applies; and'';

(vi) by striking subparagraph (E) and redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (E); and

(vii) in subparagraph (E), as so redesignated by clause (vi) of this subparagraph, by inserting ''and the extent to which the Program incorporates the recommendations of the advisory committee established under subsection (b)'' after ''for the Program'';

(3) by striking subsection (b) of section 101 and inserting the following:

''(b) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—(1) The President shall establish an advisory committee on high-performance computing consisting of non-Federal members, including representatives of the research, education, and library communities, network providers, and industry, who are specially qualified to provide the Director with advice and information on high-performance computing. The recommendations of the advisory committee shall be considered in reviewing and revising the Program. The advisory committee shall provide the Director with an independent assessment of—

''(A) progress made in implementing the Program;

''(B) the need to revise the Program;

''(C) the balance between the components of the Program, including funding levels for the Program Component Areas;

''(D) whether the research and development undertaken pursuant to the Program is helping to maintain United States leadership in high-performance computing and networking technology; and

''(E) other issues identified by the Director.

''(2) In addition to the duties outlined in paragraph (1), the advisory committee shall conduct periodic evaluations of the funding, management, coordination, implementation, and activities of the Program, and shall report not less frequently than once every two fiscal years to the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on its findings and recommendations. The first report shall be due within one year after the date of enactment of this paragraph.

''(3) Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act shall not apply to the advisory committee established by this subsection.''; and

(4) in section 101(c)(1)(A), by striking ''Program or'' and inserting ''Program Component Areas or''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5503) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''and multidisciplinary teams of researchers'' after ''high-performance computing resources'';

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking ''scientific workstations,'';

(B) by striking ''(including vector supercomputers and large scale parallel systems)'';

(C) by striking ''and applications'' and inserting ''applications''; and

(D) by inserting '', and the management of large data sets'' after ''systems software'';

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking ''packet switched'';

(4) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (5);

(5) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (6) and inserting ''; and''; and

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

''(7) 'Program Component Areas' means the major subject areas under which are grouped related individual projects and activities carried out under the Program.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 1068, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 1068, a bill to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991. This is a bipartisan bill which Congresswoman BIGGERT and I introduced.

I want particularly to acknowledge the role Mrs. BIGGERT has played in working to develop this legislation over the past several years. This bill is based on a bill introduced by Congresswoman BIGGERT and Congressman LINCOLN DAVIS during the past two Congresses. And in both those Congresses, the bill passed the House.

I also want to thank Chairman GORDON and Ranking Member HALL for their support for the legislation, for helping to advance it through the committee and to bring it to the floor.

H.R. 1068 will improve the planning and coordination process for the major Federal interagency research program in information technology. Information technology is a major driver of economic growth. It creates high-wage jobs, provides for rapid communication throughout the world, and provides the tools for acquiring knowledge.

For example, information technology helps to make the workplace more productive, to improve the quality of health care, and to make government more responsive and accessible to the needs of our citizens.

High-performance computing and networking is not only an essential component of U.S. scientific competitiveness, it also has important industrial, medical, and defense applications.

Vigorous long-term research is essential for realizing the potential of information technology. The technical advances that led to today's computers and the Internet evolved from past federally sponsored research, in partnership with industry and universities. High-performance computing is necessary as we work to develop new ways to transfer vast amounts of information around the world.

The depth and strength of U.S. capability in information technology stems in part from the sustained research and development program carried out by Federal research agencies under a program codified by the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991. That act is widely credited with reinvigorating U.S. high-performance computing capabilities after a period of relative decline during the late 1980s.

The 1991 act created a multi-agency R&D program to accelerate development of information technology and to attack challenging computational science and engineering problems. The 1991 act also put in place a formal process for planning and budgeting for the activities carried out under the interagency R&D program, which is formally known as the Networking and Information Technology R&D Program.

The need for this legislation today arises from what I would characterize as a weakening over time of the planning and prioritization process for the program.

In order to maintain our competitiveness, we must ensure that the resources available to advance high-performance computing technology are allocated to the highest priority areas and that the activities supported are carefully coordinated among the performing agencies.

Toward that end, H.R. 1068 requires formal biennial reviews of the interagency program by its external advisory committee in order to provide advice from the research community and from the information technology industries on how to sharpen program priorities and improve program implementation. Also, the required annual progress report for the program must now include a formal response to the recommendations of the advisory committee.

H.R. 1068 calls on the agencies carrying out the program to focus more effort on high-end computing. The key requirement is for the Office of Science and Technology Policy to create and maintain a road map for developing and deploying high-end systems necessary to ensure that the U.S. research community has sustained access to the most capable computing systems.

Finally, this bill clarifies the grand challenge problems supported under the interagency program, such as clean energy production, climate change, and patient safety and health quality, which are intended to involve multidisciplinary teams of researchers and demand the most capable high-performance computing and networking resources.

Consistent with this requirement, the bill also specifies the provisions for access to high-end computing systems includes technical support to users of these systems.

Mr. Speaker, the interagency information technology research program launched by the 1991 act has been largely a success. H.R. 1068 will serve to strengthen this vital research program and deserves the approval of this House. I ask my colleagues for their support in passing H.R. 1068.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1068. It will strengthen the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991.

Tomorrow, the Committee on Science and Technology will hold a hearing on U.S. innovation and competitiveness. High-performance computers have a role to play in our economic competitiveness, as they vastly enhance our ability to perform very complex computations quickly and they do it efficiently. H.R. 1068 will help ensure that American researchers have access to the very best tools available as they tackle cutting-edge problems in key fields such as nanotechnology, homeland security, and biotechnology. In addition, this bill helps reinforce the Federal commitment to ''supercomputing,'' a commitment that becomes increasingly more important as European and Asian countries continue to increase their investment in developing and purchasing the next generation of supercomputers.

Nobody knows this measure better than my distinguished colleague from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT). She has worked tirelessly in two previous Congresses to have this important legislation enacted. In fact, she has been successful in the House on both occasions, only to see it stall on the Senate side.

In an effort to keep that from happening again, we have made a few modifications to help ensure it gets Senate support. With these slight alterations, I hope we will find that the third time is a charm.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1068.

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

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas, the ranking member of the Science Committee, for yielding me the time.

And I am so pleased to be the cosponsor of this bill that was introduced by my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD). He has been a great member on the Science Committee for several years. This bill may seem familiar to many of my colleagues in the House and for

good reason. In both the 108th and 109th Congresses, we did introduce legislation that would do exactly the same thing as the bill we are considering today with some additions. H.R. 4218 in the 108th Congress and H.R. 28 in the 109th Congress were approved not only overwhelmingly by the Science Committee but by the full House of Representatives.

□ 1415

Unfortunately, because of jurisdictional complications, our friends in the other body across the rotunda had never considered this legislation. It had been endorsed by the President's science adviser, Dr. Marburger, several years ago. It is a real shame that it hasn't moved forward, but we are really happy we are, I think, going to have both sides of the aisle work on it this time.

At the time when we first introduced the High Performance Computing Revitalization Act in April of 2004, a new Japanese supercomputer, the Earth Simulator, was the fastest supercomputer in the world, a title it held for well over 2 years, from June 2002 through November of 2004.

Some experts claimed that Japan was able to produce a computer far ahead of American machines because the U.S. had taken an overly cautious or conventional approach to computing R&D. In hindsight, we see that caution meant lost opportunities.

Granted a lot has changed since November of 2004. The U.S. is now home to not only the world's fastest supercomputer, but seven of the 10 fastest, thanks to the hard work and competitive spirit of people at IBM, Cray and Silicon Graphics, as well as the Department of Energy and NSF.

But we must retain the leadership and development and use of supercomputers. As confirmed by reports of the Council on Competitiveness and the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, supercomputers are essential to maintaining U.S. leadership in many scientific fields and have many applications, from pharmaceuticals and climate to national and homeland security.

That is why the bill that we are considering today is so important. It is designed to ensure U.S. preeminence and competitiveness in computational science. This bill commits the Federal Government to providing the research community with sustained access to the highest end supercomputers, supporting all aspects of high performance computing, including software development and data management for scientific and engineering applications, and developing and maintaining a road map for computational science in the fields that require it.

I am honored to have worked with the chairman of the Research and Science Education Subcommittee, Mr. BAIRD, on this straightforward, commonsense legislation, and I have good reason to be hopeful that it will pass. As my colleague from Washington has already indicated, we made changes in this bill, simple changes, that would help our colleagues in the other body avoid those jurisdictional problems that they seem to have sometimes that have stymied their consideration of this bill in the past.

In closing, I just want to say that this bill will provide researchers in the United States with the computing resources they need to remain world class. Our Nation's scientific enterprise and our economy will be stronger for it.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1068.

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I will just very briefly again commend Mrs. BIGGERT for her leadership on this. She has been steadfast and dogged on this. We hope with the changes we made to this bill, it will meet the approval of the other body. This is not a partisan issue. This is about keeping American science and industry at the very forefront of the world. This bill will help us do that.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1068, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENERGY TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACT

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 85) to provide for the establishment of centers to encourage demonstration and commercial application of advanced energy methods and technologies, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 85

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 ''Energy Technology Transfer Act''.

SEC. 2. ENERGY TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

Section 917 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16197) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 917. ADVANCED ENERGY TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTERS.

''(a) GRANTS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Technology Transfer Act, the Secretary shall make grants to nonprofit institutions, State and local governments, cooperative extension services, or institutions of higher education (or consortia thereof), to establish a geographically dispersed network of Advanced Energy Technology Transfer Centers, to be located in areas the Secretary determines have the greatest need of the services of such Centers. In making awards under this section, the Secretary shall—

''(1) give priority to applicants already operating or partnered with an outreach program capable of transferring knowledge and information about advanced energy efficiency methods and technologies;

''(2) ensure that, to the extent practicable, the program enables the transfer of knowledge and information—

''(A) about a variety of technologies and

''(B) in a variety of geographic areas;

''(3) give preference to applicants that would significantly expand on or fill a gap in existing programs in a geographical region; and

''(4) consider the special needs and opportunities for increased energy efficiency for manufactured and site-built housing, including construction, renovation, and retrofit.

''(b) ACTIVITIES.—Each Center shall operate a program to encourage demonstration and commercial application of advanced energy methods and technologies through education and outreach to building and industrial professionals, and to other individuals and organizations with an interest in efficient energy use. Funds awarded under this section may be used for the following activities:

''(1) Developing and distributing informational materials on technologies that could use energy more efficiently.

''(2) Carrying out demonstrations of advanced energy methods and technologies.

''(3) Developing and conducting seminars, workshops, long-distance learning sessions, and other activities to aid in the dissemination of knowledge and information on technologies that could use energy more efficiently.

''(4) Providing or coordinating onsite energy evaluations, including instruction on the commissioning of building heating and cooling systems, for a wide range of energy end-users.

''(5) Examining the energy efficiency needs of energy end-users to develop recommended research projects for the Department.

''(6) Hiring experts in energy efficient technologies to carry out activities described in paragraphs (1) through (5).

''(c) APPLICATION.—A person seeking a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form and containing such information as the Secretary may require. The Secretary may award a grant under this section to an entity already in existence if the entity is otherwise eligible under this section. The application shall include, at a minimum—

''(1) a description of the applicant's outreach program, and the geographic region it would serve, and of why the program would be capable of transferring knowledge and information about advanced energy technologies that increase efficiency of energy use;

''(2) a description of the activities the applicant would carry out, of the technologies that would be transferred, and of any other organizations that will help facilitate a regional approach to carrying out those activities;

''(3) a description of how the proposed activities would be appropriate to the specific energy needs of the geographic region to be served;

''(4) an estimate of the number and types of energy end-users expected to be reached through such activities; and

''(5) a description of how the applicant will assess the success of the program.

''(d) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall award grants under this section on the basis of the following criteria, at a minimum:

''(1) The ability of the applicant to carry out the proposed activities.

''(2) The extent to which the applicant will coordinate the activities of the Center with other entities as appropriate, such as State and local governments, utilities, institutions of higher education, and National Laboratories.

''(3) The appropriateness of the applicant's outreach program for carrying out the program described in this section.

''(4) The likelihood that proposed activities could be expanded or used as a model for other areas.

''(e) COST-SHARING.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall require cost-sharing in accordance with the requirements of section 988 for commercial application activities.

''(f) DURATION.—

''(1) INITIAL GRANT PERIOD.—A grant awarded under this section shall be for a period of 5 years.

''(2) INITIAL EVALUATION.—Each grantee under this section shall be evaluated during its third year of operation under procedures established by the Secretary to determine if the grantee is accomplishing the purposes of this section described in subsection (a). The Secretary shall terminate any grant that does not receive a positive evaluation. If an evaluation is positive, the Secretary may extend the grant for 3 additional years beyond the original term of the grant.

''(3) ADDITIONAL EXTENSION.—If a grantee receives an extension under paragraph (2), the grantee shall be evaluated again during the second year of the extension. The Secretary shall terminate any grant that does not receive a positive evaluation. If an evaluation is positive, the Secretary may extend the grant for a final additional period of 3 additional years beyond the original extension.

''(4) LIMITATION.—No grantee may receive more than 11 years of support under this section without reapplying for support and competing against all other applicants seeking a grant at that time.

''(g) PROHIBITION.—None of the funds awarded under this section may be used for the construction of facilities.

''(h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

''(1) ADVANCED ENERGY METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES.—The term 'advanced energy methods and technologies' means all methods and technologies that promote energy efficiency and conservation, including distributed generation technologies, and life-cycle analysis of energy use.

''(2) CENTER.—The term 'Center' means an Advanced Energy Technology Transfer Center established pursuant to this section.

''(3) DISTRIBUTED GENERATION.—The term 'distributed generation' means an electric power generation technology, including photovoltaic, small wind, and micro-combined heat and power, that serves electric consumers at or near the site of production.

''(4) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION.—The term 'Cooperative Extension' means the extension services established at the land-grant colleges and universities under the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914.

''(5) LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.—The term 'land-grant colleges and universities' means—

''(A) 1862 Institutions (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601));

''(B) 1890 Institutions (as defined in section 2 of that Act); and

''(C) 1994 Institutions (as defined in section 2 of that Act).

''(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated in section 911, there are authorized to be appropriated for the program under this section such sums as may be appropriated.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 85, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, when we examine market barriers for advanced research energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies, we find that a simple lack of public knowledge often keeps those technologies on the laboratory shelf and out of the marketplace. Outreach and education of building and industry professionals and other key decisionmakers will undoubtedly accelerate the deployment of beneficial energy technologies and practices into the larger marketplace.

Through the guidance of Congressman BRAD MILLER, we sought to address these challenges in the energy bill of 2005 by establishing in section 917 a network of Advanced Energy Technology Transfer Centers. These centers would be a partnership between local entities and DOE to showcase advanced energy technologies and simply teach the right people how to utilize them.

Mrs. BIGGERT worked with Mr. MILLER to refine this section of the EPA Act in her bill, H.R. 85, and I believe it is a valuable improvement that will get these centers up and running sooner.

This bill came through the Science Committee and passed the House last year as part of H.R. 6203. It was a good idea then, and Chairman GORDON saw that it should be treated the same in this Congress. Like the other two bills before us today, the Science and Technology Committee passed this bill out of committee with no objection. I again commend my colleague from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) for working with the majority on this important bill, and I urge its approval by the House.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 85, the Energy Technology Transfer Act, that was introduced by Congresswoman JUDY BIGGERT, a most valuable and respected member of the Science Committee and former chairwoman of the Energy Subcommittee. I thank her and Mr. MILLER from North Carolina for their work on this bill.

There is concern that there is not enough assistance or education available in the area of transferring technologies in energy efficiency and distributed clean energy that has been developed by the Department of Energy and the national laboratories to energy end users.

In this time of heightened awareness of how much energy we are using and how much energy costs, how dependent we are on foreign countries for energy feedstocks and how to continue the emissions reductions achieved thus far under various programs, it makes sense to do all we can to make sure that energy end users are as informed as possible about what is available to them to help them become more energy efficient.

H.R. 85 would amend section 917 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which requires the Secretary of Energy to distribute grants to establish a network of advanced energy technology transfer centers for the transfer of advanced energy technologies and methods to a wide range of energy end users, including individuals, businesses and building and industrial professionals.

The bill does not create a new program. It simply improves upon the current section 917 by specifying types of activities that may be funded, minimum criteria and priorities for qualifying applications, duration of funding, and grantee evaluation requirements.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlelady from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. HALL, for yielding me the time to discuss H.R. 85, the Energy Technology Transfer Act. I would also like to commend my friend and colleague Mr. BAIRD of Washington for managing this bill, and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) for his hard work on this bill.

The provisions in this bill were included in section 11 of H.R. 6203, the Alternative Energy Research and Development Act, which passed the House by voice vote in September of last year. The Federal Government spends billions every year on energy-related research and development at our universities and national laboratories. The result is often new technologies that reduce our consumption of energy or encourage the use of alternative fuels, and thus reduces our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

But the biggest challenge to realizing these energy savings is getting these technologies out of the laboratory and into the marketplace where they can benefit all energy end users. Whether we are talking about a business owner, a homeowner, or a county or local government official, these energy end users may be hesitant to embrace advanced or alternative energy technologies with which they may not be familiar, have little experience or which may require new infrastructure.

The risk of investing in new energy technologies is just too great compared to conventional energy technologies, and getting information on the latest, greatest energy technologies can just be too costly or time-consuming.

That is why section 917 of EPACT of 2005 directed the Department of Energy to create a geographically dispersed network of energy efficient technology

transfer centers. The purpose of these centers is to transfer and provide education on energy efficiency and distribute clean energy technologies developed by DOE and at the national laboratories to energy end users.

The bill we are considering today, H.R. 85, the Energy Technology Transfer Act, would simply improve section 917 of EPACT. Instead of creating from scratch this network of centers, H.R. 85 would authorize the DOE to provide grants to and partner with existing community outreach networks. These existing networks could include cooperative extension system offices, State energy offices, local governments, institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations with expertise in energy technologies or outreach.

The Cooperative Extension Service and similar community outreach networks have a long and successful history of transferring knowledge about new technologies and techniques to farmers and other constituencies. However, few have the resources to focus on energy efficiency outside of the agriculture center. H.R. 85 would change that and would build on the successful model of the ag extension service without creating any new entity or bureaucracy.

H.R. 85 still demands the same requirements of these centers. They must be geographically dispersed; they must coordinate regional resource engineering and business expertise; and they must help apply energy technologies and methods suitable to local climate. But instead of limiting these centers to the transfer of energy technologies, H.R. 85 would expand their mission to include all advanced energy technologies.

In addition to requiring grant recipients to demonstrate results or risk losing their grant, H.R. 85 would require grantees to provide feedback to DOE on the research needs related to the production, storage or use of energy identified by energy end users. It would also encourage grant recipients to work with utilities to carry out informational activities for energy end users.

H.R. 85 prohibits grant recipients from using grants funding to construct facilities to house the tech transfer center. It doesn't authorize any funding that isn't already authorized in EPACT. In other words, this bill contains no new funding. Instead, it simply gives new guidance and direction to the Secretary about how to bolster the Department's technology transfer capacity.

I just want to give you one example from Chicago about how this program might work and its potential to save energy through the deployment of advanced energy technologies.

Before expanding their frozen pizza production plant in Woodridge, Illinois, Home Run Inn Pizza consulted with the University of Illinois Chicago's Energy Resource Center. After conducting an assessment of the plant and its operations, the UIC Energy Resource Center identified nine ways Home Run Inn Pizza could reduce their energy consumption and energy costs. Using advanced energy technologies developed as a result of DOE's funded research, Home Run Inn Pizza could reduce natural gas consumption by 13 percent and energy consumption by 5 to 6 percent, saving a total of over $15,000 annually.

Because of resource limitations, the UIC Energy Resource Center will help 12 companies in this way in fiscal year 2007, saving each on the average 15 percent of its energy budget and providing a return on investment within 2 years.

With passage of H.R. 85, the UIC Energy Resource Center and other cooperative extension and community outreach organizations could add the capacity and expertise to help many, many more companies, building managers, home builders and homeowners use technology to save energy and money.

I want to conclude by thanking the bill's chief cosponsor, my friend and colleague from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) for his strong interest in tech transfer and this legislation in particular. As we have worked with the majority to improve this legislation, his input has been invaluable. I also want to thank Chairman GORDON for recognizing the value of this legislation and moving it expeditiously through the committee. I want to thank Ranking Member HALL for his assistance as well.

Finally, I want to thank the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges and a long list of its members for their strong support of this bill. This bill represents just a small investment in the tech transfer capabilities we need to help our universities and labs move advanced energy technologies from the labs into the markets so Americans can enjoy the tangible benefits of our Federal investment in R&D.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1430

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I just would echo Mrs. BIGGERT's astute comments. We talk a lot in this body and in the administration about the importance of launching new energy research initiatives. The fact is we have a number of efficient technologies before us today, and the real challenge is getting those out to the public to be implemented as soon as possible.

The quickest way to address our energy challenge is not to immediately invent some miracle cure. The quickest way is to implement the existing technologies and mechanisms that we have already before us to begin saving energy today.

I encourage passage of this bill and commend Mrs. BIGGERT for her leadership.

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I originally introduced as an amendment to the Energy Bill, what is now section 917 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Then Chairman BOEHLERT accepted that amendment in the 108th, and then made it part of the base bill the next time that it came through this committee in the 109th. H.R. 85 makes improving changes to section 917, to make it an even more effective program.

There has never been a partisan divide over this program. This committee passed the language in this bill as part of a broader energy bill that Mrs. BIGGERT introduced in the last Congress. I thank the Chairman for working to get this bill to the House floor and thank Mrs. BIGGERT for continuing to work with me on the issue of energy technology transfer.

The purpose of the program is to encourage the use in the real world of energy efficiency technologies that have been developed with, often, federally funded research, the Department of Energy, but that has sat unused on the shelf. Using those energy efficiency technologies offers the promise of immediate help with our problems, with our energy needs, our dependency, and we should be using every effort to try to make ourselves more energy independent.

This bill would extend those ways of delivering energy conservation and efficiency programs to include cooperative extension services, which is a definite improvement, and important, that these energy efficiency technologies make their way into rural America.

And I hope that these improvements to Sec 917 of EPACT really do make the program much more comprehensive and will send a message to the Department of Energy and to the appropriators that this program should be funded.

The President's budget request failed to request funding for this program this year. In the 109th Congress the appropriators failed to include funding, despite my best efforts and many efforts to tug at someone's sleeve and get their attention, to try to include it in the appropriations bill. And I hope with a strong bipartisan effort this year, this program can be funded, and we can begin to make sure we get into practical use the energy efficiency technologies that we have developed.

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

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I urge passage of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 85, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BAIRD. 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.

REAUTHORIZING THE STEEL AND ALUMINUM ENERGY CONSERVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COMPETITIVENESS ACT OF 1988

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1126) to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1126

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 9 of the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 5108) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this Act $12,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.''.

(b) STEEL PROJECT PRIORITIES.—Section 4(c)(1) of the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 5103(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''coatings for sheet steels'' and inserting ''sheet and bar steels''; and

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

''(K) The development of technologies which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 is further amended—

(1) by striking section 7 (15 U.S.C. 5106); and

(2) in section 8 (15 U.S.C. 5107), by inserting '', beginning with fiscal year 2008,'' after ''close of each fiscal year''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LIPINSKI. 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 H.R. 1126, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 1126, legislation reauthorizing the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988, also known as the Metals Initiative.

Today, the steel industry and other metals industry, including aluminum and copper, are important parts of our national economy; and they must remain innovative in order to stay competitive in the increasingly global economy. It is vital to ensure that these industries are fully prepared to confront the challenges they face. This bill will help develop the innovative tools needed to grow valuable American jobs and businesses, and to protect the environment, by tapping into good old-fashioned American ingenuity.

Originally passed by the 100th Congress, the Metals Initiative authorizes Federal cost-sharing of research whose goals are threefold: first, enhancing energy efficiency; second, increasing the competitiveness of American industries; and, third, improving the environment through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

More specifically, this legislation promotes collaborative, public-private cost-shared research between American industry, the Department of Energy, and institutions of higher education. The bill would reauthorize the Metals Initiative at $12 million per year for fiscal year 2008 through fiscal year 2012 to fund advanced metals research.

The success of the American steel industry has a special personal significance to me. My father-in-law was a steelworker at Bethlehem Steel in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, until he lost his job when his plant closed due to foreign competition. This bill will help prevent further loss of good American jobs like his by using American innovation to increase the competitiveness of our domestic industry.

While American industries have significantly modernized, the pace of technology and the competition from overseas is relentless. Reauthorization of this bill is essential to grow American jobs, keep the customers of metal industries strong, and ensure that we have a domestic supply of the materials we need for our national defense.

The results of this program speak for themselves. Since its inception, the Metals Initiative has delivered numerous technologies to the factory floor, resulting in incredible environmental and energy savings while increasing the competitive position of the steel industry and the domestic manufacturing sector.

In the Chicago area, schools such as my alma mater Northwestern University have participated in this program, as well as companies such as IPSCO. Because of the advances made in steel production, partially through the industry's partnership with DOE, the steel industry as a whole used 28 percent less energy per ton in 2004 than it did in 1990.

In addition, this research has produced several successful and important technological breakthroughs, including the development of advanced high-strength steels and ultra-lightweight steel automobile bodies, meaning lighter, safer and more energy-efficient cars.

Recently, these advanced technologies were applied to a new, lightweight military vehicle, yielding performance improvements including 25 percent weight savings and 50 percent fuel efficiency improvements. Through this partnership program, the U.S. Army now has a next generation tactical vehicle that is agile and responsive. These advances, applied to the civilian versions of the vehicle, add a substantial further positive impact to our Nation's economy.

It is also important to note that the Federal funds in this program are given to the schools to conduct the research. Companies are not the recipients of funds, and they must provide a share of the cost of the research. But the American company that provides that match has the first opportunity to take advantage of the research findings and improve their manufacturing operations, benefiting American workers.

H.R. 1126 is simply a great example of how public-private partnership can benefit American workers and taxpayers, while saving energy, improving the environment, and accelerating the development and implementation of modern technology.

All Americans can benefit from commonsense programs such as this one, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1126.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1126, a bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988. This legislation has been passed unanimously by this body for the past two Congresses, and I hope it will do so again today.

The Department of Energy's steel-related energy-efficiency research and development program was first established in 1986 and was expanded to a broader ''metals initiative'' in 1988 when the President signed into law the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988.

Reauthorization of appropriations for the program occurred in 1992 with the passage of the Energy Policy Act, but expired in 1997. The steel industry and the Department of Energy continued the partnership under the Metals Initiative and its predecessor, the Steel Initiative, after the authorization expired. This bill would reauthorize the important program through 2012 and expand it slightly by adding research on technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The metals industry is one of the most energy-intensive industries, with energy accounting for a major portion of the cost of production. Improving energy efficiency for this industry will help to reduce the cost of steel and keep American steelmakers competitive in the world market. Improving efficiency will also help with our country's goal to become energy independent and environmentally responsible.

Investment made at the government level in partnership with industry to stimulate achievement of this increased energy efficiency has shown great results. Over the years, 58 steel

companies and 23 research organizations participated in and benefited from this program. According to testimony from the United States Steel Corporation, through this program they saw a ''set of projects that saved nearly a barrel of oil per Federal dollar invested. Or, in terms of the environment, a ton of CO_2 for every $2 of Federal money invested, all the while delivering real technology to the plant floor to help maintain a competitive advantage.''

I ask my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 1126.

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, this bill represents a great example of what we can be doing and should be doing in this country. We have legislation here that takes advantage of our great American universities and all of the knowledge, wisdom that is there, the research ability of these institutions, and puts that together with American industry to come up with ways that we can both save American jobs, grow American jobs, and help to protect the environment.

As Representative HALL said, a dollar in this program saves a barrel of oil. It is a great opportunity and a great example of what we should be doing more of here in this Congress.

I would like to thank Representatives EHLERS and AKIN for their support also on this legislation. I urge my colleagues to pass 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 Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1126.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE GIRL SCOUTS ON THEIR 95TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 136) commending the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the occasion of their 95th anniversary, for providing quality age-appropriate experiences that prepare girls to become the leaders of tomorrow and for raising issues important to girls.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 136

Whereas the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as the ''Girl Scouts'') is an organization that is committed to helping girls of today become leaders of tomorrow and that delivers quality experiences for girls locally, nationally, and internationally (through USA Girl Scouts Overseas);

Whereas the Girl Scouts are celebrating their 95th anniversary on March 12, 2007;

Whereas the Girl Scout program is girl-driven, reflecting the ever-changing needs and interests of participating girls, and provides girls with a wide variety of opportunities through its new mission statement, ''Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.'';

Whereas the Girl Scouts encourage increased skill-building and responsibility, and also promotes the development of strong leadership and decision-making skills, through program activities that are age-appropriate and based on the ''Girl Scout Promise and Law'';

Whereas at all levels of the Girl Scouts, girls participate in activities that build self-confidence, responsibility, integrity, creative decision-making skills, and teamwork, helping them take steps toward becoming the leaders of tomorrow and developing real-world leadership abilities that will last them a lifetime;

Whereas the Girl Scouts advocate for public policy that is girl-centered and beneficial to all girls;

Whereas the Girl Scouts recognize that approximately 9,000,000 children over the age of 6 are obese; that obesity is highest among girls coming from families with low-income levels, and that fewer than 1 in 3 adolescents participate in an acceptable amount of physical exercise, with girls getting less exercise than boys overall; and

Whereas the Girl Scouts are focusing on promoting healthy living for girls during 2007 and recognize through a recent study ''The New Normal: What Girls are Saying About Healthy Living'' that girls define ''health'' as a combination of diet and exercise as well as emotional well-being and self-esteem: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for its efforts to launch a national dialogue on the issue of obesity among young girls;

(2) recognizes the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for its leadership and expertise in knowing the needs of girls through the work of the Girl Scout Research Institute; and

(3) commends the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for continuing to actively promote issues important to girls.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it was a brisk March morning when Juliette Gordon Low placed a historic phone call to her cousin in Savannah, Georgia. Juliette said, ''Come right over. I've got something for the girls of Savannah, and all of America, and the world, and we're going to start it tonight.''

That phone call proved to be a historic one. On the evening of March 12, 1912, Juliette Gordon Low gathered 18 girls to register the first troop of Girl Scouts in the United States of America. With one phone call a movement was born.

An organization founded upon the principles of strength, empowerment, responsibility, and community, the Girl Scouts have continued to change the lives of many girls for generations. While other organizations have struggled to deal with factors such as race and socioeconomic status, the Girl Scouts have always been looked at as an organization of inclusion, having desegregated councils as early as 1917.

□ 1445

The Girl Scouts also offer programs for girls in unusual situations that make it difficult for them to participate in the standard program. The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars programs helps daughters of incarcerated mothers to connect with their mothers and to have the mothers participate in Girl Scout activities.

Another program, Girl Scouting in Detention Centers, allows girls who are themselves in detention centers to participate in scouting. Other initiatives try to help girls in rural areas or in public housing. There are also programs for American girls living overseas.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not comment on one of my favorite Girl Scout traditions, which is the annual cookie sale. For many years, I was overjoyed when I would see the little girls selling cookies door to door. I personally like the shortbread cookies.

It is because of the long-standing history and commitment of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America that I commend them and ask my colleagues for their support in the passage of this commendation without delay.

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today commemorates the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. Founder Juliette Daisy Gordon Low organized the first Girl Scout meeting with 18 girls in Savannah, Georgia. While living in the United Kingdom, Low dreamed of giving the United States something for all girls and envisioned exposing girls to helping their communities and enjoying the outdoors.

The organization went through many different name changes, but it was finally renamed as we know it today in 1947. It was later chartered by the United States Congress on March 16, 1950.

For 95 years, the Girl Scout organization has provided real-world leadership training for over 50 million girls and young women across the Nation. Today, overall membership includes 2.7 million girl members and 928,000 adult members, working primarily as volunteers. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say

that my two oldest granddaughters are members of the Girl Scouts of America.

The important guidance given to girls goes far beyond the eagerly anticipated annual sale of Thin Mints, Tagalongs and Dos si Dos, now made without any trans fat. Through their various programs, the organization instills the ideals of character, conduct, leadership, as well as service to others. They have recently launched a program for girls focused on healthy living that includes education regarding diet and exercise.

This important education has been instituted because of the national concern about obesity among children and the knowledge that a program such as this has been proven to lead to emotional and physical well-being.

The Girl Scouts organization has long been committed to helping girls of today become leaders of tomorrow through activities that build self-confidence, responsibility, integrity, creative decision-making skills, and teamwork. It can be difficult growing up, especially in today's society.

The Girl Scouts is one organization that has consistently guided members to believe that girls can do anything by offering girls aged 5 through 17 a variety of opportunities through their scouting programs.

The Girl Scouts are woven into the fabric of American life and have affected girls' lives, as well as their families, in virtually every community in the country. Girl Scout programs continue to expand, taking into account the diverse population of America today.

They have initiated outreach programs that strive to include all cultures as part of their mission to foster the qualities on which the United States depends. The Girl Scouts not only reach out to girls in the United States but through U.S.A. Girl Scouts Overseas, it is committed to helping girls worldwide become leaders of tomorrow. Their new vision statement sums up all that is good about this organization by saying, ''Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.''

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 136.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his eloquent remarks, and it is my pleasure to yield such time as she might consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Congressman WESTMORELAND from Georgia, also.

March marks the 95th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low, with only 18 members, Girl Scouts is now the finest organization for girls in the world, with close to 4 million active members and more than 50 million former members, and I am proud to say I am one of them.

Girl Scouts provides high-quality, age-appropriate experiences for girls locally, nationally and internationally that build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

For 95 years, Girl Scouts has served girls through a remarkable leadership development program delivered by dedicated volunteers in every community across the country. All programs are girl-driven and provide girls with a wide variety of leadership building activities that promote teamwork and the development of strong decision-making skills.

There are many programs to choose from, including more than 70 achievement badges encouraging girls to pursue education and careers in math, science and engineering, an anti-bullying and violence prevention program, and a program that connects girls with their mothers who are incarcerated.

Girl Scouts also offer a huge range of outreach activities to girls who have never had the opportunity to be a Girl Scout, including Latina and Native American girls, along with girls in rural communities and in public housing developments.

Girl Scouts recognizes the importance of giving a voice to girls by sharing original research reviews that have helped change the dialogue among the media, policymakers and community leaders on issues important to girls. They have released numerous reports that have helped shape policy discussions in this country.

In celebrating 95 years of excellence and the significant contributions, Girl Scouts will raise the bar in being the voice for all girls.

Help me commend the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for its leadership and expertise in meeting the needs of girls throughout their 95 years of remarkable programs, knowledge and information about girls who recognize the nearly 1 million current adult volunteers and volunteers through the decades.

Mr. Speaker, spending time as a Girl Scout when I was a young child I have to say was a wonderful, wonderful experience. Back then, we only worked on homemaking skills. We did things that girls did in the early 1960s, but today I am proud to say that when you see the Girl Scouts working together, serving, certainly volunteerism in nursing homes and helping our elderly, mentoring for those students that need it, they have come a long way and they are on the right track, certainly expanding their horizon for what they are going to do. When they meet with other Girl Scouts internationally, it is a wonderful opportunity so different countries can get to know each other.

They are the future of our Nation, and I am proud of them, and I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW).

Mr. BARROW. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a certain amount of personal pride and a great deal of civic pride that I join my colleagues in support of this resolution today.

On the civic side of things, I have the privilege of representing Savannah, Georgia, in the U.S. House of Representatives. It is my hometown. Juliette Gordon Low founded the Girl Scouts in Savannah. She was a native of Savannah. She founded the organization in 1912. The first organization's headquarters was in the back of her home in Savannah, Georgia, and from that humble beginning some 95 years ago we have gone from 18 members to almost 4 million members worldwide. I go by that building every time I am in town on the way to work, walking on the streets. It gives me a great deal of civic pride, along with the rest of my fellow Savannahians, who recognize that Girl Scouts the world over look to Savannah as the home and the homeplace of Girl Scouting.

On a personal level, I venture to say that very few of us guys in the U.S. House of Representatives are closer to Girl Scouting than I am. I have three sisters. Every one of them was a Girl Scout, including my twin sister, and I can tell you as a guy you don't get much closer to Girl Scouting than that.

I know that there are lots of organizations that promote courage, confidence and character in young girls but none do as good a job as the Girl Scouts.

On behalf of my hometown, on behalf of the 700,000 people that I have privilege of representing in Congress, and on behalf of the millions of brothers of Girl Scouts the worldwide, I am proud to congratulate the Girl Scouts on their 95th anniversary, and I extend my best wishes for the next 95 years.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is just good to know that in addition to the great scenic beauty and southern charm that Savannah is so well-noted for, that other good things have come from there, and certainly the Girl Scouts of America. I would urge all Members to vote in favor of this legislation.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the Girl Scouts of the USA in celebrating their 95th anniversary. Since its founding in 1912, the Girl Scouts has become the world's preeminent organization for girls. Back then they had just 18 members, but today, there are 3.7 million Girl Scouts—2.7 million girl members and 928,000 adult members working primarily as volunteers.

Girl Scouting builds confidence, character, and leadership skills which allow girls to grow into young women who make positive contributions to the world around them. Each unique experience, be it reading to younger students or participating in a math competition, empowers girls and helps them reach their full potential.

On the national level, the Girl Scouts of the USA has been an advocate for girls' involvement in math, science and engineering; for violence prevention and for the health and safety of all girls. Through their many government and corporate partnerships, the Girl Scouts bring innovative programming to girls throughout the country and expand their reach to underserved communities where girls need it most.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the Girl Scouts of Freedom Valley, which serves my district, has over 21,000 members and 7,000 adult volunteers. I am proud to have such a wonderful team of volunteers dedicated to the leadership and character development of girls in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I know that all of us take pride knowing that each and every Girl Scout of today will be one of tomorrow's leaders.

I know the Girl Scouts of the USA will celebrate many more anniversaries and continue to be a positive influence on our Nation's girls and on our society for generations to come.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. 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 Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 136.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. 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.

ESTABLISHING DUTCH-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP DAY

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 89) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day to celebrate the historic ties of the United States and the Netherlands.

The Clerk read as follows

H. RES. 89

Whereas, 225 years ago, on the 19th of April, 1782 in the City of the Hague, the Ambassadorial credentials of John Adams were officially recognized by Prince William V of Orange and the States-General, thus establishing formal diplomatic ties between the new government of the United States and the Republic of the Netherlands.

Whereas the historical ties between the Dutch and American people go back nearly 200 years earlier to the period when the Pilgrims resided for almost 11 years in the Netherlands before sailing to the new world;

Whereas the diplomatic ties between the governments of the United States and the Netherlands are the longest continuous ties between the United States and any country of the world;

Whereas the Dutch contribution to the American melting pot has played such a significant role in the life of America as exemplified by Presidents Martin Van Buren, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt;

Whereas the bonds of friendship linking the Dutch and American people continue to grow in strength and affection; and

Whereas the heritage of this friendship between peoples serves as a laudable example for the kinds of relations that should link all the peoples of the earth and should be properly extolled: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day to celebrate the historic ties of the United States and the Netherlands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, every year we and the Dutch-American community in the Netherlands celebrate the bilateral relations between the Netherlands and the United States. On April 19, 1782, John Adams, the second President of the United States, was received by the State's General in The Hague and recognized as Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America.

Also, this was the day that Mr. Adams purchased a house at Fluwelen Burgwal 18 in The Hague, which became the first American embassy in the world. This day is known by many people as the Dutch-American Friendship Day that reminds us how the Dutch played a role in America's history and traditions.

Prior to 1782, America had always had a long-standing relationship with the Dutch going back as far as 1609 when Henry Hudson, an explorer hired by a Dutch-based United East India Company, traveled up a river that now bears his name and made a land claim for his employer in the area known as New York.

□ 1500

His exploration helped the Dutch to continue to be the foremost traders and merchant mariners in the world and expanded their influence in setting up a trading post on the southern end of Manhattan Island. In 1625, the Dutch used beads to purchase Manhattan from the Indians for 60 guilders, about $24, and renamed it New Amsterdam.

It became the center for trade and commerce that attracted the best and brightest people from different walks of life, culture, and creeds. New Amsterdam received an official charter and officially became a city in 1653, making it to the first city in North America where citizens freely elected their city council. This was one of the first acts to help establish a platform for democracy in the United States.

In 1776, the Dutch played a major role in financing the Revolutionary War, and it was repaid by the U.S. Government with stock certificates, an action that eventually led to the establishment of the New York Stock Exchange in 1791. Many prominent Americans from Dutch ancestry have made significant contributions to our country, like Presidents Martin van Buren, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. All were great Americans who dedicated their lives to help shape America to be the land of the free and home of the brave.

The Dutch contributions to America are part of our customs and traditions that have enriched our lives for over 200 years. So it is very easy to support H. Res. 89. I do so and urge all of my colleagues to give their support.

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, America began its relationship with the Dutch in 1609 when Captain Henry Hudson, searching for a faster route to Asia, sailed up what is now known as the Hudson River. Although he did not find his way to Asia, he and other Dutch traders quickly saw the potential and opportunity of this country and established the second European settlement in America named Fort Nassau near Albany, New York.

Their growth continued, and eventually a large portion of the early eastern United States was settled by the Dutch. The Dutch and the United States have proven to be extraordinary allies over the past 200 years, where in many instances they came to each other's aid at critical times in history.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, the Netherlands presented a risky and courageous act by being the first country to salute the American flag. A few years later, on April 19, 1782, John Adams secured the recognition of the United States as an independent government at The Hague. He was the first U.S. envoy to the Netherlands and brokered the first loan for Congress from three banks in the Netherlands, which amounted to the entire U.S. foreign debt at that time.

Consequently, the Netherlands followed France to become the second country in the world to establish formal diplomatic relations with the United States. Also during this time, John Adams purchased a home that became the first American embassy on

foreign soil anywhere in the world. These ties still remain strong and, in fact, constitute one of the longest, unbroken diplomatic relationships between the United States and any foreign country right up until the present time.

The Netherlands have demonstrated its commitment to the United States, even in modern times, by being one of the first countries to ally itself with the U.S. after the attack on Pearl Harbor. It was one of the first to assist in the war on terror; and in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, the Netherlands graciously provided Members of Congress access to their unique and innovative perspective on water management and flood protection.

I would also like to point out that Dutch Americans have contributed greatly to our fine country and have played a significant role in the life of America. This is exemplified by our three Presidents of Dutch descent, Presidents Martin van Buren, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt. Dutch Americans have served at all levels of our government and have served us well in this distinguished body, including the two sponsors of this bill, Mr. HOEKSTRA, and my colleague on the committee, Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

Dutch Americans and our rich history have many firsts with the Netherlands, and it continues to strengthen our tie with this true diplomatic friend working side by side with the United States to bring peace, freedom, and commerce in the world at large.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 89.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure now to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for H. Res. 89. New York City was first founded by the Dutch, and they made a tremendous contribution to the city I am honored to represent and to our country. Two of the Dutch Presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, both came from New York.

If you go to the City Museum of New York, there is really a beautiful exhibit that pays tribute to the many contributions in our early days by the Dutch.

I rise in strong support of this resolution and to the preceding resolution, which honors the 95th anniversary of the Girl Scouts. I really rise today to honor the 95 years of educating, nurturing, and empowering our Nation's girls through the Girl Scout programs. Its 3.6 million members learn skills and develop character that help them succeed in the real world.

The Girl Scouts' Web site highlights the organization's focus on the leadership, strong values, social conscience and conviction about their own potential and self-worth of its members. These are vital attributes that help girls grow into the women who will lead our country and inspire the next generation of scouts.

I know personally about the power of being a Girl Scout, because I was one. The basic character and skills I learned then have served me my entire life, and they even serve me now in Congress.

For that I owe the Girl Scouts and the great Juliette Gordon, who founded the organization in 1912, a great debt of gratitude. I am proud that my hometown, New York City, is home to the Girl Scouts' national headquarters. I applaud the scouts for 95 years of empowerment and excellence, and I wish them many more years of helping nurture America's girls.

I rise in support of these two resolutions and applaud the leadership of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for bringing them before this body today, and I urge unanimous support for them.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield as much time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA).

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 89, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch American Friendship Day.

On April 19, 2007, the United States and the Netherlands will mark 225 years of unbroken diplomatic relations. It is the United States' longest existing diplomatic relationship.

My parents emigrated to the United States from the Netherlands when I was 3 years old. I am deeply proud of my Dutch heritage and feel that I have a special connection to both countries. As Russell Shorto notes in ''The Island at the Center of the World,'' Americans are indebted to the culture of tolerance that was present in 17th-century Dutch Manhattan, where men and women of diverse races and religions lived in relative peace for the first time in the New World.

Dutch ideals such as individuality, freedom, hard work, and human rights have flourished in the United States; and our two countries can and have worked together to confront common challenges to our very similar societies. Last year, my colleague on the other side of the aisle, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, and I created a bipartisan Congressional Caucus on the Netherlands, a group that I hope will deepen our understanding of the ways in which we can continue to keep working together as allies for the mutual benefit of our countries.

The United States and the Dutch have proven to be outstanding allies, allies for over 200 years. The Netherlands was the first country to salute the American flag after the Revolutionary War. It was one of the first to assist the United States and recognize the threat from radical militant Islamists and has graciously provided Members of Congress and others with critical access to their unique and innovative perspective on water management and flood protection in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita.

Put simply, the value of the relationship between our two countries and the opportunities that exist to learn from each other should be deeply appreciated and recognized.

I encourage all Members to support H. Res. 89 to honor Dutch and American friendship and celebrate the historic ties between our countries

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor in strong support of H. Res. 89, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day, to celebrate the historic ties of the United States and the Netherlands.

My district in West Michigan has some of the deepest roots of Dutch-American history and heritage in the country. Dutch explorers, traders and settlers were a significant part of the earliest European exploration of the New World, especially in New York and New Jersey. However, the first major wave of Dutch immigration began in the 1840s with the Dissentings (later on known as Calvinists), a new group of religious people in the Netherlands. Like so many of the original settlers here in America, they wanted more religious liberty than they experienced in their home country. They were also seeking prosperity in a time of economic downturn and agricultural hardship in Europe. So the Dutch pilgrims dared the journey across the Atlantic to New York and then moved across northern New York and finally settled near the shores of Lake Michigan. Waves of Dutch settlers soon found Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan, to be the places of job growth and the religious liberty they were seeking.

I am proud to report that the traditions of a ''Dutch work ethic'' and religious devotion still permeate Grand Rapids and the West Michigan region today. Generations of Dutch immigrants have enriched our area with the unique customs and traditions of their ancestral homeland. They are a people that have given the world great artists, celebrated philosophers, noted theologians, and leaders of international business.

The Dutch-American Friendship Day called for in this resolution would be an honorable response to annual celebrations in the Netherlands. Every year, the Dutch-American community in the Netherlands commemorates the bilateral relations between the Netherlands and the United States. Celebrated on April 19, the Dutch-American Friendship Day remembers the day that John Adams, the second president of the United States, was received by the States General in The Hague and recognized as an ambassador of the United States of America. It was also the day that the house he had purchased at Fluwelen Burgwal 18 in The Hague became the first American Embassy in the world. Today, the diplomatic ties between our two governments are the longest continuous ties between the U.S. and any other country in the world.

This long history of diplomacy, cooperation and friendship should be lauded as an example for all nations. I congratulate my colleague from West Michigan, PETER HOEKSTRA—himself a Dutch-American—for introducing this resolution. I am proud of my family's and my wife's family's Dutch roots, Mr. Speaker, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today in support of House Resolution 89, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day.

The Dutch/American relationship is the longest unbroken diplomatic relationship in the history of the United States of America. The relationship actually began years before the Pilgrims landed in America as they first resided for almost 11 years in the Netherlands before sailing for the New World.

On November 16, 1776, only 4 months after declaring our independence from Great Britain, an American ship sailed into the West Indies Dutch harbor of St. Eustatius and was greeted by a cannon salute in recognition of the American flag. It was the first official recognition by any sovereign nation of the United States.

On April 19, 1789, Ambassador John Adams officially presented his credentials to Prince William of Orange, thus establishing the diplomatic ties between the United States and the Republic of the Netherlands that we enjoy today.

The U.S./Dutch relationship has stood the test of time and has strengthened in the crucible of conflict as the Dutch have stood beside us in times of peace and war. The Dutch supported us in our war for independence. Sixty years ago Dutch and American servicemen stood side by side during World War II and today the Dutch stand by us still in the Global War on Terror.

The debt we owe to our Dutch friends is seen not only in our people, and in the persons of such famous Dutch Americans as Presidents Martin VanBuren, and Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, but also in our experience as a Nation. Our traditions of religious freedom and tolerance as well as our system of government, all have spiritual and legal roots in our relationship with the Dutch Republic.

That is why I stand today to thank the Dutch people for their support over these centuries and to encourage the founding of a Dutch-American Friendship Day.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of H. Res. 89, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I support and strongly urge the passage of H. Res. 89, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 89.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. 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.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 198) recognizing the significance of Black History Month.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 198

Whereas the first African Americans were brought forcibly to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans were enslaved in the United States and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of basic, fundamental rights;

Whereas despite this enslavement, early Black Americans made significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, literary, religious, scientific, and technological advancement of the United States;

Whereas in the face of these injustices, United States citizens of all races distinguished themselves in their commitment to ideals of which the United States was founded and fought for the rights and freedom of African Americans;

Whereas the United States was conceived, as stated in the Declaration of Independence, as a new country dedicated to the proposition that ''all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness'';

Whereas since its founding, the United States has been an imperfect work in making progress towards those noble goals;

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of a people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach them but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure before committing themselves to trying again; and

Whereas the month of February is officially celebrated as Black History Month, which dates back to 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period of time in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the significance of Black History Month as an important time to recognize the contributions of Black Americans in the Nation's history, and encourages the continued celebration of this month to provide an opportunity for all people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation; and

(2) affirms that—

(A) the contributions of Black Americans are a significant part of the history, progress, and heritage of the United States; and

(B) the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States enriches and strengthens the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I now yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, every February Americans celebrate African American Black History Month. This tribute dates back to 1926, and it is credited to a Harvard scholar, Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Dr. Woodson, the son of former slaves, dedicated his life to ensuring that black history was accurately documented and disseminated.

In an effort to bring national attention to the contributions of African Americans, Dr. Woodson organized the first annual Negro History Week in 1926. He selected the second week of February, during which Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass had celebrated their birthdays.

Later, Woodson's contributions helped emerge during the civil rights campaign of the 1950s and 1960s, where the black studies movement began to spawn African American history, theory courses, programs and departments on the Nation's college and university campuses. During the early 1970s, Negro History Week was renamed Black History Week; and in 1976, it officially became Black History Month, designating all of February for the recognition of African American history.

In 1926, during the time for the first organized tribute to black history, the sociopolitical landscape in this country for African Americans was demonstrably different than it is today. At that time, ''separate but equal,'' a doctrine that afforded African Americans second-class citizenship, was the law of the land, although it was an immoral one.

Through many historic efforts of many Americans of all races, legalized discrimination became a thing of the past. This body passed landmark legislation, most notably the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This was just 43 and 42 years ago when President Lyndon Johnson signed these legislative measures into law, laws that prevented Jim Crow laws from subjugating and denying African Americans the right to vote in certain southern States, the imposition of poll taxes, the segregation of schools, housing, bus and train transportation, restrooms and other public accommodations.

□ 1515

Moreover, Black History Month is also promoting public awareness of the struggles and achievements of African Americans. We must continue to build

on the existence of the past and look forward to the future.

African Americans, over the years, have made great strides, but, yet, we still have a long way to go. For instance, in 2005, there were 37 million poor people in America. The poverty rate is about 24.9 percent for blacks, compared to 8.3 percent for whites.

The homeownership rate among white households is about 74.2 percent, compared to 47.1 percent for African Americans. This huge gap between white and black homeowners will continue to be a primary factor that will undermine the growth of African Americans and their family structure to obtain wealth, capital assets and better neighborhoods.

While 5 percent of the world's population lives in the United States, we have 25 percent of the world's prison population in United States jails and prisons. Nationally, the Bureau of Justice statistics reports that the United States incarcerates 2 million people. Whites are about 36 percent, compared to 46 percent for blacks in prison.

As some of us know, the majority of people in prison are attributed to drug convictions. The law is not equally applied when it comes to drug offenses involving crack and powder cocaine. Five grams of crack cocaine brings a mandatory sentence of 5 years, compared to 5 grams of powder cocaine, which has no sentencing requirements, and the possessor of powder may get probation. Of course, a disproportionate number of the individuals who use crack cocaine are African Americans.

These are just a few barriers that many African Americans confront every day. And so when we honor Black History Month, we are recognizing the struggles and achievements of African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I know that Representative AL GREEN, who is the sponsor of this legislation, had intended to be here today to speak on it. Unfortunately, he had to be away in Texas taking care of some activities in his district, and I would ask that he be allowed to submit his statement for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I support H. Res. 198, and urge all of my colleagues to vote for this legislation.

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I am honored to speak today in support of H. Res. 198, recognizing the significance of Black History Month.

Each February we express our appreciation of the struggles, determination and perseverance of the African American community of the past and present. February is a time to recognize the contributions of black Americans that have enriched our culture and our heritage.

There have been great activists, politicians, artists, writers, poets, scientists, economists, athletes, entertainers and musicians that have all bettered our way of life. These achievements, the achievements of so many, have encouraged today's youth to strive for a more equal and free country.

It is impossible to celebrate Black History Month without mentioning such noted leaders as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks. These achievers, and others, have helped make this country what it is today.

Today's popular culture is replete with African American icons, through sports, music and the entertainment industry, icons such as Richard Pryor, Halle Berry, Tiger Woods, Arthur Ashe, Michael Jordan, Muhammad Ali, and Hank Aaron.

The music industry alone has influenced our culture for decades, Louis Armstrong, Dorothy Dandridge, Billie Holiday, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Georgia's own Ray Charles, each of whom overcame adversity before and during the civil rights movement just to play their music.

When Harvard scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson had the idea to create a week-long celebration of black history back in 1926, his goal was, and I quote, ''to make the world see the Negro as a participant rather than as a lay figure in history.'' Over time, it has become the month-long celebration and commemoration that it is today. It is with great pleasure that I speak today in support of H. Res. 198.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to join me in supporting this resolution.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) for his statement. And I also want to thank him for the opportunity to work with him today during this process. It has indeed been a pleasure.

I also want to commend Representative GREEN from Texas for his introduction of this legislation.

In closing, let me also indicate that it is important that we look at the contributions that all racial ethnic groups have made to the development of this great country that we call the United States of America.

There is no group who didn't come here looking for something different than what they had. And fortunately, for many of them, they have been able to find that America is, indeed, a country where every person can have the opportunity to grow and develop to be a part of.

I have been pleasured, I guess, to represent many high profile individuals, African Americans like Oprah Winfrey, who is in my congressional district, like Michael Jordan, who played basketball out at the stadium in my district.

But I often tell young people that I grew up in an environment where we were taught to read by unlocking words. And to us, history sort of meant, at that time, his story. And so I encourage them to think of what I call mystery, which becomes my story. And so each one of us have an opportunity to contribute to the further development of this great Nation.

I commend the gentleman for introducing H. Res. 198. I urge its passage.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Congressman AL GREEN'S Resolution to honor Black History Month.

Founded in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, Black History Month serves as a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of African-Americans in shaping our Nation. It brings to life a rich and vibrant history that was all too often untold.

The fact is that until there was a Black History Month, prominent African-Americans were virtually left out of our Nation's school books. Often, the only mention of African-Americans would reference the institution of slavery. This is simply unacceptable. Black history is not an anonymous footnote, and expands well beyond the institution of slavery. We have great leaders who fought to overcome the oppression of slavery and that of Jim Crow. We have great scientific minds and inventors. We have extraordinary novelists, poets, and musicians. These are not nameless, faceless individuals, but people who have helped shape our Nation.

Because of Black History Month we have expanded our schoolchildren's curriculum. Our children now learn about Frederick Douglas, Thurgood Marshall, Malcolm X and Toni Morrison. These are names and stories that our children otherwise may not have known. With Black History Month we are preserving our abundant history for future generations.

I commend Congressman GREEN for bringing this important Resolution to the floor and I strongly urge my colleagues' support.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H. Res. 198, a resolution I authored recognizing the significance of Black History Month. This piece of legislation is supported by conservatives, moderates and liberals. It is a piece of legislation that I received not one negative comment on. Every person that I requested agreed to support the legislation. So I thank those who supported it.

I am delighted that 80 Members of Congress joined me in cosponsoring this bipartisan resolution which serves as a testament to our united desire to inform all Americans about the contributions made by persons of diverse backgrounds to the development of our great country.

Black History Month is a time of the year when all Americans of every race and ethnicity are given the opportunity to study the untold history of African-Americans and their contributions to American and world civilization. Additionally, Black history is American history and it is essential that we recognize the great contributions of all Americans by commemorating this month long celebration.

My resolution:

Recognizes the significance of Black History Month as an important time to recognize the contributions of Black Americans in the nation's history;

Encourages the continued celebration of this month to provide an opportunity for all people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the nation;

Affirms that the contributions of Black Americans are a significant part of the history, progress, and heritage of the United States; and the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States enriches and strengthens the nation.

Black History Month is also a special time to honor pioneers such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, W.E.B. DuBois, and many others who fought for the complete freedom and full emancipation of African-Americans. That is why we use Black History Month and every month to honor their wonderful contributions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues support H. Res. 198, a resolution recognizing the significance of Black History Month.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to show my support for the principles of Black History Month. I was privileged to be a part of the recent Congressional trip to Selma, Alabama. While in that historic city, we joined together and walked in the footsteps of the brave individuals who fought to ensure that the rights and opportunities of our Nation would be available to all of its people.

The Civil Rights Movement was not the first call for freedom and equality in our Nation's history, and it will not be the last. But its success provided a blueprint for future generations to follow, an example of hope to all those who seek to secure the basic freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution.

The history of African Americans extends far beyond the Civil Rights Movement. The works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks and Thurgood Marshall will resonate in American society for generations to come. There are so many African Americans who have made notable contributions to our Nation. For example, Benjamin Banneker blazed new trails in astronomy, accurately predicting solar and lunar eclipses and Dr. Charles Richard Drew developed techniques in blood storage and helped to develop the blood banks which have saved countless military and civilian lives over the years. And there are many others, in fields too numerous to name. What is important is that we take time to honor, to remember, and to revere all of these individuals.

Black History month gives all Americans an opportunity to recognize and continue to learn about African-American history, which is the history of our Nation. I am proud to do my part to help promote the contributions that African Americans have made to our country.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. 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 Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 198.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1835

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPPS) at 6 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.

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:

H.R. 85, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 136, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 89, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

ENERGY TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 85, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 85, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 395, nays 1, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 136]

YEAS—395

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Braley (IA)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—1

Flake

NOT VOTING—37

Baldwin
Bonner
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Capuano
Castor
Cooper
Crowley
Davis, Jo Ann
Emanuel
Gallegly
Gillibrand
Grijalva
Higgins
Inglis (SC)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Kilpatrick
Matsui
Meek (FL)
Miller (FL)
Moran (VA)
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Royce
Sánchez, Linda T.
Serrano
Smith (WA)
Tancredo
Weller
Young (FL)

□ 1859

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE LATE HONORABLE WILLIAM ANDERSON

(Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I ask for a moment of silence on behalf of Captain William Anderson, a former Congressman from Tennessee who recently passed away.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members will rise and The House will observe a moment of silence.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

COMMENDING THE GIRL SCOUTS ON THEIR 95TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 136.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 136, 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 395, nays 0, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 137]

YEAS—395

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Braley (IA)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—38

Baldwin
Bonner
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Capuano
Castor
Cooper
Crowley
Davis, Jo Ann
Emanuel
Gallegly
Gillibrand
Grijalva
Higgins
Inglis (SC)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Kilpatrick
Matsui
Meek (FL)
Miller (FL)
Moran (VA)
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Royce
Sánchez, Linda T.
Serrano
Skelton
Smith (WA)
Tancredo
Weller
Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes are remaining in this vote.

□ 1910

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ESTABLISHING DUTCH-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 89.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 89, 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 391, nays 0, not voting 42, as follows:

[Roll No. 138]

YEAS—391

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bono
Boozman
Boren

Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Braley (IA)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—42

Baldwin
Bonner
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Capuano
Castor
Cooper
Crowley
Davis, Jo Ann
Emanuel
Fattah
Gallegly
Gillibrand
Grijalva
Higgins
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Kilpatrick
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
Meek (FL)
Miller (FL)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Neal (MA)
Pascrell
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Royce
Sánchez, Linda T.
Serrano
Sessions
Smith (WA)
Tancredo
Weller
Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1917

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. KILPATRICK. Madam Speaker, due to official leave of absence, I was unable to vote on three bills considered today under suspension of the rules. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on final passage of H.R. 85, the Energy Technology Transfer Act; "yea" on final passage of H. Res. 136, Commending the Girl Scouts of the United States on the Occasion of their 95th Anniversary, and "yea" on H.R. 89, Establishing the Sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEES ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committees on Homeland Security and Financial Services:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 9, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: I am writing to resign my appointment to the House Homeland Security Committee and the House Financial Services Committee pending my appointment to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Warm regards,

MARSHA BLACKBURN,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM TO FILE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON H.R. 985, WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. TIERNEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to file a supplemental report to accompany H.R. 985, the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act.

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

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, on Friday, March 9, while on a tour of Walter Reed Medical Center, I inadvertently missed the vote on H. Res. 229. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

REMOVING MINORITY MEMBER FROM AND ELECTING CERTAIN MINORITY MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 236) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows

H. RES. 236

Resolved, That Mr. Burton of Indiana is hereby removed from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SEC. 2. The following named Members are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR.—Mr. Heller of Nevada, to rank immediately after Mr. Walberg.

(2) COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE.—Mrs. Blackburn.

(3) COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES.—MR. MARCHANT.

(4) COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE.—Mrs. Capito, to rank immediately after Mr. Boozman.

(5) COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY.—Mr. McCarthy of California.

(6) COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.—MR. REICHERT, TO RANK IMMEDIATELY AFTER MR. INGLIS OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

(7) COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS.—Mr. Buchanan.

Mr. PUTNAM (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HALLIBURTON

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, yesterday in the afternoon on a bright Sunday, one of my constituents, my corporate constituents, decided to offer a press statement to indicate that they were relocating to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

We know that many American companies do have their offices in Dubai, and we know it is a thriving metropolis of business. But Halliburton is one of the largest corporate government contractors in the United States; and, unfortunately, their offices located in the 18th Congressional District have had an impact on the employees who work there.

It is unfortunate that the arrogance of this company would suggest that they could make announcements in the brightness of sunlight on Sunday and not engage their local community leaders, their employees, and others who might be vested in the relocation of corporate headquarters.

So I ask the leadership of this company to come forward and answer a number of questions which I will be sending to them. And I express my own personal outrage that a company would move its corporate headquarters without the full discussion of those who are stakeholders and work every day paying their taxes as employees of this company.

I look forward to the light of day being shined on Halliburton.

VILLAINS HALL OF SHAME

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, there is a new candidate for the ''Villains Hall of Shame.'' What began as a Sunday morning journey to church for Rose Morat of Queens, New York, ended up in ambush, robbery, and 4 days in the hospital.

Ms. Morat is 101 years old. She was leaving her apartment complex when a shameless woman-beater pretended to help her out the door, but smashed her three times in the face, breaking a cheekbone. He stole her purse; then he threw her to the ground and hit her again. And after making his getaway, this dastardly menace struck again 30 minutes later. This time he beat up an 85-year-old lady and stole her purse.

New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly has made it a priority to capture this outlaw. Angry New Yorkers are already flooding the airwaves with suggestions for punishment for this criminal that would make the hanging of Saddam Hussein look mild.

Madam Speaker, even in our current culture of tolerance, there are some things you just don't do, some things we just don't tolerate. No one beats up elderly grandmothers, or they will face the wrath of the public and the long arm of the law.

And that's just the way it is.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, 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 gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FORMER U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, today is the 55th day of an injustice. This injustice began on January 17 of 2007 when two U.S. Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison.

Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas.

These two agents were doing their job to protect the American people. They never should have been sent to prison. There are legitimate legal questions about how this prosecution was initiated and about how the prosecutors proceeded in this case.

To prosecute the agents, the U.S. Attorney's Office granted immunity to a known drug smuggler. Homeland Security officials promised Members of Congress certain information about this case, but they could not provide the information. Reports have also indicated that the prosecutors may have withheld crucial evidence from the defense. The Drug Enforcement Agency reports revealed that the Mexican drug smuggler brought a second load of marijuana, 752 pounds, into the United States. But this information was kept from the jury and the public.

Madam Speaker, over the past 6 months, dozens of Members of Congress have asked President Bush to listen to the American people and pardon these agents.

I want the two agents and their families to know that we have not forgotten them and we will not forget them. Members of Congress will come to the floor to defend these agents, and we will continue to do so until they are pardoned.

On February 7, 2007, Senator DIANE FEINSTEIN wrote Judiciary Chairman PATRICK LEAHY to request a committee investigation of this case. She wrote, and I quote the Senator:

''I strongly believe that the sentences in this case are too extreme given the criminal nature of the smuggler and his possession of large quantities of drugs and given the fact that he physically resisted at least one attempt by Agents Ramos and Compean to bring him into custody.

''In addition, to my knowledge, neither of the agents had prior convictions or any other aggravating circumstances to warrant particularly harsh treatment under the law. Yet these men were given sentences that some individuals who are convicted of murder would not receive.''

Madam Speaker, this is not a Republican or a Democratic issue, but it is an issue of fairness and justice. Chairman LEAHY has already approved Senate hearings in this case. On February 23, 2007, I sent a letter to House Judiciary Chairman JOHN CONYERS asking for hearings on this case on the House side. I hope Congress will soon hold these hearings because it is time for justice to prevail over an injustice.

Madam Speaker, before closing, I want to say to the White House and to the President, please listen to the American people. Please assure the American people that two agents who have done their best to help protect America will not be forgotten in prison, because they have no business being in prison. They should receive justice, not injustice.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS 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 Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY 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 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.)

□ 1930

CONDITIONS AT WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPPS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I want to rise today before this House to talk about something that weighs on the conscience of every Member in this House, a news story that broke very recently that has upset us all, the conditions at Walter Reed Hospital. Many Members of Congress have gone out there and looked at these conditions, and we are shocked by them.

Every Member that I have spoken to is as concerned as I am. I am particularly concerned because I am from a district that I would argue has probably put more fighters in this war than any district in America, having Fort Hood, Texas, a two division post, the only two division post in the Army in my district. The 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division, along with the 3rd Corps, have deployed now to Iraq on three separate occasions each. The 3rd Corps and the 1st Cavalry are over there right now as we speak and the 4th Infantry Division is gearing back up to go back.

Our soldiers have given a lot of their blood, sweat and tears to this war. They believe in their mission and they go to their mission as heroes, as far as I am concerned. And to learn that someone, whoever they may be, from whatever post in America or around the world, would have substandard conditions at what is supposed to be one of the two or three premier medical facilities for our Army in the country, shocks me and concerns me.

I would think it concerns every Member of this Congress, whether they are for this war or whether they are against it. But for me in particular, having 50,000 soldiers that depend on me and other Members of this Congress to make sure that we have an adequate facility that gives the absolute best medical care that we can give, that we have that, is important. It is very important. It is actually lifesavingly critical.

Now, first, to get the right picture, I have been to Walter Reed. I have been there on multiple occasions. I have visited one patient as he cycled through there a 9-month period of time, maybe even longer than that.

I will tell you that the emergency care, the intensive care that was given in that unit, I can't say enough good about the doctors, the nurses, the orderlies and everyone who was doing the work there. I think that they gave outstanding service, the kind of service we would expect for our soldiers.

The trauma medicine that is developing and has developed in the military today, from a medical standpoint, and I am no doctor, but I have sat in a courtroom and heard an awful lot of medical testimony, the trauma treatment that we have for our soldiers today is, quite frankly, state-of-the-art in what they can do to save lives, and we, by the procedures we have set up for our soldiers, are saving a lot of lives.

But then we learn that people who are there as holdovers, who are at the recovery side of their phase through Walter Reed, are being housed in substandard housing, where there were rodents and infestations of insects, where there was black mold, which I happen to have personal firsthand experience with, having been moved out of my house for a little over a year because of stachybotrys, black mold, and having had my house totally wrecked to get that stuff out of it. I am very familiar with the health hazards that are claimed for that mold.

To know that soldiers who have given their hard work and suffered an injury of some sort on our behalf are being required to stay in substandard housing such as that, or substandard facilities such as that, it is appalling. Quite frankly, if it turns out that is what the black mold was that they found there, that has health implications that affects the breathing of every human being, and it is very critical that we be concerned with that.

So this is an issue where the light of day needs to shine on it, and we need to talk about it. I hope some of my colleagues will join us later here so we can discuss this matter, because I think it is important. I think it is important, and the American people expect, as I expect, that we will give the best quality health care from beginning to end for every soldier and veteran in the United States.

It is Congress' responsibility to ensure that these medical facilities are providing the best possible care. The buck stops here. We have that responsibility.

I think overall we are very proud of the medical care that is provided for our soldiers. But we can only hope to expend much more time and, if necessary, much more resources to make sure that what is going on at Walter Reed is corrected and that we look to see if there is anything we need to do at every hospital in America.

I want to applaud the Army for getting on this deal right away. They have dispatched officials to inspect the quality of care at 11 hospitals, and they are doing that this week and next. Of course, the President immediately acted and appointed Bob Dole and Donna Shalala to head a bipartisan commission to look into the solution to this problem. I think that is commendable, and I think that clearly shows how much the President and the White House care, as we care, about the health care of our soldiers.

Because I have a major hospital in my district, at Fort Hood, I went this weekend out to Carl Darnall Army Medical Center in my district. This wasn't my first trip there. I have been there on numerous occasions. This hospital serves approximately 50,000 active duty soldiers and airmen, approximately 56,000 family members, and over 40,000 retirees and surviving annuitants. This hospital, quite frankly, we have been working very diligently and we are very hopeful that we will expand Darnall so that it can be bigger and better.

I was not concerned from what I had seen on multiple visits in the past that we would find problems at Darnall. But it seemed like to me that in light of the fact that we had this issue at Walter Reed, which by my visits to the intensive care unit at Walter Reed, I certainly did not see these conditions that are being described at Walter Reed, that I should make sure to talk to the folks, to go look at the hospital, to look at where we are housing our medical holdovers, and just see exactly what is going on at Darnall, too.

I am happy to report, Madam Speaker, quite frankly, I was very impressed. In fact, I went into the rooms where some of our holdover medical folks were. Most of them were Guardsmen. They are living in dormitory-like rooms, dormitory barrack rooms, two to a room, occasionally one to a room, the kind of room I checked my boys into when I checked them into Texas Tech University to go to college. They were the kind of room you would put your child in, you would be happy to put your teenager or young adult child in while they were going to school; clean, well-established, well-furnished, kitchenette-type rooms.

I visited some of the soldiers and asked them how things were working, were things working well there at Darnall. They were pleased. I went into more than one room and dropped in to visit with these folks.

I want to say in defense of the people in the Army Medical Corps, these folks do care about our soldiers. I don't

know what fell through the cracks out there at Walter Reed, and I am sure we are going to find out about that, but overall I cannot impress upon this body how much we have to respect these doctors and nurses and the time they are giving, because these folks are being deployed as well as serving our soldiers here. Many of them are being deployed to the two theaters of war today, working in theater hospitals that are part of the lifesaving process that we provide for soldiers today.

It is a tragedy when we talk about the number of soldiers that we have lost and airmen and, of course, Marines and sailors. It is a tragedy when we lose one, and it breaks the heart of every American to lose any soldier. But as we look at what the medical community has been able to accomplish in this war over previous wars, we have kept fatalities down because of doctors and nurses and administrators and the plans they have to get our soldiers to the doctor, to get help quickly.

The key is if they can get them off the battlefield and to a professional in 12 minutes, the vast majority of the time, no matter how serious the wound, we are able to save their lives. That is a track record that we don't have from previous wars. But it has been done by a combination of utilizing our medical facilities that all the branches of the service are involved in, and I have an example from back home that I will talk about sometime today to show how that works.

Also while I was there, I went and visited the Olin E. Teague Veterans Center in Temple, and I will tell you, you think about what you have heard about veterans hospitals in the past. Well, I am telling you, everything you have heard, you need to go visit Olin E. Teague Hospital in Temple, Texas. I promise you, you will be impressed with the quality of health care and the quality of that facility, which houses everything from our old soldiers in nursing care to intermediate holding care to hospital care for our veterans. I am telling you, it is state-of-the-art, first-class medical care that they are providing there.

Their new center, where they have about 400 men and women, it is better than what I live in here in Washington. It is a nice place. It looks like we have got a bunch of really happy veterans in that center. They have a lot of amenities. It is gloriously beautiful. I commend the foresight of those who preceded me to build that hospital up to the quality it is, and I feel very confident any inspections that take place there or at Darnall are going to come back with a very good report card.

But that doesn't get us away from the issue we have been talking about, the Walter Reed issue. These dedicated professionals can do just so much, and I will tell you when the Army was called upon to respond I think they responded very quickly.

I see I have been joined by my friend ROBIN HAYES.

I yield to ROBIN HAYES.

Mr. HAYES. Congressman CARTER, thank you very much for holding this Special Order tonight. I think it is critically important that people be fully informed as to the quality of medical care that is being administered to our troops.

You are a true champion for Fort Hood down in Texas. The epicenter of the universe for me is Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina. You and I both spend a tremendous amount of time on this. Nothing is more important to you and I and our staffs and other Members of Congress than the health of every active duty, former, or soon-to-be-retired veteran. Anybody that is connected to the military, there is nothing that we will not do to make sure that their care is the absolute ultimate.

You and I both have seen, as has Congressman POE and others, there have been some revelations at Walter Reed Army Hospital. There have also been two instances at the VA hospital in Salisbury, in my district, where the care was not what you and I would have liked. Medicine is an art as well as a science. You and I and the rest of Congress are committed to making sure that those situations don't ever happen.

But I think far more important, particularly in this debate, is the American public see here and realize fully that when you and I travel to Landstuhl, Germany, or Fort Bragg or the Hefner Medical Center or the Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas, the care that these men and women receive from incredibly dedicated, well-trained and committed individuals have saved so many lives on the battlefield.

□ 1945

These are the pilots who have flown the medical evacuations in helicopters and C–17 and other aircraft, racing the medical clock back to the U.S., Walter Reed, where incredible medical miracles have been performed, not just because of the advancement of science, but the dedication of the men and women who administer the care.

As we talk about this, it is appropriate and necessary that we look under every nook and cranny. And if any Building 18 situation arises, whether it is Walter Reed, Fort Hood, Fort Bragg, whatever the case may be, we want to know about it. We have many Members and staff members who follow this closely. We will move as quickly as we possibly can. We try to stay in front of these situations.

General Kiley has resigned. I called for his resignation. You hate to do those kinds of things, but the appropriate people need to take action. Action has been taken. People are aware at different levels that maybe weren't as aware as they should have been before. But at the end of the process, and thank you for bringing this to everyone's attention in a concise and I think important manner, the men and women as we speak around the clock and around the world are doing everything they can, not only to treat our wounded on the battlefield, but to provide preventive care for their wives, children and their parents. Everything that can be done, obviously, is not done every day; but it is not because the desire is not there.

When I look at Womack Army Medical Hospital at Fort Bragg, they receive tremendous care. I was recently down there with ADAM SMITH who is now chairman of the TUTC, which stands for Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Contingencies, to us Special Forces, and he and I toured the medical training facilities where combat medics are trained to respond to battlefield situations. Let me tell you, these men and women have done incredible things.

As we move forward, and well we must, you and I and everyone here are going to do everything possible to make sure that care exceeds everyone's expectation. Nothing is more important to this country. They are responsible for the past; they are responsible for the future. Thank God for the men and women in uniform. We will do everything we can to support them. Again, I thank you very much for having this Special Order tonight.

Mr. CARTER. I thank my colleague from North Carolina, ROBIN HAYES, a true friend of the American soldier. He proves it by his actions as well as his words, and I thank you on behalf of our soldiers.

Now I yield to my colleague from Texas, one of my former judge colleagues, Judge POE.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Judge CARTER. Thank you for an opportunity to make some comments on this important issue.

It has taken less than a week for the American public and this Congress to find out what was taking place at Walter Reed Hospital. It is one of the premier hospitals in the world for treating the injured. But yet there were some problems and those problems, rather than being overlooked, are being dealt with, and that is very, very good.

A couple of observations that I would like to make about this whole episode. As you mentioned, Judge CARTER, American troops if they are found after an injury within a few minutes, the likelihood of their survival is in the 90 percent range. That is a tremendous percentage of recovery for these individuals to live if they are wounded. And they live from wounds that just years ago, even back in Vietnam days, they would have died from. But because of medical science, expanding as it has, they will recover from those wounds, although they will have, many of them, lifetime recovery periods. And that is where we must make sure that we take care of our military, that the recovery for many of these individuals is going to be a long, long time. Sometimes the rest of their lives.

An observation I would like to make about this situation at Walter Reed is that the American public expects us to take care of our soldiers. I think this is good. I think it is good that the American public is upset about the fact that some of our troops are not being taken care of the way they should be because our people in this Nation, regardless of how they feel about Iraq or Afghanistan, the issue of taking care of the wounded is not a political issue. It is an American issue, and Americans expect the best care for our troops. And that is important that the American public support our military in the recovery process.

To try to illustrate how the American public supports our wounded warriors, I had the opportunity to go to Landstuhl Military Base in Germany where wounded Americans come from Afghanistan and Iraq, many of them with severe injuries, and they are treated there before they are even brought back to the United States because of the critical care facilities they have at Landstuhl.

And when I found out I was going to be able to go over for this short trip with about 3 days' notice, I notified my two district directors in Texas to see if we could get some kids from local schools to make some cards to take over and give to the wounded. They met me at the airport with two suitcases full of handmade cards from third, fourth, and fifth graders of the Second Congressional District of Texas, and a little over 6,000 cards. I checked one of the suitcases. The smaller one I took on the plane with me, and I started reading them as I was flying over. The person next to me wanted to know what I was doing and I told him. And so he wanted to see them. He started reading the cards. Next thing I knew, the whole plane was reading. The cards were going up and down the aisle, and there were a few tears in the background.

But the point being that the American public supports our military, supports our military even when they are wounded, and cares a great deal about them, to the tune of 6,000 handmade cards from a bunch of kids in Texas. Of course the troops were very grateful for those cards. But it is a sign and observation that the American public will always support our troops when they are wounded and expect us in the Congress to make sure they have the care that they deserve.

The President acted very decisively and quickly, and I congratulate him for that because when things go bad at a hospital like it did at Walter Reed, the person in charge of the hospital needs to be removed. They need to get somebody over there that will take care of business and make sure that we don't have problems with our military.

How we treat our warriors in aftercare really defines us as who we are as a Nation.

One other comment I would like to make is it goes back to something that is tradition with our United States military, has been for a long time through many wars. The American fighting man always has the role, the obligation, the duty to never leave anyone behind on the battlefield. People in other cultures do not understand why Americans are so relentless in making sure we take care of not only our wounded but those that have fallen on the battlefield. They don't understand why we do that. We do that because we are Americans.

One way that we leave no one behind is to make sure we don't leave them behind in the hospitals, we don't leave them behind in aftercare. We take care of them for as long as necessary, and if it means taking care of them the rest of their lives, so be it, because that is what we do in this country: we leave no one behind.

So I commend you, Judge Carter, for this Special Order and bringing awareness of this whole plight of hospital care and the care of our warriors to the American public.

Mr. CARTER. I am very fortunate, Madam Speaker, to have DUNCAN HUNTER, somebody if you asked people in this Congress who is a friend of the soldier, the first word of their mouth will always be DUNCAN HUNTER. He is the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. He is a hero for American soldiers because he never forgets the needs of the soldier, both on the battlefield and in the hospital and as a veteran. I am honored to have DUNCAN HUNTER join us.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank my friend for yielding, and with that kind of introduction, I will just shut up and sit down. I thank him for that very kind introduction.

I just got back from Iraq with Congressmen DAN BOREN and KEN CALVERT and RANDY NEUGEBAUER. We were at Landstuhl Hospital in Germany, which is the first place where our wounded soldiers and marines are taken after they have been wounded on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq. They are stabilized and treated there, and then they are flown back to Walter Reed and Bethesda.

We went over the new technologies that are being utilized right now and the new focus being put on our wounded soldiers. Let me tell you, that operation is first class.

One thing, and the gentleman talked about Walter Reed and I thought it might be appropriate to bring up an issue that all Members of this body can participate in and help in, and it is this: last year I started in San Diego in Balboa Hospital, which is where a lot of our wounded marines are, and in Walter Reed. We started these forums for getting jobs for our guys and ladies who have gone through their therapy, they are being separated from the service, they have been wounded and they are going to go back into the private sector.

So one thing that I thought we would do out in Balboa, and we did one of them here at Walter Reed, was to bring in people from industry and introduce them to our wounded soldiers and marines and try to help get them jobs. Hopefully, a young marine would stand up and say I am a generator mechanic from such and such a town in Vermont or Maine or California or Iowa, and we would be able to match them up with a company that might need such a talent in their company.

So we started doing that, and the first session I had was in the dayroom in Balboa Hospital in San Diego, and we actually had CEOs from major corporations in the dayroom and the marines all came in and told us what they did and introduced themselves, and we immediately had a number of people hired right there at that point in time.

Well, I got back, and the Armed Services staff told me you may be breaking the law.

I said, What are you talking about?

They said, We have talked to the ethics lawyers on the Hill and there may be a question if a Member of Congress tries to help somebody get a job with private industry. There is the implication that reciprocal treatment will be required at some point: you are getting a favor and you will give a favor back.

I said, What can we do?

They said, You need legislation that will end up with the Ethics Committee and House Administration Committee expressly permitting Members of Congress to help get jobs for our wounded soldiers and marines.

So last year, a month or two before we broke, we passed a resolution in the full House urging the Ethics Committee and the House Administration Committee to give us express permission to get jobs for our wounded folks. Every Member of the House can help us on this. I know that VIC SNYDER who heads up the Personnel Subcommittee on the great Armed Services Committee and JOHN MCHUGH are very much supportive of this.

Hopefully, we will get this recommendation up before the Ethics Committee and the House Administration Committee. At that point I can see this entire House of Representatives doing great work because you can take a young man or woman from a town in America who has had an injury and gone through rehab and is looking to go into the private sector. A lot are staying with the service, but the ones that aren't staying with the service, we could call up the Congressman from that particular district that young person is going back to and find out if there is a company that needs that generator mechanic or that young man or woman who is interested in law enforcement or some other profession.

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So I think there is a lot of opportunities here and I look forward to working with you and with the great gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES) and all of our colleagues to try to put this together.

Mr. CARTER. That is a great idea, wonderful idea. We introduced a bill last session, we are going to put it back in this session, that is going to encourage employers to hire the spouses of our soldiers. We give a tax break to employers who hire ex-cons. We ought to give a tax break to employers who hire the spouses of soldiers who have gone to war for us because that is the kind of caring we have got to do, caring about what happens to them when they get back but caring about the worries they carry as they go to battle. That is very popular among employers who are interested in doing that.

There are so many things, and what a great idea you have got, a job fair-type, national job fair promoted by the Congress for our wounded soldiers. That is a great idea.

Mr. HUNTER. If the gentleman will yield further, nobody knows the companies and the businesses in their district better than a Member of Congress, and so I think if we can just pass this little provision in the Ethics Committee that will allow us to do it, we will be able to call up a Member of Congress from whatever district the young man or young woman has a residence in, find out what particular companies have disciplines in the area of occupation that this person specializes in. I think we can marry them up and get some jobs pretty quick.

Mr. HAYES. If the gentleman will yield, you just returned from Iraq, literally landed moments ago. You visited Landstuhl. You were downtown in Fallujah and Ramadi. You were in Landstuhl this time, and you have been there before. I just realized that our Speaker tonight, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS), is a wonderful medical professional in another life. So it points out again and again that care and desire to do the right thing medically, absolutely knows no boundaries here.

I remember being in Landstuhl on another trip with Speaker NANCY PELOSI, and she was particularly intrigued by the facilities for premature babies there. So our wounded soldiers are critically important, their families, their children.

You spoke of Dr. Snyder, a Democrat from Arkansas, a doctor from Arkansas. Again, my purpose is to reassure people at home, no, we are not perfect, and yes, it was a serious, serious issue at Walter Reed and there are others, but we are willing, able and anxious and ready to deal with those issues.

Could you relate some of things you saw in your most recent visit to Landstuhl, which was this morning?

Mr. HUNTER. Absolutely. The one thing that we have learned is that when people get concussions, there may be a lasting effect on those concussions, and we talked to several concussion specialists who now are focusing on Landstuhl and when the young people come back, especially when they have been attacked by IEDs, by weapons systems that have a blast effect, to have a new focus on the after effects of having concussions, and so that is something that is being done right now.

Typically, in the old days, it was done, of course, in sports medicine, for example, guys that were boxers or played football and took numerous hits, and the effect of numerous concussions was studied and was followed.

What we are focusing on here is, you have been in an IED attack or you have had a mortar attack that is close and that gives a concussive effect, it is important to monitor that individual for an extended period of time, not just figure, okay, he was knocked out or she was knocked out, but now they are fine. Monitor them for a period of time. So we have a new focus there in Landstuhl and that focus, it was important to Mr. NEUGEBAUER especially, and DAN BOREN and Mr. CALVERT, who were on the trip with me, were all very interested in making sure that the information that is derived from observation of a patient who newly comes in, comes in and is stabilized there, that then is sent to Walter Reed and to Bethesda so there can be follow-up work so that we can treat the entire patient, and maybe that patient has a fragment wound, making sure that you take care of that, but at the same time make sure that we monitor the effects of concussions, which can in some cases have a lasting effect.

So it is just one example of new focuses and new technologies that are being placed on our wounded soldiers, and the folks there do a great job.

To go to Walter Reed for a minute and this problem we have with the outpatient, the inpatient care is good at Walter Reed. In fact, I was with a wounded Marine and a wounded soldier and it was either the same day or day or two before the story in the Washington Post broke. We have great inpatient capability there. What we have got to have is we have got to have what I would call a family friendly system that is consumer friendly and consumer easy, so that that 22-year-old wife of a Marine corporal, who is undergoing therapy there at Walter Reed and doing rehab there, so that it is easy to walk through the bureaucracy.

So we build these bureaucracies. We inadvertently build them, like the one we built up that says now you cannot get a job for a wounded person or you are violating an ethics rule. We get sometimes so twisted and tied up in this multiplicity of rules that we end up losing sight of the real goals of what we are here for.

So I think we need to make this a consumer friendly system for a person who has got a lot of things on their mind and maybe has some kids back home and they are coming several hundred miles to get rehab treatment or therapy can easily and quickly walk through the system without having to go through a phonebook thick of regulations and sign a million dotted lines.

That is something we can do, one-stop shopping that is easy and simple. That is not bad to have throughout the Federal bureaucracy, but especially when you have military families that have a lot of problems and a lot of things on their mind, we need to have a customer friendly system. That is what we need to develop.

Mr. HAYES. If the gentleman would yield for just a moment, if I might.

Mr. CARTER. All right.

Mr. HAYES. We have got a good doctor from Texas, Dr. BURGESS, going to join the discussion, and excuse us for overlooking you. You are the most qualified to be here. Duncan and I, I think have been accused of being hit in the head too many times before, but the point is on traumatic brain injury, this is something that has been very, very important.

Tomorrow, the private sector, which has been very, very active, Martin Foil from my district, Traumatic Brain Injury Foundation will be here in the foyer of the Rayburn House Office Building, again to help further educate Members on the multiplicity of the implications and complications of brain injury, and all of us here have worked very, very hard for additional funding to do just that.

Mr. CARTER. I am going to yield to the good doctor, to my colleague from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), and one of those fine medical professionals that we have been talking about that serve here in the United States Congress.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank him for convening this hour this evening. I think it was extremely important, extremely timely that we have this discussion on the House floor, and I am especially glad that we have been joined by such prestigious members on the House Armed Services Committee because I think their words certainly add much more than what I would be able to bring to the subject.

I will just have to say I went to Walter Reed this afternoon, asked to go last week, because I thought it was important as one of the medical professionals in Congress that I go out and just look and see is there anything that causes me grief, that causes me concern. I will have to say I was not upset about the things that I expected to be upset about, and I was upset about things that never would have occurred to me to be upset about, and let me elucidate that a little bit if I can.

Of course I read the stories in the newspapers last week, and I expected to be upset about the physical condition of the building, and the building in question, Building 18, which is just across the street from the Commanding General's residence at the Walter Reed Medical Garrison there in Northeast Washington.

Indeed, the building is not the nicest of buildings in Washington, D.C., and I am sure there has been some attention to some of the problems that had already been rendered to the building in

the week between the time the story broke and the time that I got out there, but in general, if you stop and think about what this housing was designed to do, it was obviously to provide a place for soldiers to stay while their medical conditions were evaluated, but while they decided do they stay in the military, do they get out, if they are able to undergo the physical processes for rehabilitation or allowed to stay in the military, how much time is going to be required. This location, Building 18, being outside the medical garrison of Walter Reed Hospital, had some appeal because it was outside the garrison, and as a consequence there was perhaps a little more freedom, a little more freedom of movement. There is a parking garage underneath it, not quite the same level of restriction that you have within the medical garrison itself.

So the actual physical condition of the building, again, I am sure it had received some attention between the time the story broke and I got out there, was less distressing to me than some of the things that I heard that our wounded soldiers have to go through.

I snapped a picture while I was out there. The gentleman talked about the massive amounts of regulation and red tape. Here is a gentleman going through his medical records. I do not think this picture does it justice, but this is about the size of the Dallas phonebook that he has got in front of him. These are his medical records he has got spread out on the table, and he is trying to put them in some semblance of order so he can make his case for the time he gets out of the military to assess his degree of disability if he were to wish to stay in, to be able to make the argument that he would be able to stay in the military.

But an individual such as this, and this individual, in fact, was part of the Medical corps, you can see on his shoulder patch there. So he had some knowledge of the types of record he was reviewing on his own behalf. Just imagine someone without any medical expertise having to go through these numbers of records, and then what if it all gets lost, which unfortunately happens.

Twenty-four hours total time that he spent in assembling these records, and unfortunately, he told me, it is not an infrequent occurrence, it is not just that a soldier's appointment would be canceled, that they expected for a few weeks time. It is not just that the ride to the hospital did not materialize, but this amount of work going into essentially what will define his future could be misplaced, and in this day and age, when we talk about the computerization of medical records, we talk about the VA system being on an electronic medical records system, there is no way right now for these medical records generated by the Department of Defense to talk to the medical records in the VA system.

So it is a lot of work that we ask these folks to go through on their own behalf, and unfortunately, it can occur that after putting all those hours in this record ends up on the wrong place on someone's desk, and when the time comes to retrieve it, it cannot be found.

That was a one of the things, again, I never expected to see today when I went to the hospital but certainly caught my attention when I visited.

I would stress, and just like the chairman, just like my friend from Texas, I too have been to Landstuhl Hospital in Germany, spent a good deal of time on two separate occasions at the field hospital in Balad, Iraq, and spent some time at the Ebosina Hospital in downtown Baghdad last summer. In fact, that is the hospital where the famed Baghdad ER show was taped, and I would have to say through all of that exposure to the medical care available to our soldiers in the field, the so-called down range exposure, their medical care is top notch.

I had an emergency room physician, an orthopedist in Balad, Iraq, tell me he had medicines and treatments at his disposal out in the field that he would never have had available to him in downtown Cincinnati. It is that training, that expertise that he gains dealing with those new treatments and those new therapies that will then make him a better physician, and he acknowledged this. I will be a better doctor when I go back to take care of the civilians in Cincinnati, Ohio, than I was before I left because of my experience here in Balad.

I have heard other people refer to it, but certainly we have many, many dedicated men and women in the medical staff, the nursing staff at Walter Reed Hospital and our other fine military hospitals, and it does pain me somewhat to think that these individuals are also reading these stories. They go to work every day to do their best work. They go to work every day to take care of the genuine American hero, and then they hear their efforts and their professions demeaned in the press.

I know how disheartening that can be and I would say to those individuals working in the Medical corps in our military hospitals and the Nursing corps in our military hospitals, God bless you. Thank you for what you do because individuals like this who, in another time and another place, might not have had such a happy outcome, he, in fact, is looking forward to a return to civilian life and being quite productive thanks to the expert care that he received at Walter Reed Hospital.

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One thing that I do want to bring up because it is terribly important, the Wounded Warrior Transition Brigade, which was just announced last week and has been formed this week. Major General Eric Schoomaker, who is the new command at Walter Reed Hospital, this establishes essentially a patient advocate in uniform, patient advocacy within a military context.

This is one of the things, when we hear about the failures of leadership that resulted in some of the problems that have surfaced at Walter Reed Hospital, this was the type of leadership that was lacking. So these small brigades, which will now be composed of one leader with 17 men or women under his command in those units who are awaiting a medical decision on their military future, certainly tightening up that ratio between leader and the number of men and women in the cohort will significantly improve things, I think, as far as the advocacy for our heroes.

So the gentleman from Texas was very kind to call me down and let me participate in this. I thank you very much for your leadership on this. It is extremely timely and extremely important.

Mr. CARTER. I thank my colleague from Texas for his comments and his expertise as a doctor. He is invaluable to this House, and we are very, very proud to have him as a Member of this House. I am proud to have him as a friend.

Does the gentleman from North Carolina wish to be recognized?

Mr. HAYES. Congressman CARTER, after listening to Dr. BURGESS, I just had a couple of more things I wanted to relate because they were so important.

Mr. CARTER. Take all the time you need.

Mr. HAYES. I was telling former Chairman HUNTER, Ranking Member HUNTER now, that when he and RANDY NEUGEBAUER return, we have our Congressional Prayer Caucus that meets every Monday or Tuesday night, just at the beginning of votes, and three young men who were just wounded and brought back from Iraq, we were able to pray for them and will contact their families tonight.

Prayer still goes on here in the Halls of Congress, as you well know. We will meet on Wednesday morning. There are a number of organizations, Semper Fi Fund, Fallen Heroes Fund, but there are numerous others where men, women and children are working around the clock again to assist with these wounded veterans. They are doing a fabulous job. As part of this discussion, I wanted to call attention to them.

Last but not least, I met a young man at Landstuhl a couple of years ago, Sergeant Danny Metzdorf, 82nd Airborne, all the way, and walked into that room, and you have had the same experience, he looked just like my son. That was what really caught my attention. He had just been wounded there, and I struck up a conversation with him and he hardly remembered that night. But when he got back to Walter Reed, went to visit him a couple of times, got to know his family, had a prosthetic leg, 25, 30 surgeries, just,

really, all he thought about, I want to get back with my buddies, back with my unit.

Well, that outstanding young soldier, Airborne guy, is now the coordinator and jump master for the Golden Knights. So with that new artificial leg, and these stories are, so, so, many, I want people again to be encouraged, not satisfied, but encouraged that medical treatment is not only available but it is something that is so critically important to us.

I was here one day and some contentious issue was going on in the people's House, and I got an emergency, I thought, call. Dan Metzdorf is calling you. Oh my gosh, something has gone wrong, surgery, he had a complication. I immediately left the floor and called him. He said, gosh, there was so much going on, are you doing okay? That is the way our young people are today. They are for America. God bless them all.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you so much for being here tonight. Let me tell a story about an 82nd airborne soldier. This is an 82nd Airborne soldier from my hometown. My son and daughter-in-law are a high school teacher and coach, and they knew this young man; we knew his family. He, in the invasion of Baghdad, he charged out on a bridge in the open to pull one of the fallen, he was a medic in the paratroopers, 19-year-old medic, and he charged out on his bridge and pulled one of his fellow paratroopers to safety. In the process of going back for others, he received a round through his abdomen.

Now, I told this House earlier that this is a joint effort, and Alan Babin is a perfect example of the joint effort. He was immediately treated on the battlefield by a fellow medic, immediately evacuated and flown to the Navy ship offshore, I have forgotten the name of it now, to a mercy ship off the shore, where they treated him. From there he was flown by the Air Force, air evac medical team to Landstuhl in Germany, where he was stabilized and then he was flown to Walter Reed Hospital and had hundreds of surgeries, and for 7 months laid with an open, exposed abdominal cavity which had to be scrubbed clean every day. That boy would have died on any other battlefield, anywhere else in the world; but he was an American soldier, given American medical care.

Today, he is recovering. While in the process of being treated, Alan suffered a stroke. His wounds are healed now, and he is rehabilitating himself with help from the Army on the damage that he received from the stroke while being treated for his wound.

We expect all of us in Round Rock, Texas, Alan Babin, to be back and functioning and doing well and heal completely because his spirits are great and he is working hard like every soldier and every Airborne trooper would; and he is the pride of Round Rock, Texas. He won the Bronze Star with valor for his treatment of his fellow soldiers, fellow paratrooper.

Those stories, there are a million of them. We see them every day in Landstuhl. I wanted to tell that story, because I want the American people to know that is the kind of medical care that our medical doctors are giving. This week, when I was at Darnall Hospital in Fort Hood, they told me about the fact that we couldn't make it if it wasn't for the doctors who were willing to serve in the Reserve.

In this Reserve, we sent 11 doctors downrange to Iraq in our last deployment. Someone has to fill in for those 11 doctors back at Fort Hood. It is the Army Reserve doctors that come in there and do that and the Army Reserve nurses. I visited with a nurse, I believe, from Jamaica, New York, who was filling in as a Reserve nurse who had been called up, or maybe she was a National Guard nurse.

So not only are the heroes in the war but the heroes in the Reserve and the Guard, they are doing a great job. It is abominable that we had this condition at Walter Reed. We will address it, we will fix it, but let's not take away our doubt that these doctors and nurses and medical professionals are doing everything they can to make sure our soldiers are getting the best care they can.

My friend Mr. KING, STEVE KING, has joined us. I want to recognize him and allow him to say a few things here.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Texas for organizing this Special Order hour and for gathering together a lot of patriotic Americans and shedding some objective light on the health care situation with our men and women; and like many of the Members who have spoken earlier in this hour, I am one who has also made consistent trips over to Iraq, Afghanistan, the hospital, Landstuhl in Germany, and, also, I make it a point to be one place or another to visit our wounded, at either Walter Reed or Bethesda or Landstuhl. So I have been to Walter Reed a number of times, and saw nothing like I saw described here on the floor of the House of Representatives, and make no excuses for that. In fact, like everyone else, I believe we needed to fix it and we did fix it as quickly as possible.

The people that come down here to the floor night after night after night with the same poster that had the words cockroach, mold and mice on it have been repeating the same mantra, but they have not seen anything like we are describing here night after night after night. This was, as I understand it, two rooms out of 300 and some altogether in a place where no one goes. The people that were there were ambulatory patients that liked it there because they were a little off campus, they had a little more freedom. So those were the circumstances. They have been fixed.

But I will say what this needs to be: this needs to be a message to us, a kind of reminder, a wake-up call, because what I saw here demonstrated by Mr. BURGESS, which is that there are patients there whose care is too bureaucratic, we can use this as a launching pad to bring software into place and to put into place a patient tracking system that will compare the tracking of these patients and the timeliness of their care with that in the private sector and have red flags come up on those files if there is a time they are not being dealt with in a fashion they should be. We can get this set up. It needs to be managed in that fashion.

I will also say that the VA hospitals have taken a fair amount of criticism on this. The ones that I go visit have modern health care and a modern tracking system and a bar code that goes on the wrist of the patient. When they go in there, they read that bar code and within seconds their full medical record is there; any pharmaceuticals that have been prescribed by them are all right there. It reduces and almost eliminates mistakes for prescriptions, for example.

There are a lot of modern pieces that have been put together. Most of our VA hospitals, and the ones I know, do a good job. They shouldn't be dragged into this, and the Walter Reed piece of this, we can do a better job. More of it has to do with patient management and timeliness of care and modernizing the recordkeeping system. Little of it has to do with putting plaster up on the wall and putting carpet into place. Let's use the need to do this to get this place, put Walter Reed back into the 21st century and give these men and women the very best top-notch care that is possible.

We can do that. The people doing the work, we need to applaud them, not criticize them. They give their hearts and their minds and their energy to our brave men and women who have given their life and limb for our freedom and for our liberty.

The only thing that they are short of is they suffer from compassion fatigue, and they get burned out on these jobs. But what I see, selfless Americans are doing the best job they can. We can give them some better tools to work with, which has to do with tracking the patients and being more timely in the service we provide.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman for joining us here today. On that issue of electronic records, when I was at Darnall on Saturday, we were talking about them implementing the electronic recordkeeping. I said, well, now, I need to know, are the electronic records that you are working on here, are they interoperable with the VA's electronic records? They said, well, they are so far ahead of us, we will certainly work to have interoperability, but we are way behind the VA.

Most Americans wouldn't expect that to be heard. The VA is getting a reputation on their electronic records of having a state-of-the-art electronic records system. People are coming in from the private sector to look at what the VA has done. The Army is using it

as a model to bring Army electronic records up to par. It is important, it is one of the missions we need to have here in Congress to make sure we provide the support and the funds to make sure we have an electronic record system which will take our soldier and track him from the minute he raises his right hand to serve our Nation, until, at the point we all get there, he is buried in one of our veterans cemeteries, until we have accurate records for him that are electronic, easily found, so we can get him the care, he or she the care, that they need.

Madam Speaker, this is an issue that has concerned every American, Democrat and Republican, since it broke. We are all concerned. We all want the American people to know that whatever differences we may have on the issues concerning the war, this is an issue of the lives of the American soldier; and all Americans care for our American soldiers.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the privilege and the honor to be recognized here on the floor of the United States Congress this evening and the chance to pick up where some of my colleagues left off here. But I pretty much had my say about Walter Reed, and I support and endorse the remarks that were made over the last 60 minutes, and I intend to move on to another subject matter here.

I do just simply want to restate that the care that they are provided is good and it is solid. And as I talked to patients at Walter Reed, Bethesda, Landstuhl, continually, they are very, very grateful for the quality of the care. We have some of the best experts in the world treating some of these kinds of injuries; and to look them in the eye and see the level of their commitment, you just know that they are giving it everything that they have.

I am not hearing patient complaints about the care, but about sometimes the timeliness of the recordkeeping and the timeliness of the treatment that is there.

□ 2030

There will be always be things that fall through the bureaucratic cracks, and it is our job to try to seal those cracks up and do the best job that we can. I think we are going to get that done. Certainly, though, I want to make sure that America, Madam Speaker, understands the commitment that is made on the part of the medical care providers for our military men and women, and that is what we must do in order to support their effort and support their sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, I came to the floor tonight to talk about an issue that I have been here before to raise, and hopefully I will be back again to raise, and that is this broad, overall immigration issue that has captured the debate field in the United States for the last 3 years or more. And what brings me to the floor tonight is a sense that there is a growing effort on the part of the White House, on the part of the Senate and on the part of some here in the House, to build a kind of a critical mass coalition that would bring what they would call a comprehensive immigration reform bill through the Senate and then quickly over here to the House, which I would consider to be a steamrolled or a stampeded bill, something that we don't know what is going on behind the scenes, or there has been hardly anything leaked. And I believe it is their effort to try to get enough Members, a majority, and that would be something or a filibuster proof majority in the Senate and a significant majority here in the House to buy on to a policy that they have never seen, one that is not in print yet, or at least not filed, not dropped, in the fundamental sense, but only get people, people, and I mean Members and Senators, to sign off conceptually, and say I conceptually endorse a comprehensive immigration reform bill.

Well, first, Madam Speaker, the American people need to understand that when the word ''comprehensive immigration reform,'' when that phrase is used, that means we don't like to admit amnesty. But comprehensive is a substitution for the word ''amnesty.'' It has been that way for 3 years. It will be that way until this debate is maybe over for this cycle.

But I recall when the President gave his first immigration reform speech was January 6 of 2004, 3 years and a couple of months ago. There he brought out a lot of the same things that he is standing for now. And the President says that he is opposed to amnesty. But I will say that Ronald Reagan signed a bill that Ronald Reagan called amnesty that is very much the kind of policy that is being advocated by the White House.

I am greatly concerned about this moving so quickly with so little information that the American people would not have an opportunity to weigh in, would not have an opportunity to call and write and e-mail and fax their Senators and their House Members to be able to try to move the center, I guess, of the Republican and Democrat House of Representatives and the Senate.

And so it is important that I call upon Members, don't sign off on something till you read the fine print. The devil is in the details. The devils were in the details last year when the Senate moved their immigration reform bill and the details turned out to be tens of millions of people. Just a small detail, Madam Speaker, of tens of millions of people that would be legalized and granted amnesty in about a couple of decades period of time. That is the backdrop. That is the foundation of this.

I have a lot to say about this, but I also recognize the gentleman from Texas who has been on this floor for a while has some things he would like to say about it, and I would be very happy to yield to Judge CARTER as much time as he may consume.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for yielding to me. And I appreciate him joining me in the previous hour in our discussion of Walter Reed and the health care for our soldiers and our veterans and how important that issue is.

But I guess, at least in the State of Texas, if what I hear in my town hall meetings is anything to be compared, I think the issue of what is happening on our borders and what we are going to do to resolve the issue of immigration is a topic that has never failed to come up, now, in the past 3 years at literally, every occasion at which I have held a town hall meeting; and I generally hold between 17 and 25 a year with the addition of the new tool of the telephone town hall. I held one of those less than 3 weeks ago for an hour and a half.

And once again, the people of Texas are concerned about the issue of the illegal aliens that have invaded our country. And they are concerned about who is coming, and what are they going to do, and what are we going to do to resolve this problem?

I have a Hispanic Council. The gentleman from Iowa knows that Texas is a State that you would put down as a Hispanic State. In fact, I believe we have now, over 50 percent of the people in Texas are Hispanic. The difference between Texas and some other parts of the world is we have lived with Hispanic neighbors all of our history. I mean, our culture is a kind of a combination of West and Mexican culture. It is the Southwest culture. It has a lot of the influence of Mexico in the Southwest culture. If you don't believe that, come on down to Austin; let me feed you the best Mexican food on Earth.

This is what is going on in Texas. We have lived with our neighbors like this all of our lives. When this issue cropped up I decided I wanted to form a Hispanic Council in my district. And we talk about issues, of course, immigration, the border, these are issues that are primary we discuss. But we made ourselves a promise that we were going to look at the world, all the world of litigation, legislation, and international relations, not just the immigration issue. But we always discuss the immigration issue. And at least my council, which has a membership of folks that are, some of them first generation American citizens, most of them second or third or fourth generation American citizens. All of Hispanic descent, most of whom are from Mexico, although there are some from other places. And we have a let your hair down, no holds barred discussion. And overall, my Hispanic community,

recognizes there is a problem and realizes we have to come up with a solution, and they are supportive of a solution that is within the law.

And I think that is important because, quite frankly, the reason we have a crisis, I would tell my colleague from Iowa, is because we haven't been enforcing the laws we have got and we haven't been enforcing them since 1986 when we cranked out the amnesty program under Ronald Reagan. The key to the Reagan amnesty program being a success was enforce the law. And administrations, Republican and Democrat, have not done it. I mean, those are the facts.

You know, one thing about history, it is history. You can try to write it a different way, but the reality of history is there is only one history and that is the truth of what happened.

And what happened was we didn't enforce the laws. And as a result, we went from a trickle across our southern border and our northern border to a six-lane highway bumper to bumper invasion. And that is what we have been facing now in the last 4 or 5 years.

I would say, I have met with the White House on numerous occasions and been a very big critic of making sure that we got border enforcement. I will say, we are doing better at the border. We are not there yet, but w are doing substantially better. The numbers are down. The catch and release program and the ending of the catch and release program, although not 100 percent, but it is better than it was when it was 100 percent catch and release. We are detaining people. And there are those who want to stop us and there are those who call us inhumane. And, in fact, in my district, one of the real things that we desperately needed was a place to care for families that cross the border. And we had no facility that was family friendly. They built a family friendly, or remodeled a correctional institute to make a family friendly center to hold illegals with children, people who come in this country illegally with children. And it is in my district. It is 22 miles from my home in Taylor, Texas. That thing has come under fire from our neighbors to the south who are sort of San Francisco-like, we would call them, in their views and they have been picketing this facility and claiming it is inhumane. I was there when they started remodeling this facility. I was there two-thirds of the way through the remodel, and so I went back the last month, the last week we were there during the President's Week, and I toured that facility.

I have the expertise of having built two juvenile detention centers as a judge. I was the chairman of the Juvenile Board from its inception in Williamson County until I retired, so until I retired I was the only chairman the Juvenile Board ever had in Williamson County, now a county of about 300,000 people. And so I was in charge of the board that built our first William S. Lott Detention Center, back when we were a lot smaller county. We are probably the second fastest growing county in the Nation every year of the last 20 years. And so now we have built a much larger, 4 or 500-bed facility, the second one, the Williamson County Juvenile Detention Center.

So when I went into this controversial holding situation that we have got there in Taylor, I was looking for the kind of thing that we put our juvenile offenders into. And, you know, juvenile offenders are not, under the law, criminal offenders. It is a very special category of the world. And so I looked at the classrooms, which, quite frankly, were better than the classrooms that my son and my daughter-in-law teach in at Round Rock High School, and I am pretty proud of the classroom that they teach in at Round Rock High School. They were very well managed. The teachers were bilingual and very, very compassionate.

There was a glitch, bureaucratic glitch that caused some of them not to be taught long enough. But now they are meeting the Texas educational standards. They have recess, they have a playground, the rooms are decorated. They have done the best they can to make it juvenile friendly. And I figure if it is good enough for juveniles, it is certainly good enough for their parents.

But there is a lawsuit filed by the ACLU, and I am certain that our crisis is not over on that facility. But why did we have to build that facility? Because there were coyotes in Mexico who knew that if, for sure, if you were caught and you had a child in your possession, they had no place to house you, no matter where you came from. And 97 percent of the people in that Taylor facility are OTM, other than Mexicans. They knew if you had a kid they couldn't detain you. And so we had to have some way to detain. Those things are improvements. But that is the kind of, this is a very complicated situation. And you are right, it is not something that calls for a quick easy fix that suits certain people's political agenda. It needs to be analyzed and it needs to be done, I still say, as we secure the border and get the confidence of the American people that we care about what is going on, and we are getting there. We need to come up with a way to identify people so we know who has the right to work and who doesn't have the right to work in this country. Then our work program, with those who are here with no pathway to citizenship, in my opinion, and then a work program for those that want to come in legally to work in a legal system, work for a period of time and go back type of system, and finally rework our immigration and naturalization laws to where they work, they are workable. And at that point in time, if you have violated the law, and you want to go for citizenship, you reapply from the nation you come from and you get in line like everybody else with some kind of penalty for having broken our laws. That makes sense. That is not something we should throw in in a quick laundry basket full of clothes, everything mixed up, and it will all work it out. We will work it out later, because, my friend from Iowa, ask the people that are in the trenches that are dealing with this immigration problem at ICE and other places. They are overwhelmed now. If you throw the 7 to 20 million that are hiding out in this country back on their shoulders to deal with, what are they going to do if we don't think this out logically?

□ 2045

They are going to be more overwhelmed. And when a government system is overwhelmed, it just stops working. And that is what we are experiencing in the United States today. You can't blame these people. When they have got a pile of a thousand applications on their desk and you walk through the door with 10,000 more, they are going to say, I can't do the thousand, I sure as heck can't do the 10,000.

So I think it is really wonderful that the people in this Congress are willing to keep bringing this issue to the floor and reminding the American people that we care, because there are those of us who care very, very compassionately about this issue. We can do it and we can do it right. And when it is done right, justice will prevail. I have been in the justice business all of my life, and I have been in the justice business as a judge for almost 21 years. I believe that what we owe all people who reside in this country is justice. Justice occasionally requires responsibility for your actions, and these are the kind of things we need to think about as we address this problem.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

As I listen to you talk about this, Judge, and you live down in that territory where it has been part of your life and the flow of our life, from my background in the work that I have done, there have been some times in my life when there was something that was so complicated, so convoluted and so unpredictable in its elements and so many hypotheticals that came out of each of those elements that no matter how hard I tried to chart a course through that and lay out contingency plans on, I call them if-then formulas which you can put on a spreadsheet, if then, we will do that; if that happens, then we will do this. And it threads through the whole equation.

This immigration issue is so complicated, so unpredictable and has so many hypotheticals that I contend that it is impossible for a body of 100 Senators or 435 House Members or a President to chart a course through that and be able to put law in place that deals with all of the contingencies and ends up with the kind of product that if we can even agree on what that is, we could not get there. It is beyond human ability to put that into a law

and make that work; too many hypotheticals.

So what I will submit is that we need to take this, as you suggested, one step at a time. I am for let's go ahead and get things under control at the border. Stop the bleeding. As Dr. GINGREY has often said from Georgia, we have got to stop the bleeding before we can decide how we are going to stabilize the patient and give him rehab. That is step one. And we started on that, as you said. I have been down to look at that. In fact, a couple weeks ago I went down there and helped build some wall with Secretary Chertoff down south of Yuma on the border. It occurred to me that probably the only person in America that actually has gone down on the southern border and put border fence up with Chris Simcox or the Minute Men, and then turned around and welded steel wall on the border was Secretary Chertoff. I don't think those two guys are going to get together and do this together. I had the privilege of doing it on different occasions with each of them. But we can control this at the border; in fact, we must. And if we can't do that, then all the rest of the policy we talk about goes for naught.

And another fundamental principle that I stand on is that of all the discussions that come out of the House and the Senate and the ideas about guest worker, or temporary worker, how we will give them a card, how that all might work; how you do background checks on people and then legalize them here, I don't hear anyone address what you do with those that don't come forward. Because those that come forward with a clean background record, they would then get their pass to either guest worker card or a path to citizenship, depending, they might feel pretty comfortable if all they did is come into the country illegally and that this government should write up a law, which I would oppose, that would be amnesty, too. But those that have a criminal record beyond that, those that have run afoul of the law for whatever reason, they are not coming out of the shadows because they don't want the hook of the law in them, they don't want to go off to prison and they don't want to be deported.

So we will not be uncovering the bad elements of society by trying to do background checks on people. And those elements of society, those slackers that don't want to come forward for whatever reason, those that have reasons not to come forward, they still remain in the shadows an illegal core in this civilization, and the only way you get them out is to actually send people back home again.

So I submit that we should use all of our local law enforcement. We should end all sanctuary policies. The local police force, county sheriffs, the highway patrol, the Texas Rangers, all those folks that are involved in law enforcement at all levels, and have them cooperating at all levels.

I grew up in a law enforcement family. And it was not something that we could have conceived of, but there would be a city police officer that would be prohibited from cooperating with a Federal officer on a law in this Nation because it happened to be Federal law as opposed to a city ordinance. So by that rationale, city police would only enforce city ordinances and State highway patrol and State officers, DCI or whatever, could only enforce State laws and then Federal officers could only enforce Federal laws. And I don't know what the county sheriffs are going to do except maybe they are just going to serve warrants and papers.

So we need to cooperate on all levels and we need to reestablish the rule of law.

Mr. CARTER. If the gentleman would yield, I absolutely agree with that. And as law enforcement, we have learned how to cooperate over those jurisdictional boundaries. There is no reason in the world why we can't cooperate over jurisdictional boundaries with the Federal law enforcement officers, also. It can be done. We have done it in Texas, we have done it across the country. We can do it with the immigration issue.

And I do agree with you, also, that no one is talking about what do you do with the people who don't? That has to be addressed, also. If we are going to hold out a carrot of a work permit for people to come out and turn themselves in and report and file whatever pre-procedures this Congress establishes, we have to have a stick for those who don't; that if we don't, it won't work.

I am not for pounding anybody, don't misunderstand me. My whole point is the carrot and the stick policy is law enforcement, the way we do some things in law enforcement. And it is important that we have that. If you don't, there are going to be serious ramifications for not joining and trying to solve this problem.

And those people that are in this country illegally out there tonight, if they are listening, I hope they know that whatever this Congress does, and I am with you, as it works out this thing logically and putting a focus on each element as we move along, not a big trash basket, when we do, we put together a program, we expect you to participate. And if you don't participate, I think there should be serious consequences.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from Texas. And I know that there are some people in this Congress and across the country that will say, well, what about two sticks and no carrots. We may hear about that from the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. GOODE, who I would be happy to yield as much time as he may consume.

Mr. GOODE. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here with Mr. KING; I appreciate the time he has allotted to me.

I want to thank him for his hard work in combating illegal immigration and the many problems that such brings to our country. I know today he had a forum over at the Woodrow Wilson Institute and had to slug it out with others who did not concur with his views.

Judge Carter was here. I also want to thank him for his hard work on this issue, and for recognizing the need to secure our borders.

First, I wish to commend the Mayor and Council of Hazelton, Pennsylvania for their courageous stand in defending the sanctity of Hazelton, the well-being of its citizens, and the integrity of the rule of law. The courage of this community should spur this Congress to be resolute in standing for the security of our Nation.

By setting forth the city's determination to impose penalties of those who rent to illegal aliens and requiring employers to verify the legal work status of potential workers, the leadership of Hazelton is speaking for a majority of Americans who know and believe that strict measures must be employed if we are to secure jobs for workers who are here legally, if we are to preserve the traditional culture of our Nation, and if we are to be protected from criminal illegal aliens.

Further, Hazelton's action to stipulate English as their official language is a step that this Congress should also take in order to prevent our Nation from becoming divided into splinter groups that hunker down in the assertion of their individuality rather than becoming a part of a great melting pot that Americans have cherished for over two centuries.

Hazelton is now defending itself against the legal challenges of the ACLU and others. Hazelton should know that it is supported by millions of Americans who know that its cause is just.

I would also like to mention, Madam Speaker, the movie ''Borders,'' which was showing in the Cannon Office Building last week. It is produced by Chris and Lisa Burgard. Lisa hails from Pittsylvania County, which is in the Fifth District of Virginia. We were honored to have in attendance Mr. and Mrs. Robert Duvall and Mr. Ron Maxwell, who starred and directed ''Gods and Generals.'' We also had some Members of Congress to witness this film. Hopefully this film will be showing in theaters across the country in the near future. It illustrates the need for a secure fence along our southern borders.

The criminal activity along our border with Mexico is rampant. The coyotes and the drug dealers bring people across on a regular basis, bringing drugs with them, paying them to smuggle in the illegal drugs so that the main ones are not caught with the drugs on them. This is just an example of the illegal activity that a secure southern would prevent.

Last week, Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne from Idaho, spoke about a fence that he saw on national land along our border with Mexico. He

told how it is believed that the drug cartel would jump that fence at night.

When we talk about a fence that will secure our border, we cannot be lulled into thinking that you can have a woven wire or one fence that would keep our borders secure. We must have something akin to the triple fence that exists between San Diego and Mexico. You have a fence, then a roadway for the Border Patrol to ride up and down, then you have a large barrier in the center, you have another roadway, and then a third fence.

The Secretary told about how the drug cartel would get these great drivers who would jump that fence with inclines and keep on going. I dare say, even if you had someone like Dale Jarrett or Bobby Labonte, they could never jump the San Diego fence. It would be mighty tough to tunnel under it, too. And Mr. KING, I know you have illustrated that fence here on the floor. That is the kind of fence that will keep them out. And that is the reason a number of persons oppose this fence and do not want to see it funded because it will do the job.

You mentioned amnesty, Mr. KING. You are right on the money. We cannot afford to have amnesty in any way. We have a great country in the United States of America; various beliefs, different religions, tremendous tolerance. We cannot afford to be swamped and sunk by the invasion of illegals into this country.

Just the talk of amnesty means more illegal entry. Those that come in illegally say well, let's go and stay just a few years. If we can go and stay a few years, we are going to get to stay forever. In the 1980s, they gave those that came and stayed a while amnesty. In the 1990s they, meaning our government, gave those that came and stayed for a while amnesty. And those that come across now, every time the body on the other side of this Capitol talks about amnesty, more want to come. When they hear the President say we are going to create a new guest worker program with a glidepath to citizenship, more want to come because they know. And the sidewalk talk is correct, if we can get there and stay just a little while, we are going to get a blue card, a red card, a green card or something, and we are going to have our glidepath to citizenship. And we will have ridden around a system. And everybody that is playing by the rules and waiting in line, well, they are just foolish. We broke the law, we got away with it, and they are giving us amnesty.

□ 2100

Illegal immigration has swamped our hospitals. It has jacked up health care costs for Americans not only in the southwestern United States but all across this land. We want to do something about health care costs. Shut off illegal immigration, and you will get a benefit.

I have been to community health centers which have gotten significantly increased funding over the last 5 to 8 years. Community health centers serve those primarily who have little or no assets and who have little or no insurance. They don't question whether someone may not have the wherewithal or whether someone is in this country illegally or not. They see someone needs health care assistance, and they get it. A big impact on community health systems is illegal immigration. A big impact on free clinics is illegal immigration.

Social services, now, they say there are some rules against providing them for illegal aliens. But, again, the check system at the local level is not there. And there would be some if they did like Hazelton, Pennsylvania. They are saying you are being too harsh. Well, a lot of illegals have left Hazelton, Pennsylvania; and if we had more Hazelton, Pennsylvanias around this country, we would have a lot less problem.

Corrections, illegal aliens, a huge negative impact on local jails and local prisons. A huge impact on the State prison systems all across the country. Last year the head of the Federal Bureau of Prisons testified that out of 189,000 Federal prisoners, 50,000 were illegal aliens. And I think you figured it at about 28 percent.

I surely hope the illegal alien population in the United States is not that high. It is high and it is growing. We got to 300 million much quicker than anticipated. A huge strain on our energy, a huge strain on many aspects of our society.

Let's stop illegal immigration and improve America. Our policy towards illegals needs to be clear: keep them out, direct them back, and save America.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for a clear message.

The American people appreciate straight-talking, clear messages. There have been far too many of these messages that are muddled and confusing, and those muddled and confusing messages cause more problems with more people coming across the border. And I am not hearing people stand up and say it would be wonderful if everybody could wake up in their own country one day in a legal fashion and not have to look over their shoulder and rebuild their own nation, rebuild their own society, rebuild their own economy.

I had this conversation with the ambassador to the United States from Mexico. And I say, If you encourage your people, the vitality of your nation, to come here to the United States, who is going to be there to reform Mexico? Who is going to be there to rebuild Mexico? And he had to concede that is no way to run a country.

At this point, Madam Speaker, I would be very happy to yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The gentleman mentioned his recent trip out to the Mexican border in the State of Arizona. I had the pleasure of accompanying you on that trip and found that very insightful.

As we begin to move into this debate this session of the Congress, I think it is important that we keep some principles in mind. And, hopefully, these principles, I think, if they are followed, will help us arrive at the right public policy decision. And I think there are just three key ones.

And the first one is and it has been mentioned by the previous speakers this hour, but the first one is we have to focus on security first. As we discovered down at the border with Secretary Chertoff, it is important that we secure the border and we do that first. I think the former Speaker of the House has made the statement, does an anti-ballistic missile defense system make a lot of sense when a terrorist can rent a truck and drive it across the border? That is an important thing. It is about security.

When we were down there on our visit, a few things stuck out in my mind, and the American people understand this. The first is how real this problem is. As the gentleman from Iowa knows, we were in a helicopter flying out along the border, and the pilot came over the intercom and said, Look out the window right there and you will see some aliens attempting to cross right now. And we literally saw approximately 20, 25 people coming across. We were flying right along the Mexican/United States border, and we saw 25 people trying to cross the border illegally, and they attempted to hide under a tree. There wasn't much cover out in the desert, as the gentleman remembers, but there they were. And they had the clothes on their backs and jugs of water in their hands and they took off running back to the border. But it just reinforced in my mind what the American people need understand about how real this problem is.

The second thing that I think I came away with from that visit is the fence is working. As the gentleman from Virginia pointed out, where they are constructing it right now is having an impact. And obviously the strategy of our Secretary of our government is to put the fence up first in those areas where it is going to have the best and greatest impact, and that is in the urban areas. And it is working, and it is a double fence, as the gentleman talked about. And it is making a difference.

The other thing that is making a difference out there is our National Guard, our good men and women in the National Guard who are helping build that same fence where I know you welded and we all had a chance to do a little welding there. They are providing more eyes to see the illegals as they attempt to cross, and they are helping with that fence. But security has to be priority number one, as we think about the policy that makes sense for our country.

The second principle that has to guide this debate, and, again, it has

been highlighted already, is the idea that our country is great because we have a lot of great principles that were there at the founding and are still present today. One of those fundamental principles that makes America the greatest Nation ever is the concept that the rule of law matters. And when people willingly, knowingly violate the rule of law, there have to be serious consequences. And that is why amnesty as a policy makes no sense for people who willingly and knowingly violated the law.

And, finally, the third thing I would point out, and I think sometimes as we focus on making sure we are securing our borders and following the rule of law, one of the things that seems to get left out in the debate is we should welcome people, we should welcome immigrants who want to come here legally. I mean, immigrants have always been a great treasure to this country, have always added to the greatness of this country. And for those folks who want to come here and learn our culture, learn our language, learn English, we should welcome them.

And who can fault people who want to come to the freest, greatest Nation in history? So if they want to do it the right way, the legal way, we should work on a policy that also helps the bureaucracy work better to help those people who want to be a part of the American culture and want to be a part of this great country.

Madam Speaker, this is the greatest Nation in history. And for people who want to come here for the right reasons, we should welcome them here. If these three principles drive our policy, I think we are going to get at the right policy and I hope we do, but it has to be driven by these three principles, and security has to be of paramount importance.

And I appreciate the gentleman from Iowa's leadership on this issue and others here in the United States Congress.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

I did appreciate the privilege to travel with you. And there is some extra value in that, and that is you see what it is that people notice and you understand what their priorities are and you begin to understand how people rearrange their priorities and the basic values that come together. And you have heard some of these basic values flow out from Mr. JORDAN here this evening, Madam Speaker. And I look forward to a lot more of these kinds of events in helping to shape policy for the American people.

I look at this overall immigration policy that we have, and I think there are some great big blanks out there and questions that are asked and not answered, seldom asked and never answered. The first question that one should ask is, Is there such a thing as too much illegal immigration? Or let me put it this way: Is there such a thing as too much immigration? And if the answer to that is ''yes,'' then you need to divide that between legal and illegal. And for me illegal immigration, any of it, is too much. All immigration should be legal. We shouldn't tolerate illegal immigration, and we surely should not reward it with an amnesty plan, which I believe is being worked on right now in the offices over in the Senate and perhaps on the House side, preparing to reach that kind of an agreement between the House and the Senate and the White House to quickly bring a bill that we don't have time to scrutinize and time to debate thoroughly.

If you look at what happened last year, there was mistake after mistake after mistake made in the Senate's version of the bill. And first they had a bill on the floor that would have legalized between 100 and 200 million people. And then there was, I believe, a Bingaman amendment that reduced it and put a cap on one or two of those categories that took that number down under 100 million. Different numbers came back and forth. The Senators voting on that didn't know how many numbers they were talking about. You could ask them point blank, and they would not answer. But the best numbers, the most reliable numbers came from Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, and the numbers that I saw there near the end of that debate were 66 million people that would be brought into the United States under the policies that exist and the ones that the Senate would have added in their reform bill that they passed last year. A lot of that same sentiment; 66 million people, Madam Speaker.

And so I went back and looked, and I wondered how many people were naturalized into the United States legally in all of our history. And it turns out that we began keeping records in 1820. Not at the beginning, but in the 1820s. The numbers were small prior to that. They were small in 1820. And we tracked this thing up until the census of the year 2000. So between 1820 and the year 2000, the complete totals that we have, the number is 66.1 million people have been naturalized into the United States in all of our history. And this Senate version of the bill last year would have matched the pot all in one fell swoop. And they did this all with a straight face, Madam Speaker.

I recall the amnesty in 1986 that Reagan signed, and it was supposed to be 1 million people. I was appalled that 1 million people would get a pass on the rule of law. Well, I was triplely appalled when I realized how bad it was because that 1 million turned into more than 3 million by most accounts because, first of all, they underestimated how many people would apply. Secondly, they underestimated how persuasive the fraud would be with people that raced across the border and jumped in line so they could get their amnesty.

I have met some of the people that received amnesty in 1986, and they are almost universally in favor of amnesty in 2007. And the reason is because they were a beneficiary of amnesty. When they had amnesty, it was good for them; so, of course, they advocate that for anyone else. Certainly their children were taught: amnesty was the best thing that ever happened to you, sons and daughters of mine, and we need to make sure that everyone else can take advantage of this same thing.

But amnesty comes with a price, and the price is you sacrifice the rule of law if you grant amnesty.

So the 3 million that received amnesty in 1986 became great advocates for more amnesty. And then each generation after that, more people have come into the country, that 3 million, and today the most conservative number of illegal immigrants in the United States is about 12 million. Many of us believe that number exceeds 20 million. Some believe it exceeds 30 million. I am in that above-20 million category, and it is anybody's guess up in that territory. But if there is an amnesty bill that comes out of the Senate and through the House and to the White House, then you are going to see tens of millions of people that take advantage of this, and we will be sacrificing, Madam Speaker, the rule of law.

And I have talked about why would we do this, what would be the purpose for this kind of a policy. Well, first of all, the Federal Government has failed to enforce adequately our immigration laws. And as we got more and more illegal immigrants into the United States, it became a magnet for more and more to follow. They began to recruit in their communities. We had companies that put up billboards in Mexico encouraging people there to illegally come to the United States and apply for a job. Some of them recruited them down there and brought them across the border to go to work in their factories and in their plants. And this is commonly known in the communities that utilize this kind of labor. So what kind of a Nation would do that and why would we? First of all, the Federal Government didn't enforce the law.

Secondly, employers took advantage of that because they could hire illegal labor cheaper than they could local labor. And capital is always rational. Capital is going to do the smart thing. Capital is going to follow the path of least resistance like electricity. So there wasn't a resistance on the law enforcement side; so capital then hired illegal labor, brought them into the United States or hired them when they came here. Regardless, that was the magnet.

□ 2115

They understood that they could pay illegal labor less and there were far fewer contingent liabilities that went along with the illegal labor.

So if you have to pay $15 an hour as a going rate for an American citizen or someone who is lawfully present in the

United States to do a job, but you can hire someone who is here illegally because they are in the shadows and have to scurry around and hide away from the law, if you can hire them for, let's say, $8 an hour, and then if you have to provide health insurance, retirement benefits and take on the contingent liabilities of legal employees, the $15 an hour, plus the health insurance package, plus the retirement package, plus the worker's comp piece, which is going to be higher because they are more likely to file the claims, plus the litigation risk of filing a suit against an employer, and then the unemployment claims that would come if you lay people off, none of that exists in any significant quantity when you are hiring someone who is illegal.

So you hire them cheaper, maybe at $8 an hour, compared to a $15 an hour legal person, but then that is all you are really ending up with, was 8 bucks an hour. But if you hire somebody at $15 an hour and they are legal, then you have to add on to that so much for health insurance, so much for retirement benefits, so much for worker's comp, so much for unemployment, so much for contingent liabilities. What if this employee turns around and sues me for something? You add that all up, it is far cheaper to hire the illegal laborer than the legal. Then that magnetized and brought more and more into this country.

Americans have allowed it to happen under their nose. The administration hasn't sounded the alarm. They could seal the border more quickly than they are, and they are accelerating their efforts here, and I want to compliment them for that effort. But I am also watching closely to see if this effort is a real, sincere committed effort, or if it is an effort that is designed to help clear the political groundwork so that Members of Congress will be lulled to sleep, so-to-speak, and adopt a comprehensive plan, which again the word ''comprehensive'' is the substitute word for amnesty plan.

So do we do this because we need the labor, is one of those questions. The statement is made over and over again, well, we have to have the labor. After all, we have willing employers and willing employees. That should be the standard.

Madam Speaker, if you can give me cheap enough labor, I want to hire them all. If you can get me reliable workers, I want the first 100 at a buck an hour I can get. I probably want the first hundred at $2 or $3 an hour, or in fact $5 an hour. We will find a way to make some money. I want them legal. They have to be for me.

My point is though the cheaper labor gets, the more demand there is. Kind of like if gas goes down to 50 cents, people are going to drive more, or if porterhouse steaks go down to 50 cents a pound, a lot more people are going to eat the fancy steak instead of eating the hamburger. Cheap labor, the same thing; the lower the price, the more consumption there is.

So it isn't an equation of willing employer-willing employee, because the employer is always going to be willing if he can make money off of a willing employee who will work cheaper than the going rate. It is an advantage for the employer to do that.

I hear from Member after Member, think tank head after think tank head, they get on the media airwaves every day, Madam Speaker, and they say a willing employer, a willing employee. We have people that need this labor. There is a demand for it. Therefore, we have to find a way to provide it. Otherwise, what happens in America if we don't flood the cheap labor market?

Well, one thing that has happened from flooding it is we have seen the unskilled purchasing power drop by 12 percent over the last 10 years, that is because there is a flood of cheap labor on the market. And it should go the other way. We want a broad middle-class. We want an ever more prosperous middle-class. Instead, the pressure that is coming here is those that are making money off of the cheap labor are becoming an aristocracy. They are part of nouveau rich in the United States of America. And our upper-middle class, or upper class, for that matter, is growing, and so is our lower class growing, because we are importing it, and that is putting a squeeze on middle America.

One of the principles of a free society is you need to have a broad and prosperous middle-class. We have been growing and broadening that middle-class for generations and becoming a stronger Nation because of it. But this last generation it is going the other way, Madam Speaker. This last generation, we are growing the aristocracy and we are growing the lower class, importing a lower class, all at the expense of the middle class, which is being squeezed in between the two.

But in the middle is the real America. In the middle is the real America that understands truth, justice, the American way, the merits of hard work, the American dream. They have a tremendous work ethic, a sense of family and community. They are being squeezed, Madam Speaker, by the interests on the upper levels of our society and by the thunderous herds that are coming across particularly our southern border, on the lower end of our society, at the expense of our middle-class.

I would point out that if you envision this society like a barbell, and the middle-class would be the bar, and the weights on each end would be the bells, on one side you have the weight on the right side of that barbell, that is the business interests in America. A lot of them are Republican interests, but certainly not all of them. There are a lot of liberal elitists that sit in that category too. And they are clamoring for more cheap labor because they make money doing it, and they are not threatened, nor do they believe their children will ever be threatened by the competition in the labor market that takes place down in the lower end of the spectrum.

The people on the right side of that, the business side of that barbell, that interest, they will send their children to Ivy League schools, upper crust universities, they will get an education. They won't ever have to compete, probably, with the lower income people that don't have that kind of education, that kind of culture, that gives them a path to professionalism.

So they will end up living in their ivory towers and end up living in their gated communities and getting rich off the cheaper labor, and their children will be wired into that same kind of thing. And that is how you grow an aristocracy. That is how you grow a ruling class. That is how you grow an arrogance, that they have a birthright to a servant class, which they are creating.

That servant class that they are creating is the other end of this barbell, and that is this massive number of people who give especially the left a lot of political power. Even those who are in this country illegally give political power to many Members here in this Congress because we count people rather than citizens when he with redistrict in America.

As we count people, that means we count illegal immigrant in these districts. So illegal immigrants give political power to the Members of Congress who are here because they don't have to get their vote. They only have to compete.

There will be a couple of seats here in the House of Representatives, where it will take about 110,000 votes for me to get reelected to my seat, there are a couple of seats that take around 30,000, 35,000 votes for the same thing, and the reason is because the illegal population is counted in the census, and the larger that number is, the fewer citizens are left to actually cast a ballot. And that is the circumstance.

So think of this barbell. On the one side is the ruling class, on the other side of the barbell, the political power of the lower class, the new servant class that is being created, and in the middle, the bar itself is the middle-class that holds it altogether that is being squeezed by the two. That is what we are up against, Madam Speaker.

So, do we need this labor? I would point out that if it is 12 million in the United States illegally, according to I believe it was a Pew Foundation study, that the illegal labor amounted out of that 12 million, 6.9 million workers are actually working. They don't all work, of course. Some are homemakers, some are too young. But 6.9 million working illegals in America.

Of that 6.9 million, that represents 4.7 percent of the overall workforce, and 2.2 percent of the actual production, because they are unskilled, they don't produce like a more highly trained worker does. So they are only doing 2.2 percent of the work.

Well, if you opened up your factory doors in the morning and you found out that 2.2 percent of your production, your work force, wasn't going to show up that day, in order to make up for the difference, I would send a memo out to my staff that said, you know, your 15-minute coffee break this morning and your 15-minute coffee break this afternoon, I am going to shorten that to 10 minutes.

If you do that, if you cut your two coffee breaks, morning and afternoon, by 5 minutes each, you will have picked up 2.1 percent of the production, almost the same thing that the illegal labor represents. Ten minutes a day out of an 8 hour shift of America, that is how much we would be missing. Yet I hear Chicken Little, oh, we can't get along without this labor. We must have it. If we don't have it, the economy will collapse.

It will not collapse, Madam Speaker. We can adapt to it easily. We have taken years to get here, at least 20 years to evolve into this circumstance that we are today, and we can evolve away from that, away from the dependency, away from this addiction, away from this methadone of illegal labor that we have in America, and it will not be that hard to do.

Also there are 6.9 million working illegals in America, but then the argument is, well, but we have unemployment at essentially record low rates of 4.6 percent. Well, that is nice. That is effectively a very low unemployment rate. It is not the lowest. It is not record low unemployment. In World War II, we had a 1.3 percent unemployment rate then.

But it is about 4.6, and they will say you can't get enough workers out of the unemployment rolls to fill the gap we need for this labor. Well, maybe you can't, and probably in fact I will say certainly you can't.

I will say also going into the welfare rolls, we couldn't hire all of them. Many of them would not be employable. If we could hire half of them and if we could hire half of those on unemployment, we still wouldn't put a very significant dent in that 6.9 million labor force.

But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that going to look at the Department of Labor statistics, it shows an entirely different story. If you were going to place a factory in a location, you wouldn't simply look at the unemployment rate in that location and determine how many people there were to hire. You would hire a consulting company, and that company would go in and survey the area and determine the available labor force that was in the area. This is a standard known practice in all business and industry. The consulting firm would identify the available labor.

I went into the Department of Labor Statistics to determine the available labor supply in America, and I began to add up the different categories of age groups. 16 to 19 year olds, we have 9.3 million non-working 16 to 19 year olds in America. Now, not even part-time. Some of these are part-time jobs. And so I start there, because that is where young people learn their work ethic.

As I add up these age categories from 16 on up to 19, and then from 20 to 24 and the list goes on up the line, and I got to 65 and I had to make a decision, and I looked around and concluded that Wal-Mart hires up to 74 years old, so I added them all up to that. One of the reasons I am going to confess, Madam Speaker, is because it was a convenient number I could memorize. It is not substantially changed if you lower the number down to 65.

But it works like this: 6.9 million working illegal laborers in America could be replaced by hiring one out of ten of the 69 million workers in America who are simply not in the workforce.

What Nation would ignore 69 million people not in the workforce and go and bring people in from another country? That would be like having a lifeboat with that percentage of people on it, and deciding you needed some more people to pull on the oars, and having all of those people up there in steerage riding along, and no, it wouldn't occur to us to go up and say come on down here and grab ahold of that oar. Why don't we pull off on an island and see if we can't recruit some more people, load them in the lifeboat, and maybe 7 out of 12 of them will row. That is what it amounts to, Madam Speaker.

So we have not been very objective in this. There is also a tremendous amount of crime, and the victims of that crime, it has been a tremendous price paid here in the United States. We talk about it very little, but every day there are American citizens that die violently at the hands of criminal aliens who are in this country and who, if we had enforced the laws, with not be here.

I had a gentleman say to me today, there isn't a shred of evidence that illegal immigrants commit crimes at any greater rate than average Americans do. But the truth is, Madam Speaker, there is a tremendous amount of evidence that they do.

In fact, the numbers work out to be that in the United States, the violent death rate is 4.28 per 100,000 annually. In Mexico, it is 13.2 per 100,000. That is a solid three-plus times greater violent death rate in Mexico. And Mexico is the most peaceful nation south of our border that I can identify. Honduras has nine times the violent death rate. El Salvador's is not published, but we know it is very high. If you go to Colombia, their violent death rate compared to the United States is 15.4 times higher.

So if you bring people from that society, of course they are going to commit more crimes. They are committed in their home country. They bring that culture with them. Also, $65 billion worth of illegal drugs pour across that southern border every year, brought in by these elements.

I am not here to say that they are all bad people. No, the vast majority of them are very good people looking for a better life for their families. But they have a higher percentage of violence among them, even as good people, than the average American that is here, and we are paying a price of about 12 Americans a day who lose their life as victims of murder to criminal aliens, about 13 a day who die at the hands of negligent homicide, mostly the victims of drunk drivers, not the drunks themselves.

□ 2130

That is the magnitude of this, Madam Speaker. And I recognize by the clock I am in a position where I need to say thank you for the privilege of addressing you on the floor of the House of Representatives

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. BALDWIN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and March 13 on account of illness.

Mr. CAPUANO (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. CASTOR (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. KILPATRICK (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. BUYER (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of medical 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 Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DREIER, for 5 minutes, today and March 13, 14, and 15.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and March 13, 14, and 15.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, March 13.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, March 13.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 13, 2007, at 10:30 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:

804. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tennessee Federal Regulatory Program (RIN: 1029-AC50) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

805. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf and Oil Spill Financial Responsibility for Offshore Facilities-Civil Penalties (RIN: 1010-AD39) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

806. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf-Incorporate API RP 65 for Cementing Shallow Water Flow Zones (RIN: 1010-AD19) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

807. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for Monardella linoides ssp. viminea (Willowy Monardella) (RIN: 1018-AT92) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

808. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30494; Amdt. No. 3167] (RIN: 2120-AA65 (1-25/5-31/Amdt. 3167) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

809. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30500 Amdt. No. 3172] (RIN: 2120-AA65 (1-25/6-28/Amdt. 3172) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

810. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model DC-9-10, DC-9-20, DC-9-30, DC-9-40, and DC-9-50 Series Airplanes; Model DC-9-81 (MD-81), DC-9-82 (MD-82), DC-9-83 (MD-83), and DC-9-87 (MD-87) Airplanes; Model MD-88 Airplanes; Model MD-90-30 Airplanes; and Model 717-200 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-22254; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-001-AD; Amendment 39-14598; AD 2006-10-14] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

811. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767-200, -300, and -300F Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-22529; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-0990-AD; Amendment 39-14592; AD 2006-10-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

812. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Saab Model SAAB-Fairchild SF340A (SAAB/SF340A) and SAAB 340B Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-24075; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-235-AD; Amendment 39-14589; AD 2006-10-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

813. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A319-100, A320-200, A321-100, and A321-200 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-22919; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-087-AD; Amendment 39-14582; AD 2006-09-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

814. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulation Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Statute of Limitations on Assessment Concerning Certain Individuals Filing Income Tax Returns with the U.S. Virgin Islands (RIN: Notice 2007-19) received February 26, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

815. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Announcement and Report Concerning Advanced Pricing Agreements (RIN: Announcement 2007-31) received February 26, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

816. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Revised Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction (RIN: Notice 2007-25) received February 26, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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. WAXMAN: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Supplemental report on H.R. 985. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify which disclosures of information are protected from prohibited personnel practices; to require a statement in nondisclsoure policies, forms, and agreements to effect that such policies, forms, and agreements are consistent with certain disclosure protections, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–42 Pt. 2). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1309. A bill to promote openness in Government by strengthening section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 110–45). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. OBERSTAR: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1045. A bill to designate the Federal building located at 210 Walnut Street in Des Moines, Iowa, as the ''Neal Smith Federal Building'' (Rept. 110–46). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1362. A bill to reform acquisition practices of the Federal Government; with an amendment (Rept. 110–47 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JEFFERSON:

H.R. 1468. A bill to ensure that, for each small business participating in the 8(a) business development program that was affected by Hurricane Katrina of 2005, the period in which it can participate is extended by 18 months; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 1469. A bill to establish the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation under the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. FILNER:

H.R. 1470. A bill to amend the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 to require the provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans at all Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. FILNER:

H.R. 1471. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to permit eligible veterans to receive direct access to chiropractic care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARROW (for himself, Mr. BACA, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. BOSWELL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. BOREN, and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 1472. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the deductible and change the method of determining the mileage reimbursement rate under the beneficiary travel program administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARROW (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. BOREN, and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 1473. A bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 to require child care providers to provide to parents information regarding whether such providers carry current liability insurance; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BERRY (for himself, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ROSS, Mr. GRAVES, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. MORAN of Kansas):

H.R. 1474. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require the sponsor of a prescription drug plan or an organization offering an MA-PD plan to promptly pay claims submitted under part D and to prohibit the inclusion of certain identifying information of pharmacies on explanatory prescription drug information and cards distributed by prescription drug plan sponsors; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. MCGOVERN (for himself, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. WATSON, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. KILPATRICK, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. FARR, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MATSUI, Mr.

McHugh, Mr. McDermott, Mrs. Maloney of New York, Mr. Hastings of Florida, Mr. Honda, Mr. Wynn, Mr. Neal of Massachusetts, Mr. Engel, Mr. Delahunt, Mr. Kucinich, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Abercrombie, Mrs. Lowey, Mr. Holt, Mr. Weiner, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Tierney, Mr. Olver, Mr. Markey, Mr. Schiff, Mr. Patrick Murphy of Pennsylvania, Ms. Shea-Porter, Ms. DeGette, and Mr. Blumenauer):

H.R. 1475. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase and equalize the exclusion from gross income for parking and transportation fringe benefits and to provide for a common cost-of-living adjustment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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 Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida (for herself, Mr. Kirk, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Boustany, Mr. Shays, Mrs. Biggert, Mrs. Miller of Michigan, Mr. Porter, Mr. Gingrey, Mr. Chabot, Mr. Gilchrest, Mr. Bartlett of Maryland, Mr. Upton, and Mr. Roskam):

H.R. 1476. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to expand the nursing home patients' bill of rights to include the right to receive care from a credible caregiver by requiring background checks on direct access employees and the right to a safe environment during an emergency or natural disaster by requiring nursing long-term care facilities to establish disaster emergency and evacuation plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 1477. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to extend military commissary and exchange store privileges to veterans with a compensable service-connected disability and to their dependents; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. Udall of Colorado, and Mr. Pastor):

H.R. 1478. A bill to amend the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental and Native American Public Policy Act of 1992 to provide funds for training in tribal leadership, management, and policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Natural 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 Mr. HINCHEY (for himself, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. Gutierrez, Mr. McNerney, Mr. McNulty, Mr. Paul, Mr. Royce, Ms. Schakowsky, and Ms. Schwartz):

H.R. 1479. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of qualified acupuncturist services under part B of the Medicare Program, and to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for coverage of such services under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Oversight and Government Reform, 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. KLEIN of Florida (for himself and Ms. Ros-Lehtinen):

H.R. 1480. A bill to impose a 2-year moratorium on implementation of a proposed rule relating to the Federal-State financial partnerships under Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MORAN of Kansas (for himself, Mr. Jones of North Carolina, and Mr. Paul):

H.R. 1481. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude amounts received as a military basic housing allowance from consideration as income for purposes of the low-income housing credit and qualified residential rental projects; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PETRI (for himself and Mr. Kanjorski):

H.R. 1482. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit and a deduction for small political contributions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. REGULA (for himself, Mr. Tierney, Mr. McNulty, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Ryan of Ohio, Mr. Hall of New York, Mr. Space, Mr. Brown of South Carolina, Mr. Boswell, Mr. Wamp, Ms. Kaptur, Mr. Latham, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Hinchey, Mr. Meehan, Ms. Sutton, Mr. Braley of Iowa, and Mr. Wilson of South Carolina):

H.R. 1483. A bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the authorization for certain national heritage areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TANCREDO (for himself and Mr. Udall of Colorado):

H.R. 1484. A bill to provide consistent enforcement authority to the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service to respond to violations of regulations regarding the management, use, and protection of public lands under the jurisdiction of these agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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 Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. Moran of Virginia, Mrs. Maloney of New York, Mr. McDermott, Mrs. Jones of Ohio, Mr. Boswell, Mr. Smith of Washington, Ms. Hirono, and Mr. McCotter):

H. Con. Res. 90. Concurrent resolution recognizing the dedication and honorable service of members of the Armed Forces who are serving or have served as military nurses; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PUTNAM:

H. Res. 236. A resolution removing a Minority Member from and electing certain Minority Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BACA (for himself, Ms. Kaptur, Mr. Melancon, Mr. Hall of New York, Ms. Kilpatrick, Ms. Bordallo, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Berman, Mrs. Jones of Ohio, Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Boyd of Florida, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Carnahan, Mrs. Christensen, Mr. Davis of Alabama, Mr. Space, Mr. Filner, and Mr. Hare):

H. Res. 237. A resolution supporting and encouraging greater support for Veterans Day each year; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Wexler, and Mr. Burton of Indiana):

H. Res. 238. A resolution commending the first democratic elections in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia, and expressing support for the further democratic development and implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. MARKEY introduced A bill (H.R. 1485) for the relief of Esther Karinge; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 17: Mr. Saxton, Mr. Kagen, and Mr. Moore of Kansas.

H.R. 23: Ms. Shea-Porter, Ms. Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Tierney, Mr. LaHood, Mr. Cardoza, Mrs. Jones of Ohio, Mr. Boswell, and Mr. Moran of Virginia.

H.R. 73: Mr. Rehberg.

H.R. 92: Mr. Carney.

H.R. 98: Mr. Hayes, Mr. Wamp, Mr. Gary G. Miller of California, Mr. Renzi, Mr. Coble, Mr. Walberg, Mr. Wilson of South Carolina, Mr. Boozman, Mrs. Myrick, Mr. Wolf, Mr. Bachus, Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Capito, and Ms. Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida.

H.R. 100: Mr. Schiff.

H.R. 169: Mr. Cohen.

H.R. 211: Mr. Engel.

H.R. 255: Mr. McHugh and Mr. Boozman.

H.R. 260: Mr. Grijalva.

H.R. 322: Mr. McCotter.

H.R. 327: Mr. Carney, Mr. Conyers, Mr. Oberstar, and Mrs. Boyda of Kansas.

H.R. 419: Mr. Smith of Nebraska and Mrs. Musgrave.

H.R. 464: Ms. Slaughter.

H.R. 473: Mr. Kuhl of New York.

H.R. 549: Ms. Zoe Lofgren of California, Mrs. McMorris Rodgers, Mr. Shays, Mr. Smith of Nebraska, Mr. Hinojosa, Mr. Allen, Mr. Mahoney of Florida, and Mr. Gordon.

H.R. 551: Mr. Hunter.

H.R. 563: Mrs. Miller of Michigan.

H.R. 620: Mr. Fortuño.

H.R. 631: Mr. Jordan, Mr. Keller, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Daniel E. Lungren of California, Mrs. Myrick, Mr. Westmoreland, Ms. Ginny Brown-Waite of Florida, and Mr. Chabot.

H.R. 634: Mr. Wolf and Mr. Lewis of Kentucky.

H.R. 690: Mr. McNerney.

H.R. 743: Mr. Gohmert.

H.R. 760: Mr. Rangel and Mr. Larsen of Washington.

H.R. 787: Mr. Becerra.

H.R. 790: Mr. Boucher.

H.R. 797: Mr. Tim Murphy of Pennsylvania, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Brady of Pennsylvania, Ms. Matsui, Mr. Holt, Ms. Schakowsky, Ms. DeGette, and Mr. Murtha.

H.R. 814: Mr. Barrow.

H.R. 854: Ms. DeGette.

H.R. 887: Mr. Moore of Kansas.

H.R. 916: Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Michaud, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Etheridge, and Mr. Gutierrez.

H.R. 942: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 943: Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
H.R. 960: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 971: Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. UPTON, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 1061: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 1087: Mr. GRIJALVA and Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 1093: Mr. KAGEN, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Ms. DEGETTE, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 1119: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.
H.R. 1149: Mr. TERRY, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 1186: Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 1187: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1188: Mr. KAGEN.
H.R. 1192: Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida.
H.R. 1200: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 1224: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1229: Mr. BERRY, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 1235: Mr. TOWNS and Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 1244: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1261: Mr. BOOZMAN.
H.R. 1284: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 1294: Mr. RENZI.
H.R. 1300: Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 1303: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1317: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1330: Mr. SHULER and Mr. POE.
H.R. 1347: Mr. ELLSWORTH.
H.R. 1350: Mr. KAGEN, Mr. PETRI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.
H.R. 1353: Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1359: Mr. POE.
H.R. 1362: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 1363: Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. STARK, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1409: Mr. BOOZMAN.
H.R. 1430: Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. SULLIVAN.
H.R. 1458: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1462: Ms. DEGETTE.
H.J. Res. 12: Mr. JONES of North Carolina.
H. Con. Res. 21: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. WEINER.
H. Con. Res. 33: Ms. MATSUI.
H. Con. Res. 71: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. MCCOTTER.
H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H. Con. Res. 83: Mr. TANCREDO, Ms. FOXX, and Mr. CALVERT.
H. Con. Res. 89: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H. Res. 16: Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia and Mr. WOLF.
H. Res. 55: Mr. MOORE of Kansas and Mr. STARK.
H. Res. 68: Mr. FATTAH.
H. Res. 101: Mr. MICHAUD.
H. Res. 106: Mr. SPACE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. BILBRAY.
H. Res. 107: Mr. BARROW, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. WALBERG.
H. Res. 136: Mr. BARROW, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. ORTIZ.
H. Res. 143: Mr. KUCINICH and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H. Res. 158: Mr. BLUNT and Mr. SOUDER.
H. Res. 169: Mr. BARROW.
H. Res. 171: Mr. HULSHOF, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. POE.
H. Res. 196: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H. Res. 197: Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Res. 198: Mr. HARE.
H. Res. 208: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. MCCOTTER.
H. Res. 209: Mrs. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 221: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. SERRANO.
H. Res. 226: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. FATTAH.
H. Res. 227: Ms. LEE, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Res. 228: Mr. SARBANES, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H. Res. 231: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland.
H. Res. 233: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 12, 2007 No. 42

Senate

The Senate met at 2:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, You are the ''ancient of days,'' yet the ever new God. Thank You for Your mercy and faithfulness. As the dew refreshes the Earth, so You restore us each day to newness of life.

Sustain our lawmakers today in their labors. Give them guidance and inspiration to focus on issues that truly matter. Give them the wisdom to meet needs, solve problems, and lift burdens. May the talents possessed by the Members of this legislative body help in the awesome task of making the world better. Lord, to those who are given the responsibility of seeking the ways of peace, give creative stamina equal to this difficult task. We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. There will be no rollcall votes today. The time is not divided by the majority or minority; people can come and speak whenever they choose.

I am hopeful today some of the remaining pending amendments to the 9/11 legislation can be disposed of by voice vote. If that is not the case, then 10 amendments remain in order for rollcall votes during tomorrow's session. Under an agreement entered into last week, once we have disposed of those amendments and the substitute, we will proceed to vote on passage of S. 4.

Members are on notice there will be a couple of rollcall votes in the morning prior to the Senate recessing for respective party conferences.

It is my intention to move to proceed to S.J. Res. 9, which is a joint resolution regarding Iraq, and I will file cloture on that motion hopefully tonight, setting up a cloture vote for Wednesday morning.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on January 11, 2 months ago—it seems incredible it has been that long ago, but it has been—President Bush announced his new war plan, the so-called surge. At that time, administration officials gave the American people the strong impression the President's plan would require the temporary—temporary—deployment of 21,500 new troops in Iraq. During the last several days, news reports confirm this new plan was nothing more than a bait and switch, a new name for an old, failed policy.

First we learned that 21,500 troops cited by the President did not include support in other elements and the true number of additional troops associated with his proposal could have been as many as 40,000 troops. Then, over the weekend, we learned two other troubling facts about the President's plan.

In the wake of continued violence in Iraq that prompted one of our top generals there to call for more troops, the American commander in Iraq, General Petraeus, made it clear still more troops are needed. Even more disconcerting, according to a recent New York Times report:

Military officials in Iraq have indicated they would need a large American troop presence for at least a year and probably for longer to achieve lasting stability.

President Bush is not surging; he is sustaining his failed policy. The consequences of the President's flawed policy in Iraq are staggering. Yesterday, three more American troops were killed. We are fast approaching 3,200 dead Americans. We may be there; last count was 3,195. More than 25,000 now have been wounded. It has stretched our military, it has eroded our veterans health care system, and plunged Iraq deeper and deeper into chaos. No matter how one looks at it, America is less safe today because this President has waged war in Iraq. We must change course, and it is time for the Senate to demand he do it.

Soon, the Senate will again have that opportunity to tell the President to change course. We have been blocked in efforts to have the debate on Iraq.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Last week we offered the Republicans yet another opportunity to debate. It is my hope they will agree to this debate on Wednesday morning.

I appreciate very much the Republican leader voting for cloture. We are going to finish that bill tomorrow.

It is my hope they will agree to this debate so we can complete this important work; that is, the 9/11 bill, and then turn our attention to the war.

America is losing about 20 soldiers a week, about 3 a day, and spending $280 million a day in Iraq. It is a downward spiral that will continue unless the Senate joins the American people in demanding a new direction in Iraq.

The war hangs over all we do in the Senate this year. Even if we debate this week, we will not be done. We are getting something from the House on the supplemental and we will return to this issue of the supplemental, very likely, and we will continue until there is a change of course. There is very much work to do—the priorities everyone knows about, such as immigration, stem cell; we have the budget ahead of us. There are also issues such as the crisis in the judiciary and the intelligence authorization bill, that will demand our attention in the weeks ahead. I hope we can promptly complete action on the 9/11 bill tomorrow, and I am confident we will do that. We have so much to do.

There is a lot of negativity about what we do here in the Senate, but when you sort through all of it, and I recognize the war in Iraq is hanging over everything we have done—but when you look at what we have done these past few weeks in the history of the 110th Congress, we have done OK. We have been able to do the work on ethics and lobbying. We have done the minimum wage bill. We completed the continuing resolution and we are going to complete 9/11 legislation soon. It appears we are going to be able to do the reform of the Attorney General's problems that have been so much in the press recently. We have confirmed the only appellate court judge who has been brought to the floor. We hope to do another one within the next week or so. We now have another one on the calendar, so we will do that. The Judiciary Committee has three over there they are looking at now. I know the distinguished Republican leader is very concerned about moving appellate judges. We are going to do our best to cooperate with him in that regard.

Simply in closing my remarks today, I recognize we have a difficult situation with Iraq. Sometimes we need to sort through all that and recognize we have been able to accomplish a lot, and it has been done—the only way it can get done—on a bipartisan basis. We have had a few bumps in the road, but if we are patient and willing to recognize there will be bumps in the future, even having both sides not hold any grudges—legislative grudges, at least—I think we have the ability to do a lot more in this Congress.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

WAR ON TERROR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we are fortunate it has been almost 6 years since we have been attacked here at home. There is only one reason for that: We have been on the offense in Afghanistan and in Iraq. A lot of the terrorists who murdered over 3,000 of our innocent civilians in New York on that fateful day are dead. Others of them are incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay, and many others are on the run and dodging our military. That part of the war on terror has been an extraordinary success.

Iraq has not come together in terms of the Government as quickly as we had hoped, and Afghanistan is still a challenge. But I wonder if our good friends on the other side of the aisle have any answers to the question: What happens if we precipitously leave? I gather the most recent—in fact, the 17th—different version of Iraq resolutions we are going to see later this week anticipates basically telling the enemy a date on which we will depart. I can remember when most of our friends on the other side of the aisle thought that was a bad idea, but I gather their views must be evolving as to what kind of strategy might be helpful. One thing is clear: If we announce to the enemy when we are leaving, they will come back on that day.

So we will have another Iraq debate this week, and as the majority leader indicated, there will be yet another Iraq debate when the supplemental is before us in a few weeks. This is a debate we are more than willing to engage in.

I would say to the majority leader, as I indicated last week, it would have been possible, I think, to have gotten a unanimous consent agreement to deal with the stem cell issue in a rather short period of time had we chosen to take up another issue that was in the six in 2006 list of commitments the new Democratic majority made to the American people. Having said that, I will be in discussions with the majority leader today and tomorrow about how we might go forward on the Iraq debate. It is certainly his prerogative as the leader of the majority to determine what issue we proceed to, and he and I will meet later today and be discussing that today and tomorrow.

As far as the 9/11 bill is concerned, I supported cloture on that bill. We are anxious to go on and finish it and we should be able to do that after lunch tomorrow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak in morning business for about 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, for weeks, I have been coming to the floor to discuss the signs of progress we are beginning to see as the military implements our new strategy in Iraq. Recent developments are encouraging. They include the following:

First of all, the Iraqi Cabinet approved a national oil compact, which is the beginning of a resolution of what to do with the revenues that are produced from the oil that is produced in Iraq. It is a vital step in ensuring a united Iraq, and Prime Minister Maliki called it a ''gift to all of the Iraqi people.'' This is expected to be approved by the Iraqi legislature this spring.

Next is the capture recently of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, the leader of al-Qaida in Iraq, the successor to al-Zarqawi, in the western outskirts of Baghdad. This represents a continuing increase in the number of terrorist chiefs who have been killed or captured.

Just last week, the Iraqi neighbors meeting was held. It generated a lot of press because both U.S. and Iranian representatives were present. It involved all 16 nations involved in the conflict. It was the neighbors of Iraq, as well as countries such as Great Britain and the United States. It was the largest meeting of foreign countries in Iraq since the summit meeting of the Arab League members in March of 1990. There were working groups established to work on various problems all the countries had—for example, refugees from Iraq who have gone into Syria or Jordan. A special working group was created to try to deal with that issue.

This represents a step forward, all of which illustrates the fact that not only is the new strategy being implemented a military one but it involves diplomatic and economic and political factors as well.

It was interesting that the Prime Minister toured Baghdad to illustrate the security part of the new strategy that is beginning to work. He had been largely confined to the relatively safe Green Zone, as it is called, but on Sunday, he was able to go outside the wire to tour a power station, visit with police, and shake hands with ordinary Baghdad citizens. He attributed his newfound freedom of movement to the success of the Baghdad security plan, and he committed to redouble his efforts, saying: This operation will be accelerated at all levels in numbers and weaponry; we will not back down.

You have also seen successes in places such as Sadr City, where it is pretty clear that the Shiite militias have decided to stand down and not contest the Iraqi and American forces.

In fact, at the conclusion of my remarks, I will have printed in the RECORD two newspaper articles. One was written for the Washington Post on March 11, called ''The 'Surge' is Succeeding,'' by Robert Kagan. While the leaders in Iraq are not yet willing to publicly say the surge is succeeding, clearly evidence of that is on the ground, and at least the media—journalists—are entitled to conclude from what is happening that it is succeeding.

I was in Iraq a couple of weeks ago and was briefed by General Odierno and General Petraeus, as well as others. They all were cautiously optimistic that things were looking better on the ground. They just wanted to caution that there would be good days and bad; that the enemy has a say in this and they will strike back, certainly, all they can. And if the administration were to claim too much in the way of success too early and there was some kind of event that resulted in a lot of violence, there might be a suggestion that the administration was trying to put too nice a gloss on it. So the administration is trying to downplay the successes. But the reality is that there is news of success.

I think that makes all the more distressing and puzzling the effort by a lot of our colleagues not only to downplay the potential for success there but to develop strategies to undercut that success with resolutions that would micromanage the war from the Senate and, indeed, bind the hands of our commanders and our military as they begin to implement this program.

It is hard for me to fathom the amount of time and energy that has been put into the development of these various resolutions—at last count, some 17 different resolutions—that would, in one way or another, criticize the President's plan or try to find some way to stop it from occurring.

What is further puzzling and distressing is the degree to which this appears to be resulting from political considerations. Another one of the pieces I am going to ask to print in the RECORD is an article from March 12—that is today's Roll Call magazine—in which leaders on the Democratic side are quoted as referring to the political aspects of this strategy to try to get resolutions adopted.

The article talks about the Democratic leader's ''abandoning efforts at crafting a bipartisan deal'' and ''instead look to directly tie Republicans to the unpopular conflict. . . .''

The articles goes on to talk about ''the decision to ratchet up their partisan rhetoric''—''their'' meaning Democratic partisan rhetoric—by a resolution that sets ''specific dates for a mass redeployment of troops in Iraq and creating new restrictions on the war effort,'' and, indeed, that is what the latest resolution of the majority leader would do.

But the article goes on to talk about this ''more aggressive push to tar vulnerable Republicans up for re-election in 2008.'' That is not what we should be all about in debating the war in Iraq and designing solutions to ensure that war can be resolved successfully. It should not be about trying to tar vulnerable Members of the opposition party to diminish their reelection prospects in the year 2008.

The chairman of the Democratic Campaign Committee, the distinguished senior Senator from New York, has, according to this Roll Call article, ''warned that Democrats would use the issue as a bludgeon on Republicans up for reelection next year,'' and they quote him as saying:

> The heat on these Republican Senators that are up in '08 is tremendous.

Adding:

> . . . this is a campaign . . . we are going to keep at [it].

To me, that is an illustration of something very wrong with the Democratic Party's approach to this war. Reasonable people can differ about whether we should be there and how we should conduct the operations once there. But we ought to be able to agree that our responsibility is to provide the funding or to cut it off. The President's responsibility as Commander in Chief is to do his best to see that the mission is achieved. That is what we are sending the troops over there to do. That is what General Petraeus was sent there to do. He was confirmed unanimously by this body a month or so ago.

When I was in Iraq, General Petraeus told us: Please see to it that we have what we need to fulfill our mission. Pass the supplemental appropriations bill to fund our effort and don't tie our hands with micromanagement from the Senate.

This is the message from the person we sent over to do the job. It seems to me this would be the wrong time to pull the rug out from under him and pull the rug out from under the troops just as there are signs of success, as I discussed earlier.

It is interesting, too, that there seem to be so many different approaches to this effort to criticize the President and his plan. I mentioned that at last count there are some 17 different resolutions. Somebody called it the ''Goldilocks'' strategy, with the Democratic leader searching for a solution that is neither too hot nor too cold. The real question is: In the House of Representatives, are they going to lose people on the left or the right or did they get it just right, with sufficient numbers of projects in the supplemental appropriations bill to appeal to those who may not like the end result with respect to the Iraq part of the resolution?

Some have labeled it a ''slow bleed'' because it appears to be a solution that doesn't cut off all the funding for the troops at this moment but, rather, over time makes it impossible for us to succeed.

The resolution, as I understand it, says we have to begin withdrawing our troops by a specific date and complete the withdrawal by another specific date. In the past, there has been a fairly good bipartisan consensus for the proposition that is the worst of all worlds, that you don't want to set a timetable for withdrawal because it gives the enemy precisely what they need to calibrate how long they have to hang in there until you are gone and then they can move in and take over and fill the vacuum. So it is a bad proposition, even apart from the political motivation behind it.

It is worth, taking a look at some of the iterations.

We started with S. 2, a nonbinding resolution, that it wasn't in the national interest of the United States to proceed. That was criticized as being nonbinding.

Then we move on to S. Con. Res. 7 that expressed disagreement with the plan. That didn't have sufficient support, so that was replaced by S. 470, the Levin bill. It expressed disagreement with the strategy but in a form the President would be forced to veto.

Then we moved on to the Reid-Pelosi proposal, S. 574. Not surprisingly, this approach had no more support than the others, and so we then moved on to the Biden-Levin proposal. That bill never even saw the light of day. It wasn't even debated.

Now we are down to S. J. Res. 9, a nonbinding resolution encouraging the President to redeploy all, or almost all, of the troops by the end of 2008. This has been described as a goal, and yet the resolution itself provides that it is much more than that; that the troops would, in fact, have to begin being redeployed and be fully redeployed by the end of March of 2008. I don't think this resolution will pass either because, as I said, most people agree setting a timetable for withdrawal is absolutely the worst thing you want to do, even if you don't agree with the troops being there in the first place.

As I said earlier, the amount of time and effort consumed in trying to craft the perfect Iraq resolution is difficult to square with all the other important business we have to do. The majority

leader, the chairmen of the Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees, and other important Members of this body have devoted hours and hours to making grammatical edits to this legislation, even though none of it is going to pass.

Frankly, it is a good illustration of why wars should not be micromanaged by Congress. We are not good at conducting wars. That is why we have a Commander in Chief, that is why we have a Joint Chiefs of Staff, that is why we have our military commanders, such as General Petraeus, in whom we have placed a great deal of confidence, who have the experience to conduct these kinds of operations.

I daresay, there are not many of us who have the experience of the distinguished Presiding Officer, and it is important for us not to be armchair quarterbacks when lives are on the line.

Iraq is perhaps the most critical issue facing our country at the moment, and my comments are not meant to suggest that Iraq deserves anything less than a full and fair debate on the floor. It is one thing, however, to have a debate and let each side make its position known and then vote on competing proposals. It is quite another to devote this kind of energy to attempts which appear to be purely political attempts to undercut the President and undercut the mission in Iraq.

I believe the President has chosen a course that has the potential for success. That is why I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks some of the events which have been reported in the media that demonstrate early success. I, frankly, urge my colleagues to turn their energies to find ways to amplify these successes rather than to undercut them.

It is interesting that Lee Hamilton, the chairman of the Baker-Hamilton commission, who has been cited many times by Members on both sides of the aisle, in testimony before the Congress has been insistent that now that the President has laid out a plan, that strategy should have a chance to succeed, that we should give it a chance to succeed.

By the way, even though the President at the time did not indicate what he would be doing specifically, since that report has come out, several of the recommendations have, in fact, been a part of what the administration strategy is following. For example, the strategy of meeting with people in the neighborhood is a followup on one of the Baker-Hamilton recommendations.

I agree with cochairman Lee Hamilton that we should give the strategy in Iraq a chance to succeed and not undercut it at the very moment it appears there are early signs of success with a resolution which, as I said, there had been a bipartisan consensus for that we shouldn't be setting a timetable for withdrawal since that simply plays into enemy hands.

The final document I will ask unanimous consent to be printed in the RECORD when I conclude is a piece from the L.A. Times, dated today, March 12. Headline: ''Do we really need a Gen. Pelosi?'' It refers, of course, to the distinguished Speaker of the House of Representatives, who is supporting the plan that has been put forth in the House of Representatives by the Democratic leadership there. To quote from this L.A. Times.com piece:

> After weeks of internal strife, House Democrats have brought forth their proposal for forcing President Bush to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq by 2008. The plan is an unruly mess: Bad public policy, bad precedent and bad politics. If the legislation passes, Bush says he'll veto it, as well he should.

This comes from the Los Angeles Times, no particular friend of this administration. The Times goes on to say that this kind of micromanagement ''is the worst kind of congressional meddling in military strategy.''

They go on to say:

> By interfering with the discretion of the commander in chief and military leaders in order to fulfill domestic political needs, Congress undermines whatever prospects remain of a successful outcome.

Then they go on to criticize the Speaker and others for trying ''to micromanage the conflict . . . with arbitrary timetables and benchmarks.''

Concluding:

> Congress should not hinder Bush's ability to seek the best possible endgame to this very bad war.

So a paper that does not like the war or support the administration generally, nevertheless, recognizes it should not be micromanaged from the Congress; that if there are any possibilities for it to succeed, we should be following those possibilities.

To sum it up, I simply say this: There is a chance for this strategy to succeed. We should give it a chance to succeed. Early signs are positive. We should not try to micromanage the war from the Congress. Therefore, when these resolutions come before us, we should reject them and allow our military commanders the opportunity that we have asked them to engage in to bring a successful conclusion to this war.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the articles to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 11, 2007]

THE 'SURGE' IS SUCCEEDING

(By Robert Kagan)

A front-page story in The Post last week suggested that the Bush administration has no backup plan in case the surge in Iraq doesn't work. I wonder if The Post and other newspapers have a backup plan in case it does.

Leading journalists have been reporting for some time that the war was hopeless, a fiasco that could not be salvaged by more troops and a new counterinsurgency strategy. The conventional wisdom in December held that sending more troops was politically impossible after the antiwar tenor of the midterm elections. It was practically impossible because the extra troops didn't exist. Even if the troops did exist, they could not make a difference.

Four months later, the once insurmountable political opposition has been surmounted. The nonexistent troops are flowing into Iraq. And though it is still early and horrible acts of violence continue, there is substantial evidence that the new counterinsurgency strategy, backed by the infusion of new forces, is having a significant effect.

Some observers are reporting the shift. Iraqi bloggers Mohammed and Omar Fadhil, widely respected for their straight talk, say that ''early signs are encouraging.'' The first impact of the ''surge,'' they write, was psychological. Both friends and foes in Iraq had been convinced, in no small part by the American media, that the United States was preparing to pull out. When the opposite occurred, this alone shifted the dynamic.

As the Fadhils report, ''Commanders and lieutenants of various militant groups abandoned their positions in Baghdad and in some cases fled the country.'' The most prominent leader to go into hiding has been Moqtada al-Sadr. His Mahdi Army has been instructed to avoid clashes with American and Iraqi forces, even as coalition forces begin to establish themselves in the once off-limits Sadr City.

Before the arrival of Gen. David Petraeus, the Army's leading counterinsurgency strategist, U.S. forces tended to raid insurgent and terrorist strongholds and then pull back and hand over the areas to Iraqi forces, who failed to hold them. The Fadhils report, ''One difference between this and earlier—failed—attempts to secure Baghdad is the willingness of the Iraqi and U.S. governments to commit enough resources for enough time to make it work.'' In the past, bursts of American activity were followed by withdrawal and a return of the insurgents. Now, the plan to secure Baghdad ''is becoming stricter and gaining momentum by the day as more troops pour into the city, allowing for a better implementation of the 'clear and hold' strategy.'' Baghdadis ''always want the 'hold' part to materialize, and feel safe when they go out and find the Army and police maintaining their posts—the bad guys can't intimidate as long as the troops are staying.''

A greater sense of confidence produces many benefits. The number of security tips about insurgents that Iraqi civilians provide has jumped sharply. Stores and marketplaces are reopening in Baghdad, increasing the sense of community. People dislocated by sectarian violence are returning to their homes. As a result, ''many Baghdadis feel hopeful again about the future, and the fear of civil war is slowly being replaced by optimism that peace might one day return to this city,'' the Fadhils report. ''This change in mood is something huge by itself.''

Apparently some American journalists see the difference. NBC's Brian Williams recently reported a dramatic change in Ramadi since his previous visit. The city was safer; the airport more secure. The new American strategy of'' getting out, decentralizing, going into the neighborhoods, grabbing a toehold, telling the enemy we're here, start talking to the locals—that is having an obvious and palpable effect.'' U.S. soldiers forged agreements with local religious leaders and pushed al-Qaeda back—a trend other observers have noted in some Sunni-dominated areas. The result, Williams said, is that ''the war has changed.''

It is no coincidence that as the mood and the reality have shifted, political currents have shifted as well. A national agreement on sharing oil revenue appears on its way to approval. The Interior Ministry has been purged of corrupt officials and of many suspected of torture and brutality. And cracks

are appearing in the Shiite governing coalition—a good sign, given that the rock-solid unity was both the product and cause of growing sectarian violence.

There is still violence, as Sunni insurgents and al-Qaeda seek to prove that the surge is not working. However, they are striking at more vulnerable targets in the provinces. Violence is down in Baghdad. As for Sadr and the Mahdi Army, it is possible they may reemerge as a problem later. But trying to wait out the American and Iraqi effort may be hazardous if the public becomes less tolerant of their violence. It could not be comforting to Sadr or al-Qaeda to read in the New York Times that the United States plans to keep higher force levels in Iraq through at least the beginning of 2008. The only good news for them would be if the Bush administration in its infinite wisdom starts to talk again about drawing down forces.

No one is asking American journalists to start emphasizing the ''good'' news. All they have to do is report what is occurring, though it may conflict with their previous judgments. Some are still selling books based on the premise that the war is lost, end of story. But what if there is a new chapter in the story?

[From Roll Call, Mar. 12, 2007]

REID TO ATTACK ON IRAQ

(By John Stanton and Susan Davis)

With the GOP maintaining a unified front against Democratic efforts to end the Iraq War, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and other party leaders are abandoning efforts at crafting a bipartisan deal on the issue and will instead look to directly tie Republicans to the unpopular conflict, senior leadership aides said Friday.

The decision to ratchet up their partisan rhetoric followed Thursday's announcement of a joint resolution by House and Senate Democrats setting specific dates for a mass redeployment of troops in Iraq and creating new restrictions on the war effort. Reid is expected to bring the resolution to the floor this week following completion of the 9/11 bill, aides said.

According to Democratic leadership aides, Reid, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Chairman Charles Schumer (N.Y.) and other party leaders hope that a more aggressive push to tar vulnerable Republicans up for re-election in 2008 with the prospect of an open-ended commitment to the war will force enough defections to pass legislation forcing Bush to begin bringing the war to an end.

''If they want to follow Bush over the cliff, that's fine with us,'' one Democratic leadership aide said, adding that Democrats will continue to push the issue between now and the 2008 elections in the hopes of eventually forcing a change in the administration or Congressional Republicans.

Saying Democratic Members ''are close to unanimity in both Houses,'' Schumer accused Republicans of being torn between ''their president who says 'stay the course,' and the American people who demand change'' and warned that Democrats would use the issue as a bludgeon on Republicans up for reelection next year.

''The heat on these Republican Senators that are up in '08 is tremendous,'' Schumer maintained, adding that ''this is a campaign . . . we are going to keep at'' until Reid has enough GOP defections to pass a bill.

According to leadership aides, Democrats have thus far tried to walk a careful line of criticizing GOP opposition to efforts to end the war while not being so harsh as to alienate potential GOP allies. But over the past several weeks ''it's become evident that Republicans have decided to march in lockstep with the president'' and that, at least at this point, a bipartisan solution is unlikely.

As a result, Reid, Schumer and other leaders have decided to pivot to a more confrontational—and partisan—approach starting this week and will attempt to portray opposition to the joint resolution as de facto support for Bush's war plans.

''They have made a politically perilous decision to stand with the president,'' a Democratic aide said, and Reid will attempt to use Bush's low poll numbers and public concern with the war to pressure Republican Members to break ranks.

Senate Republicans, meanwhile, will continue to make the case that Democrats are in disarray on the war and that any efforts to bring about an end to the war amount to a dangerous micromanaging of the war by Congress.

One GOP leadership aide noted that despite early jitters within the Conference, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has done an excellent job of keeping his Members together and in reasserting Republicans' vaunted discipline. ''Part of our strength in this debate has been staying on message'' and not being dragged in to fights over specific Democratic proposals or process questions, the aide said.

But despite their successes in recent weeks, McConnell and other Republicans acknowledge Iraq is a politically perilous issue for them because of its unpopularity with voters.

In an interview with Roll Call reporters and editors Friday, McConnell said Democrats appear intent on keeping the focus on the war, arguing that Democrats' success with the issue in 2006 has convinced many in the new majority that it is ''the gift that keeps on giving.''

He also said that Senate Democrats appear intent on making it a cornerstone of their 2008 campaign strategy. Pointing to the fact that Democrats have proposed some 17 different Iraq resolutions or bills since November, McConnell maintained ''the best evidence of that is that they keep moving the goal post'' on how they want to deal with Iraq.

''Would I like the election to be about something else? You bet,'' McConnell said, arguing that Republicans would have much better terrain in a fight over the economy.

''We are the economic engine of the world in many ways'' but that fact has become lost in public concern over Iraq, McConnell argued. Iraq has ''just put people in a kind of funky mood,'' he lamented.

But even McConnell—one of the White House's staunchest supporters on the war—acknowledged that conditions on the ground must change and that Iraq will need to demonstrate improvements.

''This is the Iraqis' last chance to get it right. . . . They need to show they can govern right now. Not next year. Not this fall. Now. Right now,'' a clearly upset McConnell said.

Meanwhile, unburdened by having to craft their own policy on funding the Iraq War, House Republicans appear to be unified against the supplemental in its current form.

''There is nearly unanimous opposition in the Republican Conference to any proposal that undermines the troops' ability to fight and win the war on terror,'' said Brian Kennedy, a spokesman for Minority Leader John Boehner (R-Ohio). ''Our Members are committed to sustaining a united front against anything short of full and unqualified funding for the troops.''

The House Republican Conference held a special meeting Friday morning to discuss the spending bill. Multiple Members and aides in attendance said almost all of the chamber's 201 Republican lawmakers are prepared to take the potentially risky vote against a war-funding bill.

House Republican leaders are united in opposition, and Appropriations ranking member Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.) also told the Conference he would vote against the measure.

Much of the rank and file are looking to veteran Rep. Bill Young (R-Fla.) for guidance on how to vote. Young is Rep. John Murtha's (D-Pa.) counterpart on the Appropriations subcommittee on Defense and the most senior Republican in the House.

Young told his colleagues Friday that he was—at that point—prepared to vote against the measure. He said he was reluctant to vote against any funding bill for the military, but that the Democratic bill was unacceptable.

However, Young left open the possibility that he could ultimately support the bill if Democrats remove date specific provisions on troop withdrawal. That appears unlikely, as doing so would result in anti-war Democrats voting against the bill.

Rep. Sam Johnson (R-Texas), a Vietnam War veteran and former prisoner of war, gave the most stirring speech at Conference, attendees said. ''He said, 'We need to call this what it is—a piece of crap,' '' recalled a GOP leadership aide.

House Minority Whip Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) was unusually candid in his whip count last week, stating that he expected all Republicans who voted against the mid-February Iraq resolution to oppose the supplemental, ''give or take one or two.''

There were 17 Republicans who voted with Democrats on that resolution, and two Democrats who voted with Republicans. Of those 17 Republicans, several already have indicated they are likely to oppose the supplemental, including GOP Reps. Tom Davis (Va.), Mark Kirk (Ill.) and Howard Coble (N.C.), and GOP leaders are confident they can whittle that number into the single digits if the underlying bill is not substantially changed before it hits the House floor.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Mar. 12, 2007]

DO WE REALLY NEED A GEN. PELOSI?

After weeks of internal strife, House Democrats have brought forth their proposal for forcing President Bush to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq by 2008. The plan is an unruly mess: bad public policy, bad precedent and bad politics. If the legislation passes, Bush says he'll veto it, as well he should.

It was one thing for the House to pass a nonbinding vote of disapproval. It's quite another for it to set out a detailed timetable with specific benchmarks and conditions for the continuation of the conflict. Imagine if Dwight Eisenhower had been forced to adhere to a congressional war plan in scheduling the Normandy landings or if, in 1863, President Lincoln had been forced by Congress to conclude the Civil War the following year. This is the worst kind of congressional meddling in military strategy.

This is not to say that Congress has no constitutional leverage—only that it should exercise it responsibly. In a sense, both Bush and the more ardent opponents of the war are right. If a majority in Congress truly believes that the war is not in the national interest, then lawmakers should have the courage of their convictions and vote to stop funding U.S. involvement. They could cut the final checks in six months or so to give Bush time to manage the withdrawal. Or lawmakers could, as some Senate Democrats are proposing, revoke the authority that Congress gave Bush in 2002 to use force against Iraq.

But if Congress accepts Bush's argument that there is still hope, however faint, that

the U.S. military can be effective in quelling the sectarian violence, that U.S. economic aid can yet bring about an improvement in Iraqi lives that won't be bombed away and that American diplomatic power can be harnessed to pressure Shiites and Sunnis to make peace—if Congress accepts this, then lawmakers have a duty to let the president try this ''surge and leverage'' strategy.

By interfering with the discretion of the commander in chief and military leaders in order to fulfill domestic political needs, Congress undermines whatever prospects remain of a successful outcome. It's absurd for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D–San Francisco) to try to micromanage the conflict, and the evolution of Iraqi society, with arbitrary timetables and benchmarks.

Congress should not hinder Bush's ability to seek the best possible endgame to this very bad war. The president needs the leeway to threaten, or negotiate with, Sunnis and Shiites and Kurds, Syrians and Iranians and Turks. Congress can find many ways to express its view that U.S. involvement, certainly at this level, must not go on indefinitely, but it must not limit the president's ability to maneuver at this critical juncture.

Bush's wartime leadership does not inspire much confidence. But he has made adjustments to his team, and there's little doubt that a few hundred legislators do not a capable commander in chief make. These aren't partisan judgments—we also condemned Republican efforts to micromanage President Clinton's conduct of military operations in the Balkans.

Members of Congress need to act responsibly, debating the essence of the choice the United States now faces—to stay or go—and putting their money where their mouths are. But too many lives are at stake to allow members of Congress to play the role of Eisenhower or Lincoln.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this morning I held a hearing in Chicago at the University of Illinois, Chicago medical campus. It was a hearing to discuss the challenges we face with returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. It was clear from the turnout at that hearing there is an intense interest in this subject. Much of it was brought on by the Washington Post front-page story of a few weeks ago about the now infamous Building 18 at Walter Reed Hospital.

Like many Members of Congress, I have visited Walter Reed many times to see Illinois soldiers and to check in to see how things were going. None of us were ever taken across the street to Building 18. I didn't know it existed. But the graphic images of the building, which was worse than a flophouse motel with mold on the walls and rat droppings and evidence of roaches and bugs, where we were housing men and women who had just returned from battle with their injuries, has really struck a nerve across America and here on Capitol Hill. It has caused us to ask important and difficult questions about whether we are meeting our obligations to our soldiers and to our veterans, also to ask whether Walter Reed's Building 18 was an isolated example of neglect or symptomatic of a much larger problem and a much greater challenge.

Today in Chicago we talked about the returning vets and soldiers from our perspective in the middle of the country. With the Hines VA Hospital being one of the larger VA hospitals, and with a lot of veterans heading back to that part of the country, we have a real interest in this issue.

It goes without saying we all support our troops. In fact, it is said so often on the Senate floor it becomes an almost empty cliche. Those soldiers, the families, the voters, people of this country have a right to ask each of us: Great. If you support them, what are you doing for them?

We can talk—and I might at the end of these remarks—about our policy in Iraq, but for a moment I want to focus on those who serve our country overseas and come home injured and need a helping hand.

Many of the soldiers who were featured in the Washington Post exposé on Walter Reed had been living in deplorable conditions for months, sometimes years. They have lived in that condition waiting to receive a disability rating to begin rebuilding their lives. So after they fight the enemy, they come home to fight the bureaucracy. Papers are thrown at them. Some of them are in compromised positions because of their physical or mental weakness and they have to become advocates in a system that is not always friendly.

The Washington Post brought to light poor conditions at Walter Reed, but we have to ask the larger question: What about the rest of the hospitals? What about the rest of the soldiers and the veterans?

I joined several of my Democratic colleagues last week in cosponsoring the Dignity for Wounded Soldiers Act of 2007. Our new colleague, Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL from Missouri, who has become a leader on this issue, joined with Senator OBAMA of my State in introducing a bill that calls for more homes for service members who are still recovering, less paperwork for recovering service members, better case management to cut through the red-tape, better training for caseworkers, better support services, including meal benefits, for recovering service members and their families, and job protections for husbands and wives, moms and dads of wounded service members who have come to stay with and help take care of their loved ones while they are recovering.

Mr. President, you served in Vietnam. At the time of your service, the men and women in uniform were much younger and usually single. Now the soldiers, guardsmen, and reservists who serve in Iraq and Afghanistan are older and usually have a family. So when they come home, their misfortune, their illness, and their injury turn out to be a family concern.

This bill says we should be sensitive to the family needs of these returning service members. Many of the returning troops who are injured need medical attention long after they are discharged. In fact, more of our service members sustain serious brain injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan than in any recent conflict we have known. I have seen several figures about how many Americans serving in the Middle East have suffered head and brain injuries that require a lifetime of continual care. The estimates run from 2,000 to 3,000. When you think of over a million service men and women who have served in that theater, it appears to be a small number but it is a dramatically larger number than we have seen in any previous conflict.

In Vietnam, in previous wars, brain injuries accounted for 1 out of 8 or 12 percent of the injuries. In Iraq and Afghanistan, brain injuries account for 22 percent of the injuries—almost 1 out of 4. Of course, we understand why, with the roadside bombs, the blasts, and the concussions to which these service men and women are subjected. It takes its toll. As many as 2 out of every 10 combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are returning with concussions in varying degrees of intensity, and 1.6 million vets have served already in the war. That means 320,000 people require some sort of screening and treatment for traumatic brain injury or head-related injury. That number grows with every new soldier, sailor, marine, and airman deployed.

I am working on legislation now, and I will invite my colleagues to join me, to focus on brain injury because I think that is the significant wound of this war that we cannot ignore. The bill which I am preparing will, among other things, speed up medical research so we can do a better job of diagnosis and treatment. I might add parenthetically that treatment will inure to the benefit of many other people across America dealing with brain injuries or brain-related problems.

We also in this bill encourage the VA to do more outreach to find veterans whose brain injuries may have caused problems in their lives and help bring them back into a system of care and support. The bill requires the Department of Defense and the VA to work more closely together to capture and track returning troops with combat-induced brain trauma and to put money into better equipment for VA medical centers to improve their testing and treatment.

During Vietnam, one in three Vietnam service members who were injured died. In Iraq and Afghanistan, it is one in seven. Battlefield medical care is

significantly better. The trauma teams in the field who treat our men and women who are injured are performing miracles every day. But those injured veterans, once surviving, come home to more challenging medical care needs.

Let's speak for a moment about post-traumatic stress disorder. With Vietnam veterans, it is estimated it was as high as 30 percent. That estimate is given on Iraq and Afghanistan veterans as well. But during the Vietnam war, it was not discussed.

Today, I had a young man who was a Vietnam veteran stand up. His name is Ramon Calderon. Ramon has been fighting post-traumatic stress disorder almost single-handedly since Vietnam. There are so many other cases of men and women who served there who came home haunted by the experience. It wasn't considered appropriate to raise that issue when they returned, so they suffered in silence and many times paid a price: a failed marriage, self-medication with drugs and alcohol, despondency, homelessness, and problems that follow when these psychological scars are not healed. Today we know that many of our returning service men and women from Iraq and Afghanistan bring home those demons of war in their heads, and they are trying to purge themselves of that haunting illness.

A new study that will be released later today by the Archives of Internal Medicine says we are looking at the high end of the estimate of 30 percent. About one-third of those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan come home in need of post-traumatic stress disorder counseling, and the sooner the better. The longer this situation festers, the worse it becomes. Early intervention, early help can save a life, save a marriage, and turn a life around. The study reports that one-third of veterans coming back from war who seek care in the VA have mental health or social issues.

Several months ago I went to the Hines VA Hospital and I was invited to attend a counseling session. The soldiers who were back from war said it was OK if I sat in on it. It was late on a Friday afternoon. These were vets, mainly young men, who had just returned from war. They came filing into the room, about a half dozen of them, and I could tell by the look on their face that we had the whole spectrum of emotions.

There were some who were nearly in tears the minute they crossed the threshold into the room, and there were others with clenched fists and angry looks on their faces who were suffering from the same problem. They needed to sit down and talk to somebody to try to get through another day, another week before they had another counseling session.

That is the reality. The statistics tell us a vivid story. More injured servicemembers are surviving. More injured soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen are coming home, and a larger percentage of them need help from brain injuries, both traumatic injuries as well as psychological injuries. The VA needs to be prepared to treat this large influx of people.

Our medical and benefit systems are not keeping pace with reality. Remember the promise we made to these men and women? If you will volunteer to serve America, if you will risk your life, we will stand by you. We will protect you in battle, and we will stand by you when you come home. That was the basic promise. But we know, sadly, we are not keeping that promise at the VA hospitals and even the military hospitals across our country. Injured troops come home to find in too many cases substandard outpatient care and a big fight on their hands to justify the need for ongoing care.

A recent New York Times article featured 2005 data from the Veterans Affairs that showed a big difference between the average compensation paid in my home State. It is not news. It has been there for a couple years now. For 20 years, for reasons no one can explain, a soldier who was disabled in Illinois received the lowest compensation for an injury in comparison to another soldier with the same injury in another State. I was pretty angry about it. Senator OBAMA, who is on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, joined me in demanding an inspection to find out why this was going on, an investigation to get to the bottom of it, and action. We got a report back from Veterans Affairs, and it wasn't very satisfying.

It turns out that if a veteran tried to walk through this system alone without someone by his side, someone from his family or someone from a veterans organization, they were likely to recover 50 percent less for their disability than one who took an advocate with him. It tells you what the bureaucracy does. The bureaucracy shortchanges the injured veterans. It takes an advocate to stand by their side, and I will tell you the story of one in just a moment.

Last year we required the Veterans' Administration to send letters to 60,000 veterans in Illinois explaining how they might have been shortchanged in their disability claims for a variety of reasons. I want to make sure the VA is tracking those letters and responses and that they are doing it in a timely fashion. The VA, the Veterans Affairs Department, is inundated at this point: 1.6 million new veterans they may not have anticipated just a few years ago. Higher rates of PTSD and brain injury complicate their task. The VA Compensation and Pension Claims Division reports a backlog—a backlog—of 625,000 cases. The average wait to process an original claim at the VA is about half a year—177 days. Six months to process a VA claim, and if you are unhappy with the result and decide you want to appeal it, it will take 2 years—657 days—before you will get an answer on the appeal.

One of the things I think we should acknowledge is that there are many wonderful things happening at VA hospitals. The criticisms that we hear for their shortcomings, notwithstanding there are many dedicated men and women serving in the Veterans' Administration. I can't tell you how many returning soldiers have said good things about military hospitals and the VA. But the fact is, we need to do much more, and we need to do better.

If we could have gathered together the leaders of the Veterans' Administration 10 years ago and asked them to predict where they would be in the year 2007 in terms of their caseload and the requirements they would face, I don't think any one of them could have predicted what they face today. By and large, they were dealing with an aging population of World War II vets and Korean vets, Vietnam vets and others who had chronic conditions that needed attention.

They were conditions related to their injuries. But they were also conditions such as diabetes and blood pressure. They were prepared to deal with the aging veteran population. Then comes the invasion of Iraq, and everything changes. Thousands of men and women are now in the VA system with new challenges. Instead of chronic conditions such as diabetes and blood pressure, the VA now faces the need for acute rehabilitation. This is a specialty in which there are very few centers in America on the civilian side that really get high marks.

The VA is being asked to create this kind of specialty in a hurry. It is not working out very well. I will speak to that in a moment.

I had excellent people speaking today at the hearing.

We had Scott Burton, a former marine who was part of the initial Iraq invasion. He was discharged in 2004, and he suffers from PTSD. He is very open about it and is looking for help. He will do just fine, but he has become an advocate for other soldiers who need to step forward and acknowledge their need.

We had Katy Scott. Katy's son Jason lost his right eye and right arm in an IED attack in Iraq. She lost her job because she gave it up basically to stand by her son's bed at Walter Reed and fight for him every day. She is a passionate advocate not only for her son but for all the returning servicemen.

Then we had Edgar Edmundson. He was featured today on the front page of the New York Times. It is a feature he and his family really were not looking for. It is entitled ''For War's Gravely Injured, a Challenge to Find Care.''

The article tells the story of a number of veterans, including SSG Jaron Behee, who suffered a traumatic brain injury and went to the Veterans Affairs hospital in Palo Alto, where they said it was time for him to pick out his wheelchair, which he would be in for the rest of his life. They told him he wasn't making progress and that the next step for him was a nursing home. His wife said, ''I just felt that it was

unfair for them to throw in the towel on him. I said, 'We're out of here.' ''

Because Ms. Behee had successfully resisted the Army's efforts to retire her husband into the VA health care system, his military insurance policy, it turned out, covered private care. So she moved him to a community rehabilitation center, Casa Colina, near her parents' home in Southern California, in late 2005.

Three months later, Sergeant Behee was walking, unassisted, and abandoned his government-provided wheelchair.

Three months before, he had been told by the VA there was no hope—pick out your wheelchair, we are sending you to a nursing home.

Now 28, he works as a volunteer in the center's outpatient gym, wiping down equipment and handing out towels. It is not the police job he aspired to; his cognitive impairments are serious. But it is not a nursing home either.

There are other stories. Some were referred to today in the hearing we had in Chicago. The one I mentioned earlier is one that I think bears repeating. This involves Edgar Edmundson, 52 years old, from New Bern, NC. His son, SGT Eric Edmundson, sustained serious blast injuries in northern Iraq in the fall of 2005.

Mr. Edmundson [the father] was aggressive, abandoning his job and home to care for his son, calling on his representatives in Washington for help, ''saying no a lot.'' But even he did not come to understand his son's health care options quickly enough to ensure that his son was not ''shortchanged'' in the critical first year after his injury.

Mr. President, this is an element we cannot overlook. We cannot play catchup in this game. Many soldiers with traumatic brain injuries will deteriorate, and it will be sometimes impossible to recover the ground they lost if they don't get the right care at the right moment.

Two days before Sergeant Edmundson was wounded near the Syrian border, he visited with his father on the telephone. Mr Edmundson urged his son, then 25 with a young wife and a baby daughter, to ''stay safe.''

In an interview last week, Mr. Edmundson's voice cracked as he recalled his son's response: ''He said, 'Don't worry, because if anything happens, the Army will take care of me.' ''

While awaiting transport to Germany after initial surgery, Sergeant Edmundson suffered a heart attack. As doctors worked to revive him, he lost oxygen to his brain for half an hour, with devastating consequences.

A couple weeks later, at Walter Reed in Washington, on the very day Sergeant Edmundson was stabilized medically and transferred into the brain injury unit, military officials initiated the process of retiring him [from the active military].

''That threw up the red flag for me,'' Mr. Edmundson said. ''If the Army was supposed to take care of him, why were they trying to discharge him from service the minute he gets out of intensive care?''

Still, he didn't understand that his son's insurance policy covered private care. He wasn't aware of it.

When Walter Reed transferred Sergeant Edmundson to the polytrauma center in Richmond, Mr. Edmundson believed that he was, more or less, following orders.

Mr. Edmundson was disappointed by what he considered an unfocused, inconsistent rehabilitation regimen at what he saw as an understaffed, overburdened VA hospital filled with geriatric patients. His son's morale plummeted and he refused to participate in therapy. ''Eric gave up his will,'' he said. In March 2006, the VA hospital sought to transfer Sergeant Edmundson to a nursing home.

Mr. Edmundson chose instead to care for his son himself, quitting his job [altogether and he spent full-time with his son.] For almost eight months, Sergeant Edmundson, who was awake but unable to walk, talk, or control his body, received nothing but a few hours of maintenance therapy weekly at a local hospital.

One day, by chance, Mr. Edmundson encountered a military case manager who asked him why his son was not at a civilian rehabilitation hospital. That is when Mr. Edmundson learned that his son had options. He did some research and set his sights on the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

He decided that the best place to go—and I agree—was the Rehab Institute of Chicago, which I think is one of the best in the world.

Sergeant Edmundson is now the only Iraq combat veteran being treated there.

The first step in his treatment in Chicago, Dr. Smith said, was to use drugs, technology and devices ''to reverse the ill effects of not getting adequate care earlier, somewhere between Walter Reed and here.''

For example, she said, Sergeant Edmundson's hips, knees and ankles are frozen ''in the position of someone sitting in a hallway in a chair.'' They are working to straighten out his joints so that he can eventually stand, she said. They have taught him to express his basic needs using a communication board, and they hope to loosen his vocal cords so he can start speaking.

At least he can communicate. Doctor Smith said, ''He has profound cognitive disability, but he can communicate, albeit not verbally, and he can express emotions, including humor and even sarcasm.''

When Sergeant Edmundson's father testified today, along with Eric's sister, he could not get the words out. This man had given almost 3 years of his life for his son. He knows his son has a major uphill struggle to make progress. He tried to be as kind as he could to everybody who helped, but he was also very honest. He expressed the feelings of a heartbroken father who believes that along the way, somebody should have told him his son was entitled to even better specialized care.

Last week, the head of the Rehab Institute of Chicago came to Washington. I met with her—Dr. JoAnn Smith. She was with Dr. Henry Betts, who is legendary in our town for his leadership in this institute. She came with a simple message from the Veterans' Administration, to tell them that: This is our specialty, this is what we do—take those who are acutely injured and need rehab and work with them effectively. She asked if the Veterans' Administration would please send some patients to the Rehab Institute of Chicago—patients who could be helped like those I have described in my remarks today. She said she was heartened.

Dr. Smith was trained in the VA system. She has no prejudice against them. There was a high degree of acceptance that there is a gap in the military system's current ability to take care of particularly the profoundly injured, she said. However, there is still resistance. The VA doesn't believe there is a problem or any need for rescue by the private sector.

Should we be debating this at all? If you had a seriously injured person in your household, would you not look for the best doctor you could find? Would you not want to send that severely injured person you love to the best place for them? Don't we so many times express on the floor of the Senate how much we care for and love these soldiers who serve our country? Why are they not getting the same thing?

I think that is a challenge we all have to face. We know the VA does many things and does them well. They can do a lot better when it comes to traumatic brain injury—the serious injuries the soldiers are bringing home and the post-traumatic stress disorder. We need to appropriate the funds. No excuses. We need to make sure the billions of dollars are there to take care of these soldiers.

Just 2 weeks from now—maybe sooner—the administration will ask us for a huge sum of money, in the range of $100 billion, a supplemental appropriation to be spent for soldiers in Iraq. It is likely that at the end of the day, they will receive every penny they have asked for, which has been the case for the 4 years of this war. This Senator, as do many others, believes we have to also consider the funding for our injured veterans as well. We cannot stand by and allow these vets to stay in the ''Building 18s'' or those wards where they cannot receive the specialized care and to deteriorate to a point where their lives are compromised forever.

We only have a limited opportunity for many of these brave men and women. We cannot use our own excuses here about budgets and priorities to slow down our obligation and meet our obligation to serve veterans and serve them well.

So this hearing today was an eye-opener for me and for Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, who joined me, to be in that room with the parents and the veterans, to hear the stories of the bureaucracy they fought, and to understand we can do something about it here in Washington.

I know of the personal interest of the occupant of the chair in this issue. After the Presiding Officer was first elected, after being sworn in, he came to my office and said he wanted to work on a new GI bill. I am anxious to work with him in that regard. Having served our country as he did, he understands better than I do, and better than most, the obligation we have to the men and women who have served.

Mr. President, I hope we will take this experience of the Washington Post

expose and our own personal experiences back home to heart when we consider the measures that are coming before us. I don't want another scandal on this watch. I want to make sure this Building 18 doesn't become another Hurricane Katrina, the ninth ward of New Orleans, LA. It was an indication of lack of skill, lack of management, and lack of commitment that led to this situation. Now it is time for Congress and the President to step up for these men and women who serve us so well.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ROSENBAUM FAMILY'S SELFLESS ACT

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the front page of The Washington Post Friday delivered the remarkable news that the family of David Rosenbaum has entered into an agreement with Washington's city leaders under which the family will withdraw a $20 million lawsuit—a lawsuit in which they were said to have an excellent chance of prevailing—if the city lives up to a promise to fix the city's troubled emergency response system.

David Rosenbaum, the retired New York Times reporter, was fatally beaten last year near his home in Washington. He was a good husband and father, a kind friend and neighbor, and a talented and respected journalist. He had a passion for making government more effective in doing its job. He was a good and a kind man. Those who knew or knew of the Rosenbaums were further saddened last year when David's widow, Virginia Rosenbaum, succumbed to cancer.

How fitting, how constructive, and how typical of David Rosenbaum and his life and his work that his family has taken this selfless step. Our best wishes—and our admiration and gratitude—go out to them.

The material follows.

[From the Washington Post, March 9, 2007]

JOURNALIST'S FAMILY WANTS REFORM, NOT MONEY

(By David Nakamura)

The family of a slain New York Times journalist yesterday agreed to forgo the potential of millions of dollars in damages in exchange for something that might be harder for the D.C. government to deliver: an overhaul of the emergency medical response system that bungled his care at nearly every step.

David E. Rosenbaum's family said it will give up a $20 million lawsuit against the city—but only if changes are made within one year.

Under a novel legal settlement, the city agreed to set up a task force to improve the troubled emergency response system and look at issues such as training, communication and supervision. A member of the family will be on the panel.

Although legal experts said the family could have won millions had it pursued the case, Rosenbaum's brother Marcus said he and other relatives were more interested in making sure that the city enacted measurable changes.

''As details of the case started to come out, we decided among ourselves to do something for all the citizens so that things would be improved,'' Marcus Rosenbaum said, standing next to a dogwood sapling planted near where his brother was mugged in January 2006. David Rosenbaum was pounded on the head with a metal pipe by robbers who accosted him during an evening walk. He then was mistakenly treated as a drunk by D.C. firefighters and other emergency workers, who failed to notice his severe head wound.

Rosenbaum, 63, died of a brain injury two days after the attack on Gramercy Street NW. He had recently retired after nearly four decades at the New York Times, where he covered economic policy and other issues, but continued to work in the Washington bureau on special assignments.

The D.C. inspector general's office issued a blistering report in June that faulted firefighters, emergency workers, police and hospital personnel for an ''unacceptable chain of failure'' and warned of broader problems with emergency care. The report called for stronger supervision and training, clearer communication and more internal controls for emergency workers and hospital personnel.

D.C. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty (D), who joined the Rosenbaum family at the announcement, said that he was pleased with the settlement but that it was just the start of a long process of reform. He did not identify potential changes.

''This was a failure of the government, the most tragic kind of failure the government can have,'' said Fenty, flanked by Acting D.C. Attorney General Linda Singer. ''A settlement does not let anyone off the hook, especially the District government.''

Fenty, who took office in January, pledged last year to oust the chief of the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, Adrian H. Thompson, who many officials felt did not act quickly or aggressively enough to address the failures. Among other things, Thompson issued a statement three days after Rosenbaum's death that said ''everything possible'' had been done to provide care. He later changed course, saying he had been misled, and dismissed or took disciplinary action against at least 10 employees.

This week, Fenty nominated Atlanta Fire Chief Dennis L. Rubin to head the department. Rubin said he is familiar with the Rosenbaum case and intends to make changes after studying the D.C. response system more closely. Among issues likely to be on the table: the creation of a separate city department for emergency medical response.

Marcus Rosenbaum said he is hoping for the best. ''We are really happy with the way things have gone with the District,'' he said. ''It's like we are adversaries on the same side. We hope this settlement will lead to something good.''

The lawsuit was filed in November on behalf of Rosenbaum's adult children, Daniel and Dottie.

Family attorney Patrick Regan praised Fenty for reaching out to the family even before he was sworn in and then instructing his staff to work closely with the Rosenbaums to forge a settlement. But Regan had harsh words for Howard University Hospital—which remains a defendant in the lawsuit in D.C. Superior Court.

The city's ambulance bypassed the closest hospital and took Rosenbaum to Howard because one of the emergency medical technicians had personal business to attend to near there. Rosenbaum was not seen by a hospital physician for more than 90 minutes and did not get a neurological evaluation until he had been there almost four hours, the family's lawsuit alleges.

''Howard University's performance was unacceptable, atrocious. It was Third World service in the nation's capital,'' Regan said. ''While the District has stepped up and said, 'Work with us,' Howard has refused to step up. They've covered up what they did. . . . At every turn, Howard has offered excuse after excuse.''

A spokeswoman for Howard did not respond to a request for comment.

D.C. police also were faulted in the case for failing to thoroughly investigate an earlier robbery that could have led to the suspects. Two men have been convicted in the killing: Percey Jordan, who was sentenced to a 65-year term, and his cousin Michael C. Hamlin, who cooperated with prosecutors and received a 26-year term.

The city's new task force will have six months to develop a report. Toby Halliday, Rosenbaum's son-in-law, will serve as the family's representative. The panel will include city officials and emergency care experts who have yet to be identified.

''Our goal is to look beyond the individual errors in this case to bigger issues of emergency medical services,'' Halliday said, as his wife, brother-in-law and other family members looked on.

''The results must be meaningful and measurable,'' Halliday added, ''with changes and results that can be tracked over time to see if they are effective.''•

WELCOMING SADIE FAY MORGENSTERN

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I offer a most heartfelt welcome to a bright young lady who just made her entrance into this world—Sadie Fay Morgenstern. Sadie was born just over a week ago on March 4, 2007. She joins her big sister Sydney and parents, Andrew and Beth Morgenstern. I understand that little Sadie is proving to be alert, happy, and content. Undoubtedly, she will grow into a healthy, fun-loving and curious young lady, traits she will share with her older sister, Sydney. I am honored to share this news of the birth of a happy, healthy baby into a loving family, and I wish them the best. Thank you for joining me today in sending best wishes to the blessed and growing Morgenstern family.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages

from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 720. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 720. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 838. A bill to authorize funding for eligible joint ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons, to establish the International Energy Advisory Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 839. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude amounts received as a military basic housing allowance from consideration as income for purposes of the low-income housing credit and qualified residential rental projects; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COLEMAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 840. A bill to amend the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 to authorize assistance for domestic and foreign programs and centers for the treatment of victims of torture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 841. A bill for the relief of Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. 842. A bill to authorize to be appropriated $9,200,000 for fiscal year 2008 to acquire real property and carry out military construction projects at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 843. A bill to provide for the establishment of a national mercury monitoring program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 844. A bill to provide for the protection of unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 845. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to expand and intensify programs with respect to research and related activities concerning elder falls; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. 846. A bill to amend the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act to improve the compensation system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 21

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 21, a bill to expand access to preventive health care services that help reduce unintended pregnancy, reduce abortions, and improve access to women's health care.

S. 231

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 231, a bill to authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012.

S. 261

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 261, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen prohibitions against animal fighting, and for other purposes.

S. 329

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 329, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for cardiac rehabilitation and pulmonary rehabilitation services.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. BUNNING, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to facilitate and expedite direct refunds to coal producers and exporters of the excise tax unconstitutionally imposed on coal exported from the United States.

S. 376

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 376, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to improve the provisions relating to the carrying of concealed weapons by law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

S. 381

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 381, a bill to establish a fact-finding Commission to extend the study of a prior Commission to investigate and determine facts and circumstances surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation to Axis countries of Latin Americans of Japanese descent from December 1941 through February 1948, and the impact of those actions by the United States, and to recommend appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 474

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 474, a bill to award a congressional gold medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D.

S. 505

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 505, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the above-the-line deduction for teacher classroom supplies and to expand such deduction to include qualified professional development expenses.

S. 513

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 513, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to revive previous authority on the use of the Armed Forces and the militia to address interference with State or Federal law, and for other purposes.

S. 558

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 558, a bill to provide parity between health insurance coverage of mental health benefits and benefits for medical and surgical services.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Connecticut

(Mr. DODD) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 579, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers regarding environmental factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer.

S. 625

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 625, a bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products.

S. 634

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 634, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish grant programs to provide for education and outreach on newborn screening and coordinated followup care once newborn screening has been conducted, to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 663

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 663, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the statutory designation of beneficiaries of the $100,000 death gratuity under section 1477 of title 10, United States Code, and to permit members of the Armed Forces to designate in writing their beneficiaries of choice in the event of their death while serving on active duty.

S. 691

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 691, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the benefits under the Medicare program for beneficiaries with kidney disease, and for other purposes.

S. 713

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 713, a bill to ensure dignity in care for members of the Armed Forces recovering from injuries.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) were added as cosponsors of S. 727, a bill to improve and expand geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade 12 students in the United States by improving professional development programs for kindergarten through grade 12 teachers offered through institutions of higher education.

S. 773

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 773, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 787

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 787, a bill to impose a 2-year moratorium on implementation of a proposed rule relating to the Federal-State financial partnerships under Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

S. 815

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 815, a bill to provide health care benefits to veterans with a service-connected disability at non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities that receive payments under the Medicare program or the TRICARE program.

S. 823

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 823, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to facilitating the development of microbicides for preventing transmission of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 4, a joint resolution to acknowledge a long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the United States Government regarding Indian tribes and offer an apology to all Native Peoples on behalf of the United States.

S. RES. 82

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 82, a resolution designating August 16, 2007 as ''National Airborne Day''.

S. RES. 95

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 95, a resolution designating March 25, 2007, as ''Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy''.

AMENDMENT NO. 355

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 355 intended to be proposed to S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 371

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 371 intended to be proposed to S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 389

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 389 proposed to S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 393

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 393 intended to be proposed to S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 440

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 440 intended to be proposed to S. 4, a bill to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 838. A bill to authorize funding for eligible joint ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons, to establish the International Energy Advisory Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, today I am introducing the United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Act, which is cosponsored by Senators BINGAMAN and LANDRIEU. This bill will help foster cooperation on renewable energy projects between the United States and our democratic ally in the Middle East.

Israel has some of the most advanced facilities in the world for concentrated solar. Israel is developing technology to use unsorted municipal waste to produce biogas, an alternative ''green''

energy for transportation and power plants. Israel has also developed rooftop systems for electricity and hot water supplies.

This bill will help implement an existing agreement between the two nations entitled, ''Agreement between the Department of Energy of the United States of America and the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure of Israel Concerning Energy Cooperation,'' dated February 1, 1996. The Secretary of Energy, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, will establish a grant program to support research development and commercialization of alternative renewable energy sources.

Eligible projects must be joint ventures between an entity in the U.S. and an entity in Israel, or between the U.S. government and the government of Israel. Eligible projects include those projects for the research, development or commercialization of alternative energy facilities, improved energy efficiency or renewable energy sources. Under certain circumstances, the Secretary may require repayment of the grant.

The bill also establishes an advisory board to provide the Secretary with advice on the criteria for grant recipients and on the appropriate amount of total grant money to be awarded. Finally the bill authorizes $20 million annually for fiscal years 2008 through 2014 to carry out this program.

At this time when issues related to energy security and to greenhouse gas emissions are receiving so much attention by the Congress, I hope that my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this bill. This will enable the United States and Israel to build upon the important work being done in both countries to reduce our dependence on imported oil that too often comes from politically unstable or hostile nations.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 841. A bill for the relief of Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am offering today private relief legislation to provide lawful permanent residence status to Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and his wife, Maria del Refugio Plascencia, Mexican nationals living in San Bruno, CA.

I have decided to offer legislation on their behalf because I believe that, without it, this hardworking couple and their four United States citizen children would endure an immense and unfair hardship. Indeed, without this legislation, this family may not remain a family for much longer.

In the 18 years that the Plascencias have been here, they have worked to adjust their status through the appropriate legal channels, only to have their efforts thwarted by inattentive legal counsel.

Repeatedly, the Plascencia's lawyer refused to return their calls or otherwise communicate with them in any way, thereby leaving them in the dark. He also failed to forward crucial immigration documents, or even notify the Plascencias that he had them.

Because of the poor representation they received, Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia only became aware that they had been ordered to leave the country 15 days prior to their deportation.

Although the family was stunned and devastated by this discovery, they acted quickly to fire their attorney for gross incompetence, secure competent counsel, and file the appropriate paperwork to delay their deportation to determine if any other legal action could be taken.

For several reasons, it would be tragic for this family to be removed from the United States.

First, since arriving in the United States in 1988, Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia have proven themselves to be a responsible and civic-minded couple who share our American values of hard work, dedication to family, and devotion to community.

Second, Mr. Plascencia has been gainfully employed at Vince's Shellfish for the past 14 years, where his dedication and willingness to learn have propelled him from part-time work to a managerial position. He now oversees the market's entire packing operation and several employees. The President of Vince's Shellfish, in one of the several dozen letters I have received in support of Mr. Plascencia, referred to him as ''a valuable and respected employee'' who ''handles himself in a very professional manner'' and serves as ''a role model'' to other employees. Others who have written to me praising Mr. Plascencia's job performance have referred to him as ''gifted,'' ''trusted,'' ''honest,'' and ''reliable.''

Third, like her husband, Mrs. Plascencia has distinguished herself as a medical assistant at a Kaiser Permanente hospital in the Bay Area. Not satisfied with working as a maid at a local hotel, Mrs. Plascencia went to school, earned her high school equivalency degree, improved her skills, and became a medical assistant.

For 5 years, Mrs. Plascencia was working in Kaiser Permanente's Oncology Department, where she attended to cancer patients. Her colleagues, many of whom have written to me in support of her, commend her ''unending enthusiasm'' and have described her work as ''responsible,'' ''efficient,'' and ''compassionate.''

In fact, Kaiser Permanente's Director of Internal Medicine, Nurse Rose Carino, wrote to say that Mrs. Plascencia is ''an asset to the community and exemplifies the virtues we Americans extol: hardworking, devoted to her family, trustworthy and loyal, [and] involved in her community. She and her family are a solid example of the type of immigrant that America should welcome wholeheartedly.'' Nurse Carino went on to write that Mrs. Plascencia is ''an excellent employee and role model for her colleagues. She works in a very demanding unit, Oncology, and is valued and depended on by the physicians she works with.''

The physicians themselves confirm this. For example, Dr. Laurie Weisberg, the Chief of Oncology at Kaiser Permanente, writes that Mrs. Plascencia ''is truly an asset to our unit and is one of the main reasons that it functions effectively.''

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia have used their professional successes to realize many of the goals dreamed of by all Americans. They saved up and bought a home. They own a car. They have good health care benefits and they each have begun saving for retirement. They want to send their children to college and give them an even better life.

This private relief bill is important because it would preserve these achievements and ensure that Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia will be able to make substantive contributions to the community in the future. It is important, also, because of the positive impact it will have on the couple's children, each of whom is a United States citizen and each of whom is well on their way to becoming productive members of the Bay Area community.

Christina, 14, is the Plascencia's oldest child, and an honor student at Parkside Intermediate School in San Bruno.

Erika, 10, and Alfredo Jr., 8, are enrolled at Belle Air Elementary, where they have worked hard at their studies and received praise and good grades from their teachers. In fact, the principal of Erika's school recognized her as the ''Most Artistic'' student in her class. Erika's teacher, Mrs. Nascon, remarked on a report card, ''Erika is a bright spot in my classroom.''

The Plascencia's youngest child is 3-year-old Daisy.

Removing Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia from the United States would be most tragic for their children. These children were born in the United States and, through no fault of their own, have been thrust into a situation that has the potential to alter their lives dramatically.

It would be especially tragic for the Plascencia's older children—Christina, Erika, and Alfredo—to have to leave the United States. They are old enough to understand that they are leaving their schools, their teachers, their friends, and their home. They would leave everything that is familiar to them. Their parents would find themselves in Mexico without a job and without a house. The children would have to acclimate to a different culture, language, and way of life.

The only other option would be for Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia to leave their children here with relatives. This separation is a choice which no parents should have to make.

Many of the words I have used to describe Mr. and Mrs. Plascencia are not

my own. They are the words of the Americans who live and work with the Plascencias day in and day out and who find them to embody the American spirit. I have sponsored this private relief bill, and ask my colleagues to support it, because I believe that this is a spirit that we must nurture wherever we can find it. Forcing the Plascencias to leave the United States would extinguish that spirit.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the private relief bill and the numerous letters of support my office has received from members of the San Bruno community be entered into the RECORD immediately following this statement.

There being no objection, the materials were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 841

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR ALFREDO PLASCENCIA LOPEZ AND MARIA DEL REFUGIO PLASCENCIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia shall each be eligible for the issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of that Act or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—If Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia enter the United States before the filing deadline specified in subsection (c), Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia shall be considered to have entered and remained lawfully and shall be eligible for adjustment of status under section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall apply only if the application for issuance of immigrant visas or the application for adjustment of status are filed with appropriate fees within 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) REDUCTION OF IMMIGRANT VISA NUMBERS.—Upon the granting of immigrant visas or permanent residence to Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper officer to reduce by 2, during the current or next following fiscal year, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of the aliens' birth under section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or, if applicable, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of the aliens' birth under section 202(e) of that Act.

KAISER PERMANENTE,
San Francisco, CA, January 10, 2007.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

To Whom It May Concern: I am writing to attest to the character and work ethic of Marla Del Refugio Plascencia. I am the Director of Medicine at Kaiser Permanente, South San Francisco. I have known Maria since she was hired as a medical assistant into my department in July 2000.

Maria is an excellent employee and role model for her colleagues. She is extremely dependable; She works in a very demanding unit, Oncology, and is valued and depended on by the physicians she works with. Maria is flexible, thorough and proactive. She pays attention to detail and identifies potential problems before they occur. In addition, her bilingual skills enhance the patient care experience for our members who speak Spanish.

In her short tenure here, Maria found time to volunteer with our community outreach programs. She served as a volunteer interpreter for our recent Neighbors in Health event, wherein free health care was provided to uninsured children in our local community.

I can't say enough about Maria and the type of person she is. I feel fortunate to have her in my department. She is an asset to the community and exemplifies the virtues we Americans extol: hardworking, devoted to her family, trustworthy and loyal employee, involved in her community. She and her family are a solid example of the type of immigrant that America should welcome wholeheartedly.

It would be an incredible miscarriage of justice if Maria and Alfredo are deported. They came to this country to pursue a better life and afford their children opportunities that they wouldn't have in Mexico. They have begun to do just that by establishing roots in the community and purchasing a home. Deporting Maria and Alfredo would rip their family apart and result in either depriving their children of a loving family or depriving them of their rights as American citizens if they leave the country of their birth with their parents.

I pray that you will allow them the opportunity to live in this country.

Sincerely,

ROSE CARINO, RN,
Director, Department of Medicine.

Sen. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

My name is Rosa Mendoza, and I am a resident of San Bruno, my letter is with the purpose of presenting my observations on Maria and Alfredo Plascencia whom I have known for about 6 yrs, when Maria started to work for Kaiser Permanente, as I'm a Kaiser Permanente employee myself.

Maria is a very respectful person, and owns very good moral principles; she likes to help people according to each other necessities. I support the private legislation introduced in their behalf, as this type of people is what each country needs. Here by I'm asking Senator Feinstein to please keep working on their case for them to become residents of this country, as this family needs to stay together. If there should be any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at (650) 303–8930.

Sincerely,

ROSA MENDOZA.

JANUARY 10, 2007.

Re: Alfredo Plascensia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia

Sen. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Washington, DC.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The purpose of this letter is to present my observations on Alfredo Plascencia Lopez and Maria Del Refugio Plascencia's character and work ethic.

I have worked with Maria Del Refugio Plascencia for the past six years and in that time I have gotten to know her as a person and a friend. Maria is always willing to help in any situation. She shows great compassion to the patients, as she is always willing to assist them. In the past year, I have also gotten to know Alfredo Plascencia Lopez as well as their five children. Maria and Alfredo have invited my daughter and me to their home on many occasions and while visiting there, I have always felt very welcomed as my daughter feels the same. They treat my daughter as if she were one of their own.

In the past six years, I have also observed how hard working both Maria and Alfredo are. But while working as hard as they do both still find time to create a balance between work, home, family, friends and church. Maria and Alfredo do all they can for their family, employers and anyone who is in need of a helping hand. As a mother, I can't imagine having to go through what Maria and Alfredo are going through right now. It would be unfair to the Plascencia family if Maria and Alfredo were to be deported at this time in their lives. It would also cause a great loss to the Oncology department as Maria offers tremendous support to all of us here at Kaiser.

Hereby I want to express my gratitude to Senator Feinstein for the great work that she is doing on the private legislation, and at the same time I want to ask to please keep helping them by renewing the introduction of the legislation. I hope that there is justice in this case and some consideration of everyone involved in this situation. Not only will Maria and Alfredo be affected by being deported but also this could change the lives of their children, family, friends, co-workers and the patients here at Kaiser. We need more people like the Plascencia's in our country, as they are a model family.

Sincerely,

ERIKA HIDALGO,
Medical Assistant/Receptionist,
Kaiser Permanente.

By Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. 842. A bill to authorize to be appropriated $9,200,000 for fiscal year 2008 to acquire real property and carry out military construction projects at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation authorizing new construction at Cannon Air Force Base, NM.

I am proud to offer this bill because Cannon has a variety of military construction needs because of a June 2006 decision by the Secretary of Defense to use Cannon Air Force Base as an Air Force Special Operations base.

Two of these needs are an MC–130 Flight Simulator facility and renovations to an existing Hangar to accommodate C–130 aircraft. The Department of Defense budgeted for both of these items in its fiscal year 2008 Defense budget request, and in keeping with that request my legislation authorizes $7.5 million for the MC–130 Flight Simulator facility and $1.7 million for hangar renovations.

Our special operations forces are a part of some of the most important missions in the Global War on Terror, and we have more special operations warfighters deployed now than ever before. I am proud to support those soldiers, and I look forward to working on this bill and taking other actions to support our special operations forces.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 842

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT MILITARY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AT CANNON AIR FORCE BASE, NEW MEXICO.

(a) AUTHORITY.—Using amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (b), the Secretary of the Air Force may acquire real property and carry out military construction projects at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico, as specified under such subsection.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2008 for military construction and land acquisition for the Department of the Air Force the following amounts:

(1) For the construction or alteration of a C-130 aircraft hangar at Cannon Air Force, New Mexico, $1,700,000.

(2) For the construction of an MC-130 Flight Simulator Facility at Cannon Air Force, New Mexico, $7,500,000.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 844. A bill to provide for the protection of unaccompanied alien children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today, I am pleased to introduce the Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act of 2007, along with Senators HAGEL, KENNEDY, FEINGOLD, CANTWELL, and KERRY. This important legislation will govern the way the Federal Government treats undocumented immigrant children who end up or show up all alone at our borders or within the United States.

I first introduced legislation similar to this bill in January 2001. It has now passed twice out of the Senate. Yet, unfortunately, both times it stalled in the House of Representatives.

Despite the passage of time, this bill remains vital to the proper treatment of young undocumented children who get caught within our Federal system. My hope is that this is the year that this bill will become law.

Every year, more than 7,000 undocumented and unaccompanied children are apprehended. Most are from Central America, but others come from Mexico, India, China, Somalia, Sierra Leone, and remote places around the world. Some have parents or other relatives who the child is trying to find in the United States, but many have no one.

These children come to the United States for many reasons: reuniting with family, pursuing education or employment, escaping family violence or abuse, fleeing political or religious persecution, and seeking protection from gang violence or recruitment.

Some children are brought here by adults seeking to exploit them for commercial sex work, domestic servitude, or other forced labor. Sometimes they're too young to understand why they've been sent to the United States at all.

These children are the most vulnerable immigrants who come to this country and I believe we have a special obligation to ensure that they are treated humanely and fairly.

Historically, U.S. immigration law and policies have been developed and implemented without regard to their effect on children. This result has been similar to trying to fit a square peg in a round hole—it just cannot work.

Under current immigration law, these children are forced to struggle through a system designed for adults, even though they lack the capacity to understand nuanced legal principles, let alone courtroom and administrative procedures. Because of this, children who may very well be eligible for relief are often deported back to the very life-threatening situations from which they fled—before they are even able to make their cases before the Department of Homeland Security or an immigration judge.

For example, the New York Times recently reported the story of Young Zheng, who was 14 years old when his parents sent him from China to the United States.

He was first detained for a year at a facility that was later closed due to abysmal conditions. Fortunately, he was then transferred to Chicago, where he was assigned a child advocate who spent time with him and urged his release to his relatives.

Six months later, Young was released to live with his uncle in Akron, OH. Then, immigration authorities suddenly attempted to deport Young in April 2005.

Young so feared being deported that he tried to hurt himself. Young was terrified that he would be subject to torture by the Chinese government or that the traffickers would exact physical revenge. The traffickers had already threatened retribution against his family if they did not repay the trafficking fee of $60,000.

With the help of a team of pro bono attorneys and the child advocate, Young's removal was stayed. In April 2006, Young received his green card and is now a model high school student.

This example dramatically highlights why this legislation is still so critical. It was only because Young was lucky enough that pro bono attorneys and a child advocate happened to intervene in his case that he was not deported. And, they intervened only after he was detained for 1 year in squalid conditions in the United States.

According to an analysis of Department of Justice data in 2000, those children fortunate enough to find representation, usually through a pro bono attorney, are more than four times as likely to be granted asylum.

Sadly, many children never get the help of a child advocate or a pro bono lawyer. Worse, for those children who are victims of human trafficking, their only advice may come from lawyers hired by the traffickers who care nothing for the child's best interest.

The legislation that I am introducing today builds on the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which adopted components of the bill that I first introduced during the 107th Congress.

The Homeland Security Act transferred responsibility for the care and placement of unaccompanied alien children from the now-abolished Immigration and Naturalization Service to the Office of Refugee Resettlement within the Department of Health and Human Services.

This change finally resolved the conflict of interest inherent in the former system that pitted the enforcement side of the Immigration and Naturalization Service against the benefits side of that same agency in the care of unaccompanied alien children.

I am pleased that the provision transferring responsibility for the care and custody of unaccompanied alien children was included in the Homeland Security Act, and that by all accounts, the transition in the care of children between the affected agencies has gone well.

Yet, because the Homeland Security Act was crafted quickly, it left the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Refugee Resettlement without clearly distinguished mandates and responsibilities in some key areas, including legal custody, age determination procedures, and State court dependency proceedings.

Congress now has a responsibility to go beyond the simple transfer of children from one agency to another to actually laying out the process and steps to ensure that unaccompanied alien children are treated fairly and humanely.

We must provide the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice with the tools they will need to succeed in their missions regarding the care of unaccompanied alien children after the transfer of jurisdiction took place.

First of all, I want to stress that this bill is not about benefits, as it provides no new immigration benefit to unaccompanied alien children. Rather, this bill is about the process of how we treat these children under the current system.

The ''Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act'' provides guidance and instruction to the Office of Refugee and Resettlement, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice in the following areas: first, in the custody, release, family reunification and detention of unaccompanied alien children; second, it provides access by unaccompanied alien children to child advocates and pro bono counsel; third, it streamlines the Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) program and provides guidance on the

training of federal government officials and private parties who come into contact with unaccompanied alien children; fourth, it requires the issuance of guidelines specific to children's asylum claims; fifth, it authorizes appropriations for the care of unaccompanied alien children; and, sixth, it amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide additional responsibilities and powers to the Office of Refugee Resettlement with respect to unaccompanied alien children.

Central throughout the ''Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act'' are two concepts: (1) The United States government has a fundamental responsibility to protect unaccompanied children in its custody; and, (2) In all proceedings and actions, the government should have as a priority protecting the interests of these children who are not criminals or do not pose a risk to our national security.

Imagine the fear of an unaccompanied alien child, in the United States alone, without a parent or guardian. Imagine that child being thrust into a system he or she does not understand, provided no access to pro bono counsel or a child advocate, placed in jail with adults or housed with juveniles with serious criminal convictions.

I find it hard to believe that our country would allow children to be treated in such a manner.

That is why I am introducing this legislation today. The ''Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act'' will help our country fulfill the special obligation to these children to treat them fairly and humanely.

I am proud to have the support of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children, the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Heartland Alliance, Amnesty International USA and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and many other organizations with whom I have worked closely to develop this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to join with me by cosponsoring this important measure and ensuring that these reforms are finally enacted.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the legislation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 844

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 ''Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act of 2007''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
TITLE I—CUSTODY, RELEASE, FAMILY REUNIFICATION, AND DETENTION
Sec. 101. Procedures when encountering unaccompanied alien children.
Sec. 102. Family reunification for unaccompanied alien children with relatives in the United States.
Sec. 103. Appropriate conditions for detention of unaccompanied alien children.
Sec. 104. Repatriated unaccompanied alien children.
Sec. 105. Establishing the age of an unaccompanied alien child.
Sec. 106. Effective date.
TITLE II—ACCESS BY UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN TO CHILD ADVOCATES AND COUNSEL
Sec. 201. Child advocates.
Sec. 202. Counsel.
Sec. 203. Effective date; applicability.
TITLE III—STRENGTHENING POLICIES FOR PERMANENT PROTECTION OF ALIEN CHILDREN
Sec. 301. Special immigrant juvenile classification.
Sec. 302. Training for officials and certain private parties who come into contact with unaccompanied alien children.
Sec. 303. Report.
TITLE IV—CHILDREN REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
Sec. 401. Guidelines for children's asylum claims.
Sec. 402. Unaccompanied refugee children.
Sec. 403. Exceptions for unaccompanied alien children in asylum and refugee-like circumstances.
TITLE V—AMENDMENTS TO THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002
Sec. 501. Additional responsibilities and powers of the Office of Refugee Resettlement with respect to unaccompanied alien children.
Sec. 502. Technical corrections.
Sec. 503. Effective date.
TITLE VI—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS
Sec. 601. Authorization of appropriations.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In this Act:

(1) COMPETENT.—The term ''competent'', in reference to counsel, means an attorney, or a representative authorized to represent unaccompanied alien children in immigration proceedings or matters, who—

(A) complies with the duties set forth in this Act;

(B) is—

(i) properly qualified to handle matters involving unaccompanied alien children; or

(ii) working under the auspices of a qualified nonprofit organization that is experienced in handling such matters; and

(C) if an attorney—

(i) is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of any State, possession, territory, Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia; and

(ii) is not under any order of any court suspending, enjoining, restraining, disbarring, or otherwise restricting the attorney in the practice of law.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(3) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the Office.

(4) OFFICE.—The term ''Office'' means the Office of Refugee Resettlement established by section 411 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1521).

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(6) UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILD.—The term ''unaccompanied alien child'' has the meaning given the term in 101(a)(51) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as added by subsection (b).

(7) VOLUNTARY AGENCY.—The term ''voluntary agency'' means a private, nonprofit voluntary agency with expertise in meeting the cultural, developmental, or psychological needs of unaccompanied alien children, as certified by the Director.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.—Section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(51) The term 'unaccompanied alien child' means a child who—

''(A) has no lawful immigration status in the United States;

''(B) has not attained 18 years of age; and

''(C) with respect to whom—

''(i) there is no parent or legal guardian in the United States; or

''(ii) no parent or legal guardian in the United States is available to provide care and physical custody.

''(52) The term 'unaccompanied refugee children' means persons described in paragraph (42) who—

''(A) have not attained 18 years of age; and

''(B) with respect to whom there are no parents or legal guardians available to provide care and physical custody.''.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) STATE COURTS ACTING IN LOCO PARENTIS.—A department or agency of a State, or an individual or entity appointed by a State court or a juvenile court located in the United States, acting in loco parentis, shall not be considered a legal guardian for purposes of section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279) or this Act.

(2) CLARIFICATION OF THE DEFINITION OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILD.—For the purposes of section 462(g)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(g)(2)) and this Act, a parent or legal guardian shall not be considered to be available to provide care and physical custody of an alien child unless such parent is in the physical presence of, and able to exercise parental responsibilities over, such child at the time of such child's apprehension and during the child's detention.

TITLE I—CUSTODY, RELEASE, FAMILY REUNIFICATION, AND DETENTION

SEC. 101. PROCEDURES WHEN ENCOUNTERING UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN FOUND ALONG THE UNITED STATES BORDER OR AT UNITED STATES PORTS OF ENTRY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), an immigration officer who finds an unaccompanied alien child described in paragraph (2) at a land border or port of entry of the United States and determines that such child is inadmissible under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) shall—

(A) permit such child to withdraw the child's application for admission pursuant to section 235(a)(4) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(a)(4)); and

(B) return such child to the child's country of nationality or country of last habitual residence.

(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR CONTIGUOUS COUNTRIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any child who is a national or habitual resident of a country, which is contiguous with the United States and has an agreement in writing with the United States that provides for the safe return and orderly repatriation of unaccompanied alien children who are nationals or habitual residents of such country, shall be treated in accordance with paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines, on a case-by-case basis, that—

(i) such child is a national or habitual resident of a country described in this subparagraph;

(ii) such child does not have a fear of returning to the child's country of nationality or country of last habitual residence owing to a fear of persecution;

(iii) the return of such child to the child's country of nationality or country of last habitual residence would not endanger the life or safety of such child; and

(iv) the child is able to make an independent decision to withdraw the child's application for admission due to age or other lack of capacity.

(B) RIGHT OF CONSULTATION.—Any child described in subparagraph (A) shall have the right, and shall be informed of that right in the child's native language—

(i) to consult with a consular officer from the child's country of nationality or country of last habitual residence prior to repatriation; and

(ii) to consult, telephonically, with the Office.

(3) RULE FOR APPREHENSIONS AT THE BORDER.—The custody of unaccompanied alien children not described in paragraph (2) who are apprehended at the border of the United States or at a United States port of entry shall be treated in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) CARE AND CUSTODY OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN FOUND IN THE INTERIOR OF THE UNITED STATES.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF JURISDICTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided under subparagraphs (B) and (C) and subsection (a), the care and custody of all unaccompanied alien children, including responsibility for their detention, where appropriate, shall be under the jurisdiction of the Office.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Department of Justice shall retain or assume the custody and care of any unaccompanied alien who is—

(i) in the custody of the Department of Justice pending prosecution for a Federal crime other than a violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act; or

(ii) serving a sentence pursuant to a conviction for a Federal crime.

(C) EXCEPTION FOR CHILDREN WHO THREATEN NATIONAL SECURITY.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Department shall retain or assume the custody and care of an unaccompanied alien child if the Secretary has substantial evidence, based on an individualized determination, that such child could personally endanger the national security of the United States.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each department or agency of the Federal Government shall promptly notify the Office upon—

(i) the apprehension of an unaccompanied alien child;

(ii) the discovery that an alien in the custody of such department or agency is an unaccompanied alien child;

(iii) any claim by an alien in the custody of such department or agency that such alien is younger than 18 years of age; or

(iv) any suspicion that an alien in the custody of such department or agency who has claimed to be at least 18 years of age is actually younger than 18 years of age.

(B) SPECIAL RULE.—The Director shall—

(i) make an age determination for an alien described in clause (iii) or (iv) of subparagraph (A) in accordance with section 105; and

(ii) take whatever other steps are necessary to determine whether such alien is eligible for treatment under section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279) or under this Act.

(3) TRANSFER OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—

(A) TRANSFER TO THE OFFICE.—Any Federal department or agency that has an unaccompanied alien child in its custody shall transfer the custody of such child to the Office—

(i) not later than 72 hours after a determination is made that such child is an unaccompanied alien, if the child is not described in subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (1);

(ii) if the custody and care of the child has been retained or assumed by the Attorney General under paragraph (1)(B) or by the Department under paragraph (1)(C), following a determination that the child no longer meets the description set forth in such subparagraphs; or

(iii) if the child was previously released to an individual or entity described in section 102(a)(1), upon a determination by the Director that such individual or entity is no longer able to care for the child.

(B) TRANSFER TO THE DEPARTMENT.—The Director shall transfer the care and custody of an unaccompanied alien child in the custody of the Office or the Department of Justice to the Department upon determining that the child is described in subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (1).

(C) PROMPTNESS OF TRANSFER.—If a child needs to be transferred under this paragraph, the sending office shall make prompt arrangements to transfer such child and the receiving office shall make prompt arrangements to receive such child.

(c) AGE DETERMINATIONS.—If the age of an alien is in question and the resolution of questions about the age of such alien would affect the alien's eligibility for treatment under section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279) or this Act, a determination of whether or not such alien meets such age requirements shall be made in accordance with section 105, unless otherwise specified in subsection (b)(2)(B).

(d) ACCESS TO ALIEN.—The Secretary and the Attorney General shall permit the Office to have reasonable access to aliens in the custody of the Secretary or the Attorney General to ensure a prompt determination of the age of such alien, if necessary under subsection (b)(2)(B).

SEC. 102. FAMILY REUNIFICATION FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN WITH RELATIVES IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) PLACEMENT OF RELEASED CHILDREN.—

(1) ORDER OF PREFERENCE.—Subject to the discretion of the Director under paragraph (4), section 103(a)(2), and section 462(b)(2) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(b)(2)), an unaccompanied alien child in the custody of the Office shall be promptly placed with 1 of the following individuals or entities in the following order of preference:

(A) A parent who seeks to establish custody under paragraph (3)(A).

(B) A legal guardian who seeks to establish custody under paragraph (3)(A).

(C) An adult relative.

(D) An individual or entity designated by the parent or legal guardian that is capable and willing to care for the well being of the child.

(E) A State-licensed family foster home, small group home, or juvenile shelter willing to accept custody of the child.

(F) A qualified adult or entity, as determined by the Director by regulation, seeking custody of the child if the Director determines that no other likely alternative to long-term detention exists and family reunification does not appear to be a reasonable alternative.

(2) SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT.—

(A) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), and subject to the requirements of subparagraph (B), an unaccompanied alien child may not be placed with a person or entity described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (F) of paragraph (1) unless the Director provides written certification that the proposed custodian is capable of providing for the child's physical and mental well-being, based on—

(i) with respect to an individual custodian—

(I) verification of such individual's identity and employment;

(II) a finding that such individual has not engaged in any activity that would indicate a potential risk to the child, including the people and activities described in paragraph (4)(A)(i);

(III) a finding that such individual is not the subject of an open investigation by a State or local child protective services authority due to suspected child abuse or neglect;

(IV) verification that such individual has a plan for the provision of care for the child;

(V) verification of familial relationship of such individual, if any relationship is claimed; and

(VI) verification of nature and extent of previous relationship;

(ii) with respect to a custodial entity, verification of such entity's appropriate licensure by the State, county, or other applicable unit of government; and

(iii) such other information as the Director determines appropriate.

(B) HOME STUDY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall place a child with any custodian described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (F) of paragraph (1) unless the Director determines that a home study with respect to such custodian is necessary.

(ii) SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN.—A home study shall be conducted to determine if the custodian can properly meet the needs of—

(I) a special needs child with a disability (as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102(2)); or

(II) a child who has been the object of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment under circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare has been harmed or threatened.

(iii) FOLLOW-UP SERVICES.—The Director shall conduct follow-up services for at least 90 days on custodians for whom a home study was conducted under this subparagraph.

(C) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Director may, by grant or contract, arrange for some or all of the activities under this section to be carried out by—

(i) an agency of the State of the child's proposed residence;

(ii) an agency authorized by such State to conduct such activities; or

(iii) an appropriate voluntary or nonprofit agency.

(D) DATABASE ACCESS.—In conducting suitability assessments, the Director shall have access to all relevant information in the appropriate Federal, State, and local law enforcement and immigration databases.

(3) RIGHT OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN TO CUSTODY OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILD.—

(A) PLACEMENT WITH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN.—If an unaccompanied alien child is placed with any person or entity other than a parent or legal guardian, and subsequent to that placement a parent or legal guardian seeks to establish custody, the Director shall—

(i) assess the suitability of placing the child with the parent or legal guardian; and

(ii) make a written determination regarding the child's placement within 30 days.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to—

(i) supersede obligations under any treaty or other international agreement to which the United States is a party, including—

(I) the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at The Hague, October 25, 1980 (TIAS 11670);

(II) the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, adopted at Vienna, June 25, 1993; and

(III) the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, adopted at New York, November 20, 1959; or

(ii) limit any right or remedy under such international agreement.

(4) PROTECTION FROM SMUGGLERS AND TRAFFICKERS.—

(A) POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish policies and programs to ensure that unaccompanied alien children are protected from smugglers, traffickers, or other persons seeking to victimize or otherwise engage such children in criminal, harmful, or exploitative activity.

(ii) WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAMS INCLUDED.—Programs established pursuant to clause (i) may include witness protection programs.

(B) CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS.—Any officer or employee of the Office or of the Department, and any grantee or contractor of the Office or of the Department, who suspects any individual of involvement in any activity described in subparagraph (A) shall report such individual to Federal or State prosecutors for criminal investigation and prosecution.

(C) DISCIPLINARY ACTION.—Any officer or employee of the Office or the Department, and any grantee or contractor of the Office, who believes that a competent attorney or representative has been a participant in any activity described in subparagraph (A), shall report the attorney to the State bar association of which the attorney is a member, or to other appropriate disciplinary authorities, for appropriate disciplinary action, including private or public admonition or censure, suspension, or disbarment of the attorney from the practice of law.

(5) GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—The Director may award grants to, and enter into contracts with, voluntary agencies to carry out this section or section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279).

(b) CONFIDENTIALITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All information obtained by the Office relating to the immigration status of a person described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of subsection (a)(1) shall remain confidential and may only be used to determine such person's qualifications under subsection (a)(1).

(2) NONDISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.—In consideration of the needs and privacy of unaccompanied alien children in the custody of the Office or its agents, and the necessity to guarantee the confidentiality of such children's information in order to facilitate their trust and truthfulness with the Office, its agents, and clinicians, the Office shall maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all information gathered in the course of the care, custody, and placement of unaccompanied alien children, consistent with its role and responsibilities under the Homeland Security Act to act as guardian in loco parentis in the best interest of the unaccompanied alien child, by not disclosing such information to other government agencies or nonparental third parties.

(c) REQUIRED DISCLOSURE.—The Secretary or the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall provide the information furnished under this section, and any other information derived from such furnished information, to—

(1) a duly recognized law enforcement entity in connection with an investigation or prosecution of an offense described in paragraph (2) or (3) of section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)), when such information is requested in writing by such entity; or

(2) an official coroner for purposes of affirmatively identifying a deceased individual (whether or not such individual is deceased as a result of a crime).

(d) PENALTY.—Any person who knowingly uses, publishes, or permits information to be examined in violation of this section shall be fined not more than $10,000.

SEC. 103. APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS FOR DETENTION OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) STANDARDS FOR PLACEMENT.—

(1) ORDER OF PREFERENCE.—An unaccompanied alien child who is not released pursuant to section 102(a)(1) shall be placed in the least restrictive setting possible in the following order of preference:

(A) Licensed family foster home.

(B) Small group home.

(C) Juvenile shelter.

(D) Residential treatment center.

(E) Secure detention.

(2) PROHIBITION OF DETENTION IN CERTAIN FACILITIES.—Except as provided under paragraph (3), an unaccompanied alien child shall not be placed in an adult detention facility or a facility housing delinquent children.

(3) DETENTION IN APPROPRIATE FACILITIES.—An unaccompanied alien child who has exhibited violent or criminal behavior that endangers others may be detained in conditions appropriate to such behavior in a facility appropriate for delinquent children.

(4) STATE LICENSURE.—A child shall not be placed with an entity described in section 102(a)(1)(E), unless the entity is licensed by an appropriate State agency to provide residential, group, child welfare, or foster care services for dependent children.

(5) CONDITIONS OF DETENTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director and the Secretary shall promulgate regulations incorporating standards for conditions of detention in placements described in paragraph (1) that provide for—

(i) educational services appropriate to the child;

(ii) medical care;

(iii) mental health care, including treatment of trauma, physical and sexual violence, and abuse;

(iv) access to telephones;

(v) access to legal services;

(vi) access to interpreters;

(vii) supervision by professionals trained in the care of children, taking into account the special cultural, linguistic, and experiential needs of children in immigration proceedings;

(viii) recreational programs and activities;

(ix) spiritual and religious needs; and

(x) dietary needs.

(B) NOTIFICATION OF CHILDREN.—Regulations promulgated under subparagraph (A) shall provide that all children in such placements are notified of such standards orally and in writing in the child's native language.

(b) PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN PRACTICES.—The Director and the Secretary shall develop procedures prohibiting the unreasonable use of—

(1) shackling, handcuffing, or other restraints on children;

(2) solitary confinement; or

(3) pat or strip searches.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede procedures favoring release of children to appropriate adults or entities or placement in the least secure setting possible, as described in paragraph 23 of the Stipulated Settlement Agreement under Flores v. Reno.

SEC. 104. REPATRIATED UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) COUNTRY CONDITIONS.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, to the extent consistent with the treaties and other international agreements to which the United States is a party, and to the extent practicable, the United States Government should undertake efforts to ensure that it does not repatriate children in its custody into settings that would threaten the life and safety of such children.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF CONDITIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall include, in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, an assessment of the degree to which each country protects children from smugglers and traffickers.

(B) FACTORS FOR ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary shall consult the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and the Trafficking in Persons Report in assessing whether to repatriate an unaccompanied alien child to a particular country.

(b) REPORT ON REPATRIATION OF UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on efforts to repatriate unaccompanied alien children.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the number of unaccompanied alien children ordered removed and the number of such children actually removed from the United States;

(B) a description of the type of immigration relief sought and denied to such children;

(C) a statement of the nationalities, ages, and gender of such children;

(D) a description of the procedures used to effect the removal of such children from the United States;

(E) a description of steps taken to ensure that such children were safely and humanely repatriated to their country of origin; and

(F) any information gathered in assessments of country and local conditions pursuant to subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 105. ESTABLISHING THE AGE OF AN UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILD.

(a) PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall develop procedures to make a prompt determination of the age of an alien, which procedures shall be used—

(A) by the Secretary, with respect to aliens in the custody of the Department;

(B) by the Director, with respect to aliens in the custody of the Office; and

(C) by the Attorney General, with respect to aliens in the custody of the Department of Justice.

(2) EVIDENCE.—The procedures developed under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) permit the presentation of multiple forms of evidence, including testimony of the alien, to determine the age of the unaccompanied alien for purposes of placement, custody, parole, and detention; and

(B) allow the appeal of a determination to an immigration judge.

(b) PROHIBITION ON SOLE MEANS OF DETERMINING AGE.—Radiographs or the attestation of an alien may not be used as the sole means of determining age for the purposes of determining an alien's eligibility for treatment under this Act or section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279).

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to place the burden of proof in determining the age of an alien on the Government.

SEC. 106. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall take effect on the date which is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE II—ACCESS BY UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN TO CHILD ADVOCATES AND COUNSEL

SEC. 201. CHILD ADVOCATES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF CHILD ADVOCATE PROGRAM.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Director may appoint a child advocate, who meets the qualifications described in paragraph (2), for an unaccompanied alien child. The Director is encouraged, if practicable, to contract with a voluntary agency for the selection of an individual to be appointed as a child advocate under this paragraph.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS OF CHILD ADVOCATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A person may not serve as a child advocate unless such person—

(i) is a child welfare professional or other individual who has received training in child welfare matters;

(ii) possesses special training on the nature of problems encountered by unaccompanied alien children; and

(iii) is not an employee of the Department, the Department of Justice, or the Department of Health and Human Services.

(B) INDEPENDENCE OF CHILD ADVOCATE.—

(i) INDEPENDENCE FROM AGENCIES OF GOVERNMENT.—The child advocate shall act independently of any agency of government in making and reporting findings or making recommendations with respect to the best interests of the child. No agency shall terminate, reprimand, de-fund, intimidate, or retaliate against any person or entity appointed under paragraph (1) because of the findings and recommendations made by such person relating to any child.

(ii) PROHIBITION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—No person shall serve as a child advocate for a child if such person is providing legal services to such child.

(3) DUTIES.—The child advocate of a child shall—

(A) conduct interviews with the child in a manner that is appropriate, taking into account the child's age;

(B) investigate the facts and circumstances relevant to the child's presence in the United States, including facts and circumstances—

(i) arising in the country of the child's nationality or last habitual residence; and

(ii) arising subsequent to the child's departure from such country;

(C) work with counsel to identify the child's eligibility for relief from removal or voluntary departure by sharing with counsel relevant information collected under subparagraph (B);

(D) develop recommendations on issues relative to the child's custody, detention, release, and repatriation;

(E) take reasonable steps to ensure that—

(i) the best interests of the child are promoted while the child participates in, or is subject to, proceedings or matters under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.);

(ii) the child understands the nature of the legal proceedings or matters and determinations made by the court, and that all information is conveyed to the child in an age-appropriate manner;

(F) report factual findings and recommendations consistent with the child's best interests relating to the custody, detention, and release of the child during the pendency of the proceedings or matters, to the Director and the child's counsel;

(G) in any proceeding involving an alien child in which a complaint has been filed with any appropriate disciplinary authority against an attorney or representative for criminal, unethical, or unprofessional conduct in connection with the representation of the alien child, provide the immigration judge with written recommendations or testimony on any information the child advocate may have regarding the conduct of the attorney; and

(H) in any proceeding involving an alien child in which the safety of the child upon repatriation is at issue, and after the immigration judge has considered and denied all applications for relief other than voluntary departure, provide the immigration judge with written recommendations or testimony on any information the child advocate may have regarding the child's safety upon repatriation.

(4) TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT.—The child advocate shall carry out the duties described in paragraph (3) until the earliest of the date on which—

(A) those duties are completed;

(B) the child departs from the United States;

(C) the child is granted permanent resident status in the United States;

(D) the child reaches 18 years of age; or

(E) the child is placed in the custody of a parent or legal guardian.

(5) POWERS.—The child advocate—

(A) shall have reasonable access to the child, including access while such child is being held in detention or in the care of a foster family;

(B) shall be permitted to review all records and information relating to such proceedings that are not deemed privileged or classified;

(C) may seek independent evaluations of the child;

(D) shall be notified in advance of all hearings or interviews involving the child that are held in connection with proceedings or matters under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.), and shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be present at such hearings or interviews;

(E) shall be permitted to accompany and consult with the child during any hearing or interview involving such child; and

(F) shall be provided at least 24 hours advance notice of a transfer of that child to a different placement, absent compelling and unusual circumstances warranting the transfer of such child before such notification.

(b) TRAINING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall provide professional training for all persons serving as child advocates under this section.

(2) TRAINING TOPICS.—The training provided under paragraph (1) shall include training in—

(A) the circumstances and conditions faced by unaccompanied alien children; and

(B) various immigration benefits for which such alien child might be eligible.

(c) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish and begin to carry out a pilot program to test the implementation of subsection (a). Any pilot program existing before the date of the enactment of this Act shall be deemed insufficient to satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the pilot program established pursuant to paragraph (1) is to—

(A) study and assess the benefits of providing child advocates to assist unaccompanied alien children involved in immigration proceedings or matters;

(B) assess the most efficient and cost-effective means of implementing the child advocate provisions under this section; and

(C) assess the feasibility of implementing such provisions on a nationwide basis for all unaccompanied alien children in the care of the Office.

(3) SCOPE OF PROGRAM.—

(A) SELECTION OF SITE.—The Director shall select 3 sites at which to operate the pilot program established under paragraph (1).

(B) NUMBER OF CHILDREN.—Each site selected under subparagraph (A) should have not less than 25 children held in immigration custody at any given time, to the greatest extent possible.

(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the first pilot program site is established under paragraph (1), the Director shall submit a report on the achievement of the purposes described in paragraph (2) to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 202. COUNSEL.

(a) ACCESS TO COUNSEL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that all unaccompanied alien children in the custody of the Office or the Department, who are not described in section 101(a)(2), have competent counsel to represent them in immigration proceedings or matters.

(2) PRO BONO REPRESENTATION.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Director shall—

(A) make every effort to utilize the services of competent pro bono counsel who agree to provide representation to such children without charge; and

(B) ensure that placements made under subparagraphs (D), (E), and (F) of section 102(a)(1) are in cities in which there is a demonstrated capacity for competent pro bono representation.

(3) DEVELOPMENT OF NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS.—The Director shall develop the necessary mechanisms to identify and recruit entities that are available to provide legal assistance and representation under this subsection.

(4) CONTRACTING AND GRANT MAKING AUTHORITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall enter into contracts with, or award grants to, nonprofit agencies with relevant expertise in the delivery of immigration-related legal services to children in order to carry out the responsibilities of this Act, including providing legal orientation, screening cases for referral, recruiting, training, and overseeing pro bono attorneys.

(B) SUBCONTRACTING.—Nonprofit agencies may enter into subcontracts with, or award grants to, private voluntary agencies with relevant expertise in the delivery of immigration-related legal services to children in order to carry out this subsection.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—In awarding grants and entering into contracts with agencies under this paragraph, the Director shall take into consideration the capacity of the agencies in question to properly administer the services covered by such grants or contracts without an undue conflict of interest.

(5) MODEL GUIDELINES ON LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF CHILDREN.—

(A) DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES.—The Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice, in consultation with voluntary agencies and national experts, shall develop model guidelines for the legal representation of alien children in immigration proceedings. Such guidelines shall be based on the children's asylum guidelines, the American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct,

and other relevant domestic or international sources.

(B) PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES.—The guidelines developed under subparagraph (A) shall be designed to help protect each child from any individual suspected of involvement in any criminal, harmful, or exploitative activity associated with the smuggling or trafficking of children, while ensuring the fairness of the removal proceeding in which the child is involved.

(C) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review shall—

(i) adopt the guidelines developed under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) submit the guidelines for adoption by national, State, and local bar associations.

(b) DUTIES.—Counsel under this section shall—

(1) represent the unaccompanied alien child in all proceedings and matters relating to the immigration status of the child or other actions involving the Department;

(2) appear in person for all individual merits hearings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review and interviews involving the Department; and

(3) owe the same duties of undivided loyalty, confidentiality, and competent representation to the child as is due to an adult client.

(c) ACCESS TO CHILD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Counsel under this section shall have reasonable access to the unaccompanied alien child, including access while the child is—

(A) held in detention;

(B) in the care of a foster family; or

(C) in any other setting that has been determined by the Office.

(2) RESTRICTION ON TRANSFERS.—Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, a child who is represented by counsel may not be transferred from the child's placement to another placement unless advance notice of at least 24 hours is made to counsel of such transfer.

(d) NOTICE TO COUNSEL DURING IMMIGRATION PROCEEDINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except when otherwise required in an emergency situation involving the physical safety of the child, counsel shall be given prompt and adequate notice of all immigration matters affecting or involving an unaccompanied alien child, including adjudications, proceedings, and processing, before such actions are taken.

(2) OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT WITH COUNSEL.—An unaccompanied alien child in the custody of the Office may not give consent to any immigration action, including consenting to voluntary departure, unless first afforded an opportunity to consult with counsel.

(e) ACCESS TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF CHILD ADVOCATE.—Counsel shall be given an opportunity to review the recommendations of the child advocate affecting or involving a client who is an unaccompanied alien child.

(f) COUNSEL FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.—Nothing in this Act may be construed to require the Government of the United States to pay for counsel to any unaccompanied alien child.

SEC. 203. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This title shall take effect on the date which is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The provisions of this title shall apply to all unaccompanied alien children in Federal custody before, on, or after the effective date of this title.

TITLE III—STRENGTHENING POLICIES FOR PERMANENT PROTECTION OF ALIEN CHILDREN

SEC. 301. SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE CLASSIFICATION.

(a) J CLASSIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 101(a)(27)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(27)(J)) is amended to read as follows:

''(J) an immigrant, who is 18 years of age or younger on the date of application for classification as a special immigrant and present in the United States—

''(i) who, by a court order supported by written findings of fact, which shall be binding on the Secretary of Homeland Security for purposes of adjudications under this subparagraph—

''(I) was declared dependent on a juvenile court located in the United States or has been legally committed to, or placed under the custody of, a department or agency of a State, or an individual or entity appointed by a State or juvenile court located in the United States; and

''(II) should not be reunified with his or her parents due to abuse, neglect, abandonment, or a similar basis found under State law;

''(ii) for whom it has been determined by written findings of fact in administrative or judicial proceedings that it would not be in the alien's best interest to be returned to the alien's or parent's previous country of nationality or country of last habitual residence; and

''(iii) with respect to a child in Federal custody, for whom the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services has certified to the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services that the classification of an alien as a special immigrant under this subparagraph has not been made solely to provide an immigration benefit to that alien.''.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (J) of section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by paragraph (1), shall be construed to grant, to any natural parent or prior adoptive parent of any alien provided special immigrant status under such subparagraph, by virtue of such parentage, any right, privilege, or status under such Act.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—Section 245(h)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255(h)(2)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) paragraphs (4), (5)(A), (6)(A), (7)(A), 9(B), and 9(C)(i)(I) of section 212(a) shall not apply; and''.

(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A child who has been certified under section 101(a)(27)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by subsection (a)(1), and who was in the custody of the Office at the time a dependency order was granted for such child, shall be eligible for placement and services under section 412(d) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(d)) until the earlier of—

(A) the date on which the child reaches the age designated in section 412(d)(2)(B) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(d)(2)(B)); or

(B) the date on which the child is placed in a permanent adoptive home.

(2) STATE REIMBURSEMENT.—If foster care funds are expended on behalf of a child who is not described in paragraph (1) and has been granted relief under section 101(a)(27)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, the Federal Government shall reimburse the State in which the child resides for such expenditures by the State.

(d) TRANSITION RULE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a child described in section 101(a)(27)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by subsection (a)(1), may not be denied such special immigrant juvenile classification after the date of the enactment of this Act based on age if the child—

(1) filed an application for special immigrant juvenile classification before the date of the enactment of this Act and was 21 years of age or younger on the date such application was filed; or

(2) was younger than 21 years of age on the date on which the child applied for classification as a special immigrant juvenile and can demonstrate exceptional circumstances warranting relief.

(e) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate rules to carry out this section.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to all aliens who were in the United States before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 302. TRAINING FOR OFFICIALS AND CERTAIN PRIVATE PARTIES WHO COME INTO CONTACT WITH UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) TRAINING OF STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS AND CERTAIN PRIVATE PARTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting jointly with the Secretary, shall provide appropriate training materials, and upon request, direct training, to State and county officials, child welfare specialists, teachers, public counsel, and juvenile judges who come into contact with unaccompanied alien children.

(2) CURRICULUM.—The training required under paragraph (1) shall include education on the processes pertaining to unaccompanied alien children with pending immigration status and on the forms of relief potentially available. The Director shall establish a core curriculum that can be incorporated into education, training, or orientation modules or formats that are currently used by these professionals.

(3) VIDEO CONFERENCING.—Direct training requested under paragraph (1) may be conducted through video conferencing.

(b) TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL.—The Secretary, acting jointly with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall provide specialized training to all personnel of the Department who come into contact with unaccompanied alien children. Training for agents of the Border Patrol and immigration inspectors shall include specific training on identifying—

(1) children at the international borders of the United States or at United States ports of entry who have been victimized by smugglers or traffickers; and

(2) children for whom asylum or special immigrant relief may be appropriate, including children described in section 101(a)(2)(A).

SEC. 303. REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives that contains, for the most recently concluded fiscal year—

(1) data related to the implementation of section 462 of the Homeland Security Act (6 U.S.C. 279);

(2) data regarding the care and placement of children under this Act;

(3) data regarding the provision of child advocate and counsel services under this Act; and

(4) any other information that the Director or the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines to be appropriate.

TITLE IV—CHILDREN REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

SEC. 401. GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN'S ASYLUM CLAIMS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) commends the former Immigration and Naturalization Service for its ''Guidelines for Children's Asylum Claims'', issued in December 1998;

(2) encourages and supports the Department to implement such guidelines to facilitate the handling of children's affirmative asylum claims;

(3) commends the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the Department of Justice for its ''Guidelines for Immigration Court Cases Involving Unaccompanied Alien Children'', issued in September 2004;

(4) encourages and supports the continued implementation of such guidelines by the Executive Office for Immigration Review in its handling of children's asylum claims before immigration judges; and

(5) understands that the guidelines described in paragraph (3)—

(A) do not specifically address the issue of asylum claims; and

(B) address the broader issue of unaccompanied alien children.

(b) TRAINING.—

(1) IMMIGRATION OFFICERS.—The Secretary shall provide periodic comprehensive training under the ''Guidelines for Children's Asylum Claims'' to asylum officers and immigration officers who have contact with children in order to familiarize and sensitize such officers to the needs of children asylum seekers.

(2) IMMIGRATION JUDGES.—The Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review shall—

(A) provide periodic comprehensive training under the ''Guidelines for Immigration Court Cases Involving Unaccompanied Alien Children'' and the ''Guidelines for Children's Asylum Claims'' to immigration judges and members of the Board of Immigration Appeals; and

(B) redistribute the ''Guidelines for Children's Asylum Claims'' to all immigration courts as part of its training of immigration judges.

(3) USE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.—Voluntary agencies shall be allowed to assist in the training described in this subsection.

(c) STATISTICS AND REPORTING.—

(1) STATISTICS.—

(A) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—The Attorney General shall compile and maintain statistics on the number of cases in immigration court involving unaccompanied alien children, which shall include, with respect to each such child, information about—

(i) the age;

(ii) the gender;

(iii) the country of nationality;

(iv) representation by counsel;

(v) the relief sought; and

(vi) the outcome of such cases.

(B) DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—The Secretary shall compile and maintain statistics on the instances of unaccompanied alien children in the custody of the Department, which shall include, with respect to each such child, information about—

(i) the age;

(ii) the gender;

(iii) the country of nationality; and

(iv) the length of detention.

(2) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually, thereafter, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary, Secretary of Health and Human Services, and any other necessary government official, shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives on the number of alien children in Federal custody during the most recently concluded fiscal year. Information contained in the report, with respect to such children, shall be categorized by—

(A) age;

(B) gender;

(C) country of nationality;

(D) length of time in custody;

(E) the department or agency with custody; and

(F) treatment as an unaccompanied alien child.

SEC. 402. UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE CHILDREN.

(a) IDENTIFYING UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE CHILDREN.—Section 207(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(e)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) An analysis of the worldwide situation faced by unaccompanied refugee children, categorized by region, which shall include an assessment of—

''(A) the number of unaccompanied refugee children;

''(B) the capacity of the Department of State to identify such refugees;

''(C) the capacity of the international community to care for and protect such refugees;

''(D) the capacity of the voluntary agency community to resettle such refugees in the United States;

''(E) the degree to which the United States plans to resettle such refugees in the United States in the following fiscal year; and

''(F) the fate that will befall such unaccompanied refugee children for whom resettlement in the United States is not possible.''.

(b) TRAINING ON THE NEEDS OF UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE CHILDREN.—Section 207(f)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(f)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' after ''countries,''; and

(2) by inserting '', and instruction on the needs of unaccompanied refugee children'' before the period at the end.

SEC. 403. EXCEPTIONS FOR UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN IN ASYLUM AND REFUGEE-LIKE CIRCUMSTANCES.

(a) PLACEMENT IN REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS.—Any unaccompanied alien child apprehended by the Department, except for an unaccompanied alien child subject to exceptions under paragraph (1)(A) or (2) of section (101)(a), shall be placed in removal proceedings under section 240 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1229a).

(b) EXCEPTION FROM TIME LIMIT FOR FILING ASYLUM APPLICATION.—Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1158(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by adding at the end the following:

''(E) APPLICABILITY.—Subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall not apply to an unaccompanied alien child.''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3), by adding at the end the following:

''(C) INITIAL JURISDICTION.—United States Citizenship and Immigration Services shall have initial jurisdiction over any asylum application filed by an unaccompanied alien child.''.

TITLE V—AMENDMENTS TO THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

SEC. 501. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS OF THE OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT WITH RESPECT TO UNACCOMPANIED ALIEN CHILDREN.

(a) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR.—Section 462(b)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (K), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (L), by striking the period at the end and inserting '', including regular follow-up visits to such facilities, placements, and other entities, to assess the continued suitability of such placements; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(M) ensuring minimum standards of care for all unaccompanied alien children—

''(i) for whom detention is necessary; and

''(ii) who reside in settings that are alternative to detention.''.

(b) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY OF THE DIRECTOR.—Section 462(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) AUTHORITY.—In carrying out the duties under paragraph (3), the Director may—

''(A) contract with service providers to perform the services described in sections 102, 103, 201, and 202 of the Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act of 2007; and

''(B) compel compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in section 103 of such Act, by—

''(i) declaring providers to be in breach and seek damages for noncompliance;

''(ii) terminating the contracts of providers that are not in compliance with such conditions; or

''(iii) reassigning any unaccompanied alien child to a similar facility that is in compliance with such section.''.

SEC. 502. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 462(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279(b)), as amended by section 501, is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''paragraph (1)(G)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in paragraph (2)(B) may be construed to require that a bond be posted for unaccompanied alien children who are released to a qualified sponsor.''.

SEC. 503. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this title shall take effect as if included in the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.).

TITLE VI—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 601. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Health and Human Services, such sums as may be necessary to carry out—

(1) the provisions of section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 279); and

(2) the provisions of this Act.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. 846. A bill to amend the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act to improve the compensation system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today, I introduce the Longshore and Harbor

Workers' Compensation Act Amendments of 2007. The Longshore Act provides medical, physical rehabilitation and lost wage replacement benefits to thousands of workers nationwide for work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths. The Act is long overdue for attention from Congress, and I am eager to engage with my colleagues from both sides as to how we can improve the system for our workers, their employers, taxpayers and our economy as a whole.

We all can agree that the workers covered under this program play a key role in our national security and in our vital international trade. Longshore and harbor workers labor on the piers of Portland, ME, in the dead of winter, just as they toil in the hot Southern sun in Savannah, GA. Their work is undoubtedly difficult and often dangerous. It is impossible to underestimate the extent to which Americans rely on the myriad of products these workers move in and out of our nations' ports. Every year, over 15 billion tons of freight moves through our ports, with a total value of $9 trillion.

These workers deserve a fair and effective workers' compensation program. Since 1927, longshore and harbor workers have had a unique program all their own. Congress enacted the Act in response to Southern Pacific Company v. Jensen, a ruling by the Supreme Court in 1917. The Court held that the Maritime Clause in the Constitution forbids states from covering shore-based maritime workers who may become injured while working on vessels anchored in navigable waters. Now, nearly 90 years later, not only are private stevedoring companies covered by the Act, but so are virtually all maritime construction folks, builders and repairers of U.S. Naval and Coast Guard vessels, Federal contractors with overseas employees, oil rig workers, and even civilian employees at the Post Exchanges on U.S. military bases.

As many of us have learned if we ever spent time in our State legislatures, States nationwide regularly amend their programs to incorporate the most modern and best workers' compensation practices. However, unlike these responsible state legislatures, Congress has not addressed the Longshore Act in over two decades.

Since the last amendments to the Act, States from California to Rhode Island have found numerous methods of improving their workers' compensation programs, saving taxpayers' dollars, and eliminating waste, fraud and abuse, while always ensuring that workers have appropriate medical care. We must bring these State-level innovations in workers' compensation to the Longshore Act system.

Technology, events, and even Congressional interventions have continued to dramatically change our nations' seaports and shipyards. Indeed, since 2002, per Congress's instruction, U.S. Customs has begun locating so-called ''VACIS machines'' at U.S. terminals. These machines are truck-mounted gamma ray imaging systems that produce radiographic images of the contents of containers and other cargo to determine the possible presence of many types of contraband. Eventually, EVERY port in the country will have the machines on sight. Will maritime workers be exposed to radiation? If so, will they file claims against their employers when the machines are owned and operated by the Federal Government?

The bill I introduce today will foster a sound and fair workers' compensation system for maritime workers with a clear, exclusive remedy for their workplace injuries and illnesses. It will guarantee fairness for workers, and in the event of death, their survivors. It will make our ports and shipbuilders more competitive. It will ensure fair compensability, in that it will hold employers responsible for only that which is caused by employment under the Longshore Act system. It will fix, once and for all, the so-called ''Special Fund,'' an archaic and problematic vestige of early 20th Century public policy.

In May 2006, I chaired a hearing of the Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety, at which we heard about many different problems with the implementation of this 80-year-old Act. I have incorporated suggestions from both sides in crafting the bill I introduce today.

Since I began dealing with this issue last year, I have talked with more and more workers, port operators, and administrators from the Port of Savannah in my home State of Georgia. Savannah is the Nation's eleventh busiest waterborne freight gateway for international trade. Every year, over $20 billion of international freight move through it and its neighboring port of Brunswick. The folks I talk to at Savannah and Brunswick tell me that they can't emphasize enough the importance of revising the Longshore Act to make it more efficient.

I hope we can move on this bill, for the sake of taxpayers, for workers in Savannah and Brunswick and at ports and ship building facilities nationwide, and for the international commerce that is vital to our Nation's economy and way of life.

TO REVISE UNITED STATES POLICY ON IRAQ—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week, I asked unanimous consent with respect to S.J. Res. 9, along with several other resolutions regarding the subject of Iraq—that we proceed on these—and there was an objection. So I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 72, S.J. Res. 9, and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 72, S.J. Res. 9, to revise the United States policy on Iraq.

Harry Reid, Carl Levin, Dick Durbin, Byron L. Dorgan, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Barbara Boxer, Edward M. Kennedy, Patrick Leahy, Jay Rockefeller, Patty Murray, Jack Reed, Debbie Stabenow, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Jeff Bingaman, Barbara A. Mikulski, Ben Cardin, Robert Menendez.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the live quorum with respect to this cloture motion, as required under rule XXII, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now withdraw the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

PRESERVING UNITED STATES ATTORNEY INDEPENDENCE ACT OF 2007—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will shortly move to proceed to S. 214, the U.S. attorneys bill. Before I do so, I would like to state for the record there are ongoing discussions about this bill and we have offered to the Republicans a proposal that would have a very limited number of amendments and debate time. I feel fairly confident at this time we can reach that agreement. There has been cooperation on both sides. If we are able to reach that agreement, then it will not be necessary to have a cloture vote. Therefore, if we reach agreement, it will be my intent to vitiate cloture on the motion to proceed.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 24, S. 214, and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 24, S. 214, Preserving United States Attorney Independence Act of 2007.

Harry Reid, Dianne Feinstein, Benjamin L. Cardin, Maria Cantwell, Ted Kennedy, Robert C. Byrd, Kent Conrad, Max Baucus, Tom Harkin, Ken Salazar, Tom Carper, Jeff Bingaman, Patrick Leahy, Patty Murray, Dick Durbin, Jim Webb, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the live quorum with respect to this cloture motion, as required under rule XXII, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now withdraw the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d–276g, as amended, appoints the following Senator as chairman of the Senate delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group conference during the 110th Congress: the Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276n, as amended, appoints the following Senator as chairman of the U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group conference during the 110th Congress: the Honorable DANIEL INOUYE of Hawaii.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 13; that when the Senate reconvenes Tuesday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that there then be a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; that following morning business, the Senate then resume consideration of S. 4, and that the time until 11:45 a.m. be for debate with respect to the Coburn amendments Nos. 294 and 325, and that the time run concurrently and be equally divided and controlled between Senators Lieberman and Coburn or their designees; that at 11:45 a.m., without further intervening action or debate, the Senate proceed to a vote in relation to the amendment No. 294, to be followed by a vote in relation to the amendment No. 325, regardless of the outcome of the first vote; that there be 2 minutes of debate between the votes, equally divided and controlled; and that at 12:30 p.m. the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m. for the respective work conferences.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. So tomorrow, beginning at 11:45 a.m., there will be two rollcall votes in relation to the Coburn amendments Nos. 294 and 325. Members should be prepared to be on the floor at that time for those votes. The remaining amendments will be disposed of, if necessary, after the conference recess period. The managers are going to accept some of the amendments, so we may be able to complete this bill fairly quickly tomorrow afternoon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate—I now ask the Republican leader if he has any business to bring before the Senate?

Mr. MCCONNELL. No, Mr. President, I have nothing to add tonight. We look forward to wrapping up the 9/11 bill sometime in the early afternoon tomorrow.

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:05 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 13, 2007, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate March 12, 2007:

SECURITIES INVESTOR PROTECTION CORPORATION

WILLIAM HERBERT HEYMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE SECURITIES INVESTOR PROTECTION CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2007 VICE DEBORAH DOYLE MCWHINNEY, TERM EXPIRED.

WILLIAM HERBERT HEYMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE SECURITIES INVESTOR PROTECTION CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2010. (REAPPOINTMENT)

UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

ANNE CAHN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2009, VICE BETTY F. BUMPERS, TERM EXPIRED.

BRUCE P. JACKSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2011, VICE CHESTER A. CROCKER, TERM EXPIRED.

KATHLEEN MARTINEZ, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2011, VICE SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET, TERM EXPIRED.

GEORGE E. MOOSE, OF COLORADO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2009, VICE MORA L. MCLEAN, TERM EXPIRED.

JEREMY A. RABKIN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 19, 2009, VICE BARBARA W. SNELLING, TERM EXPIRED.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

DALE CABANISS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 29, 2012. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CAROL WALLER POPE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 1, 2009. (REAPPOINTMENT)

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES T. COOK, 0000

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JAMES L. WILLIAMS, 0000

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 1211:

To be major

MARK A. YUSPA, 0000

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

GERALD J. LUKOWSKI, JR., 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

CHARLES W. WHITTINGTON, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C. SECTION 624:

To be major

VASILIOS LAZOS, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS A CHAPLAIN UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

THOMAS G. MCFARLAND, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624:

To be major

JEFFREY R. BAVIS, 0000
SORREL B. COOPER, 0000

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

ARTHUR W. STAUFF, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

CHARLES A. MCLENITHAN, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

JEFFREY P. BEJMA, 0000
MICHAEL S. FERRELL, 0000
SEAN M. HUSSEY, 0000
ERIC V. LEWIS, 0000
KATHLEEN J. MCDONALD, 0000
WILLIAM P. OMEARA, 0000
MANAN M. TRIVEDI, 0000
JORDAN I. ZIEGLER, 0000

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on March 12, 2007 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

WILLIAM HERBERT HEYMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE SECURITIES INVESTOR PROTECTION CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2008, VICE THOMAS WATERS GRANT, TERM EXPIRED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 29, 2007.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUILDING

SPEECH OF

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor the 36th President of the United States, a great Texan and American, Lyndon Baines Johnson, by passing this resolution naming the headquarters of the Department of Education the ''Lyndon Baines Johnson Federal Building.'' President Johnson's lifelong commitment to improving the American education system and the lives of children across the United States makes him a perfect choice for this honor.

President Johnson, known as the ''Education President,'' made education a top priority of his Great Society programs, with an emphasis on helping poor children. This commitment resulted in the passage of the ''Elementary and Secondary Education Act'' and the ''Higher Education Act'' in 1965.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was the first comprehensive federal education program that provided substantial funds for elementary and secondary schools. This Act funded schools progressively, giving impoverished districts financial support to allow them to fund schools adequately.

The Higher Education Act also greatly improved our educational system by expanding access to higher education for low-income students. The Act established new grants, federal loans and work-study programs that have given innumerable students the opportunity to take advantage of their potential and go to college.

President Johnson also established the Head Start program, which has been critical to ensuring that low-income children have access to pre-school programs. Years of experience have shown that early childhood education leads to improved academic performance and life outcomes. Since its inception, the Head Start program has given over 22 million low-income children the opportunity to take advantage of early childhood education.

President Johnson's commitment to educating all American children was also evidenced by his appointment of the great justice Thurgood Marshall to the Supreme Court. Justice Marshall rose to prominence by winning the historic Brown v. Board case as chief counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. By outlawing segregation in our schools, this case for the first time gave American children hope for the future, regardless of the color of their skin. That President Johnson was willing to appoint as justice a man who had dedicated so much of his life to justice for American children shows the commitment of President Johnson himself to this noble goal.

No president in the history of our great nation has shown a greater level of dedication to the education of our children than President Johnson. I believe that it is just and fitting that the Department of Education headquarters be named in honor of a man with such unparalleled commitment to the education of our nation's children. I commend my colleague Mr. GENE GREEN from Texas for introducing this resolution.

D.C. HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS BILL OF 2007

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, the bipartisan bill we introduce today is a culmination of four years of during which Democrats and Republicans have worked together to accomplish a common goal for Utah and the District of Columbia. This effort has been worth every minute, as we are poised to clear the high hurdle to equal citizenship in the People's House—the House of Representatives. Representative TOM DAVIS (R–VA) and I have worked together on many tough bills and have gotten a fair number passed. Still, the bill we introduce today has surely been the toughest, has required the most work for us both, and has taken the most time. I am most grateful to Representative DAVIS who found the balance that makes this bill possible, modeled most recently on Alaska and Hawaii, both admitted to the Union in 1959 after Congress assured itself that their entry would benefit both parties. TOM DAVIS did not stop with his good idea but has worked relentlessly to reach this milestone. Speaker NANCY PELOSI has long fought for the rights of D.C. residents. It was she who personally insisted that this legislation go forward without delay as a bill of historic importance. Majority Leader STENY HOYER, my regional friend for years, has been an especially outspoken champion of this bill. Throughout this process Chairman HENRY WAXMAN (D–CA) has been a central figure, making every possible effort to ensure we would reach this day. From the very beginning, Chairman JOHN CONYERS (D–MI) as a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus and a member of the Judiciary Committee has fought for our full rights throughout his years in Congress, pressing all along until as chair he will now preside over the committee that will send this bill to the floor. Governor Jon Huntsman Jr. and the entire Utah delegation have been steadfast and determined throughout.

TOM and I have understood that the essential metric required bringing both parties with us, not only bipartisanship in the usual sense but equivalence, that is no partisan gain and no partisan disadvantage. We have gone through many variations, beginning with TOM's original proposal, where the D.C. House seat would have included some Maryland residents. TOM then accepted our notion that a D.C. stand-alone seat would be best and less controversial all around, and the talks and proposals proceeded. We since have tried several scenarios for moving the bill. I continued to keep my bill, the No Taxation Without Representation Act for the full representation that will never abandon until a bill agreeable to all could be fashioned.

The District of Columbia has waited 200 years to gain the equal citizenship rights they deserve and seek. The framers were clear that American citizens are entitled to equal representation in the House. Our status as second in the United States in federal income taxes that support our government argues indisputably for equivalent rights. However, in this time of war with residents serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, our bill for congressional voting rights for D.C. residents must and I believe will not be denied.

Finally, I hope I can be forgiven a personal moment. Throughout this process, I have never referred to the District's vote as my vote or what the vote would mean to me personally because it will not belong to me. I have never mentioned the special reason I personally wanted to be the first to cast that vote because this bill is for D.C. residents now and in the future, not for me. However, my 16 years in Congress has been defined by the search for some way to get full representation for the city where my family has lived since before the Civil War. That search has included the two-day debate followed by a vote on statehood more than 10 years ago, and the vote I won in the Committee of the Whole. The struggle has been driven by its own terms, by the here and now. Yet, I cannot deny the personal side of this quest, epitomized by my family of native Washingtonians, my father Coleman Holmes, my grandfather, Richard Holmes, who entered the D.C. Fire Department in 1902 and whose picture hangs in my office, a gift from the D.C. Fire Department, but especially my great-grandfather, Richard Holmes, a slave who walked off a Virginia plantation in the 1850s, made it to Washington, and settled our family here. By definition, subliminal motivation is unknown and unfelt. However, when TOM and I knew that we had reached the best agreement we could, I thought openly of my family. I thought especially of the man I never knew. I thought of Richard Holmes, a slave in the District until Lincoln freed the slaves here nine months before the Emancipation Proclamation. I thought of my great grandfather who came here in a furtive search for freedom itself, not the vote on the House floor. I thought of what a man who lived as a slave in the District, and others like him would think if his great-granddaughter becomes the first to cast the first full vote for the District of Columbia on the House floor. I hope to have the special honor of casting the vote I have sought for 16 years. I want to cast that vote for the residents of this city whom I have had the great privilege of representing and who have fought and have waited for so long. Yes, and I want to cast that vote in memory of my great-grandfather, Richard Holmes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CITIZENS INVOLVEMENT IN CAMPAIGNS (CIVIC) ACT

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today Representative PAUL KANJORSKI and I are introducing bipartisan legislation to establish a program of limited tax credits and tax deductions to get average Americans more involved in the political process. This bill, the Citizens Involvement in Campaigns (CIVIC) Act, will broaden the base of political contributors and limit the influence of big money donors in federal elections.

We need to take a fresh look at innovative approaches to campaign finance reform, with special attention paid to ideas that encourage, and not restrict, greater participation in our campaigns. Toward this end, I have been advocating tax credits and deductions for small political contributions for many years. An updated tax credit system would be a simple and effective means of balancing the influence of big money donors and bringing individual contributors back to our campaigns. The impact of this counterweight will reduce the burden of raising money, as well as the appearance of impropriety that accompanies the money chase.

Most would agree that the ideal way to finance political campaigns is through a broad base of donors. But, as we are all painfully aware, the economic realities of modern-day campaigning lead many candidates to focus most of their efforts on collecting funds from a few large donors. This reality alienates many Americans from the political process.

The concept of empowering small donors is not a new idea. For example, from 1972 to 1986, the federal government offered a tax credit for small political contributions. This provided an incentive for average Americans to contribute to campaigns in small amounts while simultaneously encouraging politicians to solicit donations from a larger pool of contributors. Currently, 6 geographically and politically diverse States (Oregon, Minnesota, Ohio, Virginia, Arkansas, and Arizona) offer their own tax credits for political contributions. These state-level credits vary in many respects, but all share the same goal of encouraging average Americans to become more involved.

The CIVIC Act can begin the process of building this counterweight for federal elections. This bill is designed to encourage Americans who ordinarily do not get involved in politics beyond casting a vote every 2 or 4 years (that is, if they bother to vote at all) to become more active participants in our political process.

The CIVIC Act will reestablish and update the discontinued federal tax credit. Taxpayers can choose between a 100 percent tax credit for political contributions to Federal candidates or national political parties (limited to $200 per taxable year), or a 100 percent tax deduction (limited to $600 per taxable year). Both limits, of course, are doubled for joint returns. As long as political parties and candidates promote the existence of these credits, the program can have a real impact and aid in making elections more grassroots affairs than they are today.

A limited tax credit for political contributions can be a bipartisan, cost-efficient method for helping balance the influence of large money donors in the American electoral process. Instead of driving away most Americans from participation in political life, we can offer an invitation for citizens to play a larger role in political campaigns. It seems to me that this will be a fruitful way to clean up our system, while at the same time convincing Americans that they actually have a meaningful stake in elections.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, on Friday, March 9, 2007, I was absent from Rollcall votes 132, 133, 134 and 135 due to official business.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''nay'' on Rollcall vote 132, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007.

On Rollcall 133 for the Baker Amendment to H.R. 720, I would have voted ''aye.'' I strongly oppose extending Davis-Bacon requirements for construction under H.R. 720.

On Rollcall vote 134, the motion to recommit H.R. 720, I would have voted ''aye.''

Finally, on Rollcall vote 135, final passage of H.R. 720, I would have voted ''nay.''

I ask that my statement appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HONORING LYNBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lynbrook Elementary School on their 50th anniversary.

Located in Springfield, Virginia, Lynbrook Elementary School opened its doors on February 11, 1957. Although it opened on that day and was dedicated a month later, the school continued to take shape over the next twenty years as the local population boomed and the true needs of the community were realized. An air-conditioning system, a gymnasium, a music room, additional classrooms and ''the pod'' were all added to create the Lynbrook that we know today. Additionally, in 1976 a contest was held to select a new school mascot. Out of this contest, and the imagination of a young Wee Lane Yee, Lenny the Leprechaun was born.

The school continued to evolve through the end of the last century. In the 1980's many of Lynbrook's long standing traditions, including ''Shamrock Shindigs'' and the medieval fair, were started. Also, the students began publishing the schools first newspaper, The Four Leaf Clover, which remains in circulation today.

Lynbrook strives to stay true to its long standing mission statement: to provide a safe environment where all students will become lifelong learners and develop a positive sense of self-worth and an appreciation among students, staff and community for all diverse backgrounds and experiences.

To that end, the school is constantly seeking to improve its strong relations with its students, parents and community. The students' academic, social and emotional learning are met utilizing proven instructional strategies. Families are encouraged to participate in PTA events, such as: family nights, socials, concerts, student programs and cultural events. Additionally, Lynbrook has been repeatedly recognized for its students' active participation in the Marine Corps Marathon Healthy Kid Fun Run. All of these factors demonstrate a concerted effort on behalf of the school's faculty to mold the young people at Lynbrook Elementary into well rounded, high-functioning adolescents.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend and congratulate all of the students, faculty and parents who have played such an integral part in the establishment and growth of this fine academic institution. I call upon my colleagues to join me in congratulating Lynbrook Elementary School on its 50th anniversary and in wishing them many more years of continued academic success.

IN MEMORY OF DAVID IVORY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor David Ivory, former Fort Worth city manager, who passed away on Friday, March 9, 2007. Mr. Ivory was known by many as a loyal, trustworthy, and dedicated public servant.

Mr. Ivory served his country for two years in Korea, achieving the rank of Lieutenant. In 1973, he received his master's degree in public administration from Brigham Young University. He also served in the Utah state legislature for a brief time.

After moving to the City of Fort Worth, Mr. Ivory served in many City Hall positions, ultimately being named city manager in 1989. His achievements include involvement in numerous economic developments, such as the annexation of the Perot Group's 5600 acres in North Fort Worth and the creation of Alliance Airport.

Mr. Ivory was 62 years old, at the time of his passing. He is survived by his wife, Margery; his son, Charles; and his daughter, Angela. I would like to extend my sincerest condolences to the Ivory family; my thoughts are with them as they endure this difficult time. The City of Fort Worth has lost a devoted public servant and a great man.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PRIVATE KELLY YOUNGBLOOD, U.S. ARMY, OF MESA, ARIZONA

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of Private Kelly

Youngblood of Mesa, Arizona, who was killed on February 18, 2007 after being shot by a sniper in Ramadi, Iraq. Kelly risked everything in a fight to bring democracy to people halfway around the world.

Kelly represented the best that the United States of America has to offer. After graduating from McClintock High School in Tempe, Arizona, Kelly set his sights on military service. While only 19 years old, he was aware of all of the potential dangers associated with his service. Yet, despite his young age, a sense of duty called him to enlist. It had been Kelly's lifelong dream to serve his country and shortly after his 18th birthday he achieved his dream by enlisting in the Army. Following basic training Kelly was sent to Iraq as a member of the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. He left behind his mother Kristen and sister Melaney of Mesa, Arizona, his grandparents, Charley and Jean Herrold of Westville, Indiana and many friends around the country. I stand here today to express my gratitude to Kelly and his loved ones for their sacrifice.

Today, I join Kelly's family and friends in mourning his death. While we struggle to come to terms with our sorrow over this loss, we can take pride in his example and joy in our memory of his life. Kelly served bravely as a soldier working to bring freedom to the people of Iraq. His courage and strength of character will provide an example for future generations and his memory will continue to bring comfort to his loved ones in their time of grief.

Kelly was known as a loving and kind young man with an excellent sense of humor. His grandmother told the local newspaper, "That kid was so much fun. He made jokes out of everything. He's going to be sorely missed." Today and always Kelly will be remembered by family members, friends, and fellow Hoosiers as a true American hero. We honor the life he laid down in service to his country.

As I search for words to do justice in honoring Kelly's sacrifice, I am reminded of a speech by General Douglas MacArthur to a graduating class at West Point. "The soldier above all other people prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war." Kelly's grandparents remember his last Christmas, when he worshiped at Westville United Methodist Church. As a soldier about to enter combat we can be assured that Kelly prayed for peace in Iraq, for his fellow soldiers and for his country he left behind. We too will continue this prayer in Kelly's memory and will continue his fight to bring peace around the world.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Kelly Youngblood into the official record of the United States House of Representatives for his service to this country and for his sacrifice in the name of freedom, democracy and peace. When we think of this cause in which we are engaged and the pain that the loss of our heroes brings, I hope that the memory of Kelly and others like him will bring some solace in our grief and some hope for our future.

May God grant peace to those who mourn and strength to those who continue to fight and may God be with all of you, as I know he is with Kelly.

INTRODUCING THE "SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD FOUNDATION ACT"

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, today I rise in partnership with my distinguished Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, to introduce a very significant piece of legislation, the "Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act." This measure will create a new government corporation with an annual budget of $80 million—authorized for 10 years—to dramatically increase the number of non-traditional U.S. students studying abroad in non-traditional destinations.

This bill will a provide significant long-term boost to our effort to prevail in the global war against terrorism. It will do so by dramatically increasing foreign understanding of the enduring strength and value of America's democratic culture by exposing foreign students and their families to one million of our best and most authentic diplomats, our American students. It will also vastly increase the talent pool of young Americans with foreign cultural experience and language knowledge to support our foreign affairs agencies, U.S. global NGOs and U.S. global corporations.

The bill responds to a landmark Congressionally commissioned November 2005 study entitled, "Global Competence and National Needs", authored by the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, which proposed ". . . a broad vision for the U.S.: send one million students to study abroad within a decade." The idea behind this vision, as articulated in the study, was that "making study abroad the norm and not the exception can position this and other future generations for success in the world much as the establishment of the land-grant university system and enactment of the GI Bill helped create the 'American Century'." The Lincoln Commission which was headed up by former AID Administrator Mr. Peter McPherson and included my colleagues, Ms. SLAUGHTER from New York and Mr. KIRK from Illinois, was established by Congress in 2004 at the urging of Senator Paul Simon who tirelessly advocated for this agenda.

Madam Speaker, I believe this is an incredibly important legislative initiative. If enacted it will democratize study abroad in the way that the GI bill democratized higher education. Today, many American college students still face financial and institutional impediments to study abroad. The Senator Paul Simon Act and the Foundation it creates will tear down these barriers and make foreign study a normal rather than an exceptional part of an American college education.

Today our Nation faces a deficit of cultural knowledge that is a clear impediment to our effort to prevail in the global war on terrorism and to keep America competitive in a global economy. Our foreign affairs agencies are struggling mightily to find recruits who have firsthand understanding of critical cultures and languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Pashto, and Dari. The Senator Paul Simon Act will rectify this by vastly expanding the talent pool of young Americans with global skills.

I urge my colleagues to join this important effort by supporting this legislation.

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

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, today I rise to voice my pleasure and support of the passage of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act. I would also like to pay tribute to Chairman OBERSTAR for his efforts in reauthorizing this program for the first time in 13 years. Chairman OBERSTAR is a dear friend of mine and he has been one of my greatest partners in our efforts to clean the Nation's waters.

Under President Bush's proposed fiscal year (FY) 2008 budget, the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund is facing a $16 million cut. H.R. 720, of which I am a proud cosponsor, would authorize $14 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund over the next 4 years, providing communities with the financial means to construct municipal wastewater treatment plants. In recent years, Michigan has seen over 1,000 separate sewer overflows, totaling over 20 billion gallons of spilled sewage. Funding through the Clean Water State Revolving Load Fund is crucial to preventing further such disasters in Michigan.

Since Congress passed the Clean Water Act, the Federal government has provided more than $82 billion for wastewater assistance which led to tremendous improvements in our wastewater infrastructure. However, this infrastructure is starting to deteriorate, leading to sewage and untreated waste flowing into our rivers and lakes and leaking onto our roads and even into our basements. It has been estimated by the EPA that each year, overflows from sewer systems discharge about 850 billion gallons of wastewater and storm water containing untreated waste, toxic debris, and other pollutants into the environment.

The Republican leadership allowed the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to expire in 1994 and has failed to reauthorize it because of their objection to the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage law. Furthermore, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have cut funding by 34 percent. Unfortunately the Republican-controlled Congress has not been our only barrier; the Bush Administration has also repeatedly tried to obstruct clean water programs. In fact this week the White House issued a Statement of Administration policy conveying the President's opposition to H.R. 569 and H.R. 700, describing the bills as "excessive" and "unrealistic in the current fiscal environment" respectively. We have watched these setbacks to our clean water programs for far too long. I urge the Senate to pass these bills and show this Administration that the Congress will not let our waters be neglected any longer.

IN SUPPORT OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS TRANSFER DAY, MARCH 31, 2007

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise with great pride to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the transfer of the three small islands in the Caribbean from Danish to American control on March 31st, 1917. On that day, the Danish West Indies became the U.S. Virgin Islands and my district, the district that consists of St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John and a host of other smaller islands became part of the American family.

The people of the U.S. Virgin Islands are both proud Virgin Islanders and proud Americans. We are a diverse community comprised of people who are native to the island, those who have moved there from Puerto Rico and many of the surrounding Caribbean island nations, mainlanders from the continental United States, and people from many other parts of Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In our 90 years, we have come to reflect the American melting pot, evolving from many people, yet striving to become one.

One of the aspects that make the U.S. Virgin Islands a special place is our reverence for our history and our past and our concern that we pass on to our children the story of how we came to this place and how we have lived here, and struggled here and thrived here.

Transfer Day, the day that our islands became part of the American family, has long been a source of pride as we have celebrated it over the years with parades and fanfare and speeches of historic significance. But our relationship with the United States of America, began long before 1917.

Christopher Columbus, credited with the discovery of the Americas stopped at Salt River Bay on the island of St. Croix on his second voyage, making it one of the only confirmed Columbus landing sites under the U.S. flag today.

One of this country's founding fathers, Alexander Hamilton, who also served as its first Secretary of the Treasury, spent his boyhood on St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, where he is said to have learned the rudiments of finance, as he worked as a clerk in the international trade business of his mentor Nicholas Cruger in the busy Caribbean port town of Christiansted. It was in the Virgin Islands that his talent was first noticed, as his writing in the local newspapers, in particular on the 1772 hurricane, spurred his supporters to send him to New York the next year where he became part of the brewing American Revolution.

The Virgin Islands with its natural harbors had long been a trading partner of the colonies of North America, and during the American Revolution, it was the small Danish fort on the western side of St. Croix, Ft. Frederik that was one of the first to salute the new American colors when one of its ships sailed into Frederiksted harbor.

The United States of America recognized the strategic importance of the tiny Virgin Islands, then known as the Danish West Indies as early as 1865 when negotiations began for their purchase. According to historians, "the need for military bases at strategic points in the Caribbean" was bolstered by the construction of the Panama Canal. Purchasing the Virgin Islands became important because it would "enable the United States to defend the approaches to the Panama Canal and it would prevent the islands from falling into the hands of countries that were hostile to the United States."

During World War I, it was the fear that Germany wanted a foothold in the Caribbean and fear that Denmark, who owned the islands at the time would be overrun by the Germans in the war, that prompted a more aggressive approach towards their purchase. By January 1916, "agreement was reached on $25 million as a compromise between the Danish demand for $27 million and the American offer of $20 million."

We are told by our parents and grandparents that Transfer Day, March 31, 1917 was one of mixed emotions. While some were excited at the prospect of becoming part of the American nation, others were sad that the ties with Denmark that were 250 years old were about to be broken. Residents of the islands were given the choice of Danish or American citizenship and some remained loyal to the Danish flag while others enthusiastically embraced their new nation.

The United States of America entered World War I one week after the Virgin Islands were transferred to its ownership and the islands were placed under Navy rule as they were used as a coaling depot for U.S. ships during that period. The Navy enacted a number of social reforms to include reorganizing the hospitals and improving its equipment, instituting a sanitary code and mosquito control which drastically reduced the death rate. They also built the St. Thomas catchment and the St. Croix Creque Dam which increased the amount of safe, reliable drinking water. They instituted a sewage disposal system, and a fire and police system. They built and improved schools and trained and hired teachers at a higher rate of pay. They were not as successful at economic development and annual revenues plunged to less than what it was under the Danes, prompting an out-migration to then U.S. controlled territories like Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama and the mainland. During that time, new immigrants from Puerto Rico and the mainland and an increased birth-rate due to better sanitation bolstered the population numbers.

It was in 1931 that the Department of the Interior was given the authority to administer the islands and charged with the economic regeneration of the islands. It was during that time that the first civilian governor was appointed, Dr. Paul M. Pearson who was responsible for the institution of the homestead program which allowed for the purchase of old plantation lands for homes and small farms. It was during this period that our tourism industry began as the first three hotels were built on St. Thomas and that opportunities for higher education were provided with scholarships to Hampton and Howard Universities for our worthy students. But the economy of the islands was still in need of a shot in the arm and political development was still in its infancy. These were the cause of discontent among the people.

It was not until 10 years after the Transfer, on February 25, 1927, that United States citizenship was granted through congressional enactment to all natives of the Virgin Islands and residents on and after January 17, 1917 including those who moved to the U.S. or Puerto Rico before or after January 17, 1917 who had not become citizens of any foreign country and to all children born in the Virgin Islands on or after January 17, 1917.

Another Act of Congress in 1932 further extended U.S. citizenship to all natives of the Virgin Islands living in the United States or any other U.S. territory who were not citizens of any foreign country regardless of their place of residence on January 17, 1917.

It was in the years between the Transfer and the early 1930s, that the people began awakening to their political power and began agitation for more local, democratic control, extended voting rights, and other enfranchisement common to the American Nation. Advocacy through the local press came from men such as Rothschild Francis on St. Thomas, D. Hamilton Jackson on St. Croix and Casper Holstein, a wealthy St. Croix born New Yorker. They began pushing for more local democratic control of the institutions that governed the people of the Virgin Islands.

In this atmosphere, under some political unrest which included demonstrations and congressional inquiries and investigations, two major constitutional achievements were gained, namely the right of women to vote in December of 1935 and the passage of the First Organic Act on June 22, 1936.

The First Organic Act was said to represent a considerable extension of political power with the creation of two municipal councils, St. Thomas-St. John and St. Croix and a Legislative Assembly consisting of the two councils. Property and income qualifications were abolished, but English literacy was required of voters. Other features of the Act were a governor appointed by the President, who had veto power which could be overridden by a two-thirds majority of the Council, with final decision making rested in the President. The governor was also required to report annually to the Secretary of the Interior on financial transactions.

It was during this period that the first of our Virgin Islands soldiers began fighting and dying for their new country. Whether joining the military from Puerto Rico, the closest enlisting station to the territory or from where they had migrated in New York or elsewhere, our young men joined to defend our nation and some of them paid the ultimate sacrifice.

It was after World War II, in the period between 1950 and 1970, with increased economic expansion and political power that the population in the Virgin Islands began to double and triple. It was the result of increased birth rate, immigration from the mainland, Puerto Rico and the surrounding Caribbean islands to fill the new jobs created by the expanding tourism industry and the new oil and aluminum refineries and watch industry. There was also a movement of native Virgin Islanders who had moved away in earlier decades for economic opportunity back to the islands.

In 1950, the first native Virgin Islander, Morris deCastro was appointed governor. With his appointment came the recognition by the United States of the growing ability of the people of the Virgin Islands to govern themselves. The growth of political parties and the increased participation of the electorate, the growth and diversification of the economy and the population all set the stage for the need to

revise the Organic Act to provide for the political and administrative re-organization of the Virgin Islands. With the Revised Organic Act of 1954, the present governmental structure of the Virgin Islands with its laws, administrative departments and its unicameral legislature were formed. The English literacy requirement instituted in 1936 was removed paving the way for Spanish speaking residents to have a voice in governmental affairs.

In 1968, after the First Constitutional Convention of 1964–65, the Elective Governor Act of 1968 provided for an elected governor and lt. governor to serve four year terms, a delegate to Congress, and the lowering of the voting age to 18. In 1970, the U.S. Virgin Islands elected the first of its seven governors to office. The Honorable Melvin Evans was elected the first Governor. My predecessor, the Honorable Ron de Lugo became our first Delegate to Congress and I am proud to serve as the fourth elected and first woman Delegate to Congress.

Since that time there have been several attempts to deal with the internal structure of our government, through drafting a new Constitution in 1981 and through a referendum on the nature of the territory's relationship to the United States which culminated in a referendum in 1993. This summer, Virgin Islanders will again attempt to draft a constitution to address many of the structural issues that continue to pose challenges to governance and every day living. It is my hope that on the 90th anniversary of the Transfer and our sojourn as part of the American family that we use it to analyze, plan and bring to fruition a common vision for our territory by 2017, the hundredth anniversary celebration.

Madam Speaker, there is much good that has come from this 90-year-old relationship between the U.S. Virgin Islands and the United States of America. Our islands have not only grown in population and diversity, but have made strides in governmental infrastructure and the provision of services in health, education, transportation infrastructure, and social welfare. Much of this has been accomplished in partnership with the federal government. There are many challenges that have also arisen because of rapid growth and development and lack of control over issues such as border control and the lack of a plan to manage our resources to include land and water use. We have been a beacon for development and advancement in the region and have attracted people from all over the world. It is my hope that this 90th anniversary will strengthen our resolve to become a stronger, more cohesive community with a dream and a plan for peace and prosperity into this 21st century and beyond.

RECOGNIZING THE COMMUNITY OF COLLYER, KANSAS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the citizens of Collyer, Kansas for continuing efforts to sustain and revitalize their community.

On September 26, 2004 that effort was formalized through creation of the Collyer Community Alliance. Donna Malsom, president of the alliance, said the organization was formed because residents want to see their hometown raise another generation of Kansans. ''Our community is made up of hard working individuals who pull together to support businesses, projects and each other, Malsom said. ''Through our combined efforts, we made a conscious decision to 'save' our community.''

Despite its small size—133 people—Collyer is making a large commitment to its future. In the nearly 30 months since it was formed, the alliance has grown from zero to more than 200 paid memberships.

In order to obtain financing for community initiatives, the alliance has conducted a number of fundraising activities—the most famous of which are fish fries that are held every Friday evening during the Lenten season. In 2006, more than 1,000 plates were served. Having personally attended a fish fry, I can affirm that the food is delicious and the community spirit is inspiring.

Funds have also been raised by organizing Hunter's Burgers and Brats and Ground Hog Celebration Soup suppers, the Walsh Auction Lunch, Quinter School Forensics Tournament Lunch, WaKeeney Trash and Treasure Flea Market, Quinter May Day Celebration, Switchback Benefit Barn Dance and alumni celebrations. Money raised from these activities is supplemented by generous financial support from individuals, families, businesses and local units of government. Since its inception, approximately 75 entities have achieved ''sponsor'' status through the alliance.

This fundraising effort translates into impressive promotion of and support for the community. Last year, the Collyer Café opened in the refurbished Saint Michael's Convent. The alliance purchased the convent and the community donated well over 1,000 volunteer hours to this restoration project.

In July, the community hosts an After Harvest Music Festival which brings approximately 500 people to town. In October, the Fall Street Festival attracts more than 1,000 visitors to Collyer.

The alliance further promotes Collyer by maintaining an extensive website at www.collyerks.com. The site includes a history of the community, ongoing development projects, fundraising activities and community events.

An effort is being made to preserve the legacy of Collyer by obtaining historical designations on 14 community buildings. The Saint Michael's Buildings, Zeman Dance Hall, the old mercantile/grocery store and the Collyer Depot are just a few of these historically significant structures. With persistent effort, the alliance has achieved 501(C)3 nonprofit status retroactive to May of 2005. This approval is allowing the community to aggressively pursue restoration efforts.

An additional boost to preserve Collyer's legacy occurred in May of 2006 when the community was awarded a grant from the Kansas Humanities Council in support of an initiative to gather and record stories of immigrant families that settled in Collyer. Alliance members supplied the volunteer hours needed to complete this and several other grant applications.

Sandra Stenzel, community volunteer, acknowledges that the work required to create a future for Collyer is not easy. However, she believes the effort is worth it. ''Our community was founded on the principles of faith, freedom, education, progress and agriculture,'' Stenzel said. ''We are proud of our past, but we are even prouder of the vision we have for the future and the plan we have to get there.''

For rural communities to survive and prosper, citizens must be willing to create their own opportunities for success. Ongoing efforts to revitalize Collyer are an example of how hard work, vision and involvement support can create just such an opportunity. Citizens throughout Kansas are working together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Collyer is a developing success story that demonstrates how teamwork and creative thinking can make a positive difference in rural America.

WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER

SPEECH OF

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the scandal at Walter Reed Army Medical Center has placed a spotlight on our entire military and veteran health care system. That is a good thing because the system is in need of a thorough reorganization. As a result of cuts in VA health care, more than a quarter of a million vets were refused enrollment in 2005 alone because they ''didn't qualify''. How many of these men and women were told when they reported for duty that they may or may not ''qualify'' for veteran's care after separation?

Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the notion that America's promise to its veterans is subject to later, arbitrary qualifications, but that quarter of a million veterans is the number we know of. Perhaps even more insidious are those vets who because of their PTSD or other injuries were discharged with less than honorable discharges most of the time with no hearing, no review. These men and women now reside in a kind of abyss between earth and hell. They have served their nation but their nation has turned its collective backs on them.

Mr. Speaker, we need to recall Vietnam Vet Jim Hopkins who finally drove his Jeep into the lobby of the Wadsworth VA Hospital out of frustration and protest in 1981. Jim Hopkins didn't get the treatment he needed and couldn't get anyone in the VA or the administration to listen to him. His subsequent tragic death led to a fifty-three day hunger strike by vets and finally shed some national light on our refusal to acknowledge the reality of PTSD and the impact of dioxin on the human nervous system. Now, a quarter of a century later there are many more frustrated vets, men and women who responded when their nation called, men and women who we have promised lifetime medical care in return who are shut out of the VA system. Men and women have been kicked to the curb, unseen and unserved. Mr. Speaker, the hour and day have come: it is time for this Congress, in turn, to kick open the doors of the VA system—to ensure that every veteran, every veteran, has received his or her due for their service.

RECOGNIZING LEWISVILLE AND FLOWER MOUND STUDENTS FOR RECEIVING TOP HONORS AT THE INAUGURAL NORTH TEXAS TEEN COURT TRAINING

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize student volunteers with the Lewisville-Flower Mound Teen Court, who were named ''Best Overall Prosecution Team'' and ''Best Overall Defense Team'' at the inaugural North Texas Teen Court Training.

The event was held on March 3, 2007, at the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law in Fort Worth, Texas. Volunteer youth attorneys, bailiffs, clerks, and jurors are given an opportunity to conduct trials of actual cases with Class C misdemeanor defendants from local Teen Courts. Over 200 teens, adult volunteers, and judges were involved in the competition.

Seth Duban, of Marcus High School, and John Maksym, a home-schooled student, were members of the winning prosecution team. Lewisville High School students Sarah Abdel and Jennifer Stanley, along with Lexia Chadwick of Huffines Middle School, composed the competition's winning defense team.

The North Texas Teen Court Training is a great event for the students, the community, and the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law. These exceptional young men and women had the opportunity to see and act out the judicial process in a way that they could not have otherwise. I would like to extend my congratulations and best wishes to the five winning students, and to all other participants. I am honored to represent such intelligent and academically driven students.

THE EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, with one of the most misleading names ever put to a piece of legislation, the House of Representatives voted last week on a bill entitled ''The Employee Free Choice Act.'' (H.R. 800). If made law, the Act would result in the most important changes in federal labor law since the enactment of the Wagner Act in 1935 and, contrary to its title, would deprive employees of free choice in the two most important issues involving unions by denying employees the right to a secret ballot election to determine whether or not they want to be represented by a union and by denying employees the right to approve or disapprove the first labor contract with their employer.

Under present law, the most common way to determine whether employees want to be represented by a union is through a secret ballot election conducted by a federal agency, the NLRB. The United States Supreme Court has emphasized that other methods of deciding about unionization are inferior. Under the new bill, a union would be able to gain the right to represent employees through a ''card check'' in which a union simply would have to collect the signatures of a majority of employees on union authorization cards in order to represent them. The result would be that employees' signatures on union cards, which now are used to call for an election, would be used to preclude them from having an election. Moreover, once unionized through a card check, employees would not be able to change their mind by the same mechanism.

Nothing could be more undemocratic, as is evidenced by the AFL–CIO's own study showing that when unions get from 60 to 75 percent of employees to sign union authorization cards, they win less than 50 percent of elections.

It seems painfully obvious that, as Congressman HOWARD BERMAN (one of the Act's co-sponsors), said when he was in the California Assembly, secret ballot elections are essential to ''the self determination of the workers'' that federal labor law seeks to promote. As Yale's Robert Dahl concluded: ''In the late nineteenth century, the secret ballot began to replace a show of hands. . . [S]ecrecy [in voting] has become the general standard, a country in which it is widely violated would be judged as lacking free and fair elections.'' Federal law now requires that in elections for federal office, the citizens must be able to vote ''in a private and independent manner'' and that ''the privacy of the voter and the confidentiality of the ballot'' must be protected. 42 U.S.C. § 15481(a)(1). The lack of privacy under H.R. 800 would subject employees to overwhelming pressure from union organizers and other workers to sign union cards, putting them back in the 19th century.

Card checks not only violate the workers' right to privacy but deprive workers of the right to hear the arguments against as well as for unionization. Again, as Professor Dahl observed, ''voters must have access . . . to alternative sources of information that are not . . . dominated by any . . . groups or point of view.'' Unions usually solicit cards with no notice to the employer, so that H.R. 800 would deprive employees of the ''alternate sources of information'' necessary to make an informed, and hence free, decision.

H.R. 800 compounds these inherent defects in the card check process by providing no remedy if a union uses improper pressure or deception in getting employees to sign cards. Present law establishes a detailed and comprehensive procedure for dealing with election misconduct by both employers and union. H.R. 800 contains no such protections.

H.R. 800's card check provisions also violate the parity of the processes for employees to bring in a union and rejecting an existing union representative. Under present law and under the proposed new law, once employees bring in a union, it is not easy for them to change their mind and get rid of the union. In most cases, a secret ballot election is necessary both to bring in a union and jettison one. Under the proposed law, it would be easy for unions to get in through a card check, but difficult for employees to get free of union representation because the formalities of a secret ballot election would be required. There is no rational basis for establishing different procedures for choosing to be represented by a union and choosing not to.

H.R. 800 would deprive employees of their other basic free choice: the right to use their collective economic power to negotiate the best agreement they think they can get and the right to approve or reject any contract negotiated by their union. Presently, employees are free to strike if they do not approve of a proposed labor contract, but H.R. 800 makes the contract fixed by a panel of government-appointed arbitrators binding for two years and now most employees covered by a proposed labor contract have the right to vote whether or not to accept it. H.R. 800 would strip this right away from them for the first (and most important) contract with their employer. If their employer and union did not reach agreement on a first contract after 90 days, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (''FMCS'') would appoint a board of private arbitrators to determine the terms of the contract, which would be binding on the employees, the union, and the employer. There is no limit on the arbitrators' authority. They could raise wages by 100 percent or lower them. They could require employees to pay union dues or lose their jobs. This part of the law is clearly unconstitutional because it establishes no standards or procedures for the arbitrators to follow and does not provide for any review of the private arbitrators' decisions, either administrative or judicial.

In 1925, the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment a state law requiring certain private sector employers and workers to submit to binding interest arbitration by a panel of judges if the parties could not agree on a contract.

Accordingly, H.R. 800 can be upheld only if it provides procedural due process. It does not. Conspicuously absent from the statute are the procedural safeguards customarily considered necessary to ensure a fair hearing (e.g., the right to notice, to know what standards will be applied, to present evidence, to some kind of review, administrative or judicial). Of course, it is possible that the NLRB will utilize their rulemaking authority to provide for such procedures. Even so, neither agency is authorized to review an arbitration board's decision on the basis of non-compliance with such procedures. Similarly, an arbitration board's non-compliance with procedural safeguards is not a basis for judicial review. Moreover, in most arbitrations, the parties' agreement to a particular procedure is the best guarantee of fairness. Under H.R. 800, the parties have no voice in determining procedure.

In addition to due process infirmities, H.R. 800 effectuates an impermissible delegation of legislative authority to private actors, violating principals of separation of powers. Pursuant to H.R. 800, private arbitrators are vested with the ability to bind nonconsenting parties. Most importantly, employees are not parties to the mediation and have no right to participate in the arbitration proceeding or challenge the arbitrators' decision. While a majority of the affected employees will have signed union authorization cards (as defective as they are) supporting the union, the contract imposed by the arbitrators will bind all bargaining unit employees, including those who did not support union representation.

Aside from constitutional defects, H.R. 800 would eviscerate large portions of the over 70 years of case law developed carefully under the National Labor Relations Act. The resulting uncertainty would be a major force in destabilizing labor relations and causing labor strife the NLRA was intended to resolve. For example, over 97 percent of private sector labor

contracts contain provisions for the binding arbitration of disputes under those contracts. Such arbitration provisions are enforceable only if they are consensual.

The underlying problem with the mandatory arbitration portion of H.R. 800 is that in addition to depriving employees of the right to disapprove of the arbitrators' "agreement", it would destroy collective bargaining by eliminating the role of economic power and injecting procedural requirements for a fair adjudication or rulemaking proceeding that are inconsistent with collective bargaining. A labor negotiation is a contest of economic power, fundamentally different than an adjudication or rulemaking. Any attempt to graft direct government determination of the terms and conditions of employment onto a law promoting private decision-making through collective bargaining is bound to fail. The two cannot be reconciled.

I stand firm behind my vote against H.R. 800 and fully support a Presidential veto of the bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, due to a family obligation, I was unable to vote March 9th of this year. I would like the record to reflect how I would have voted on the following votes.

On rollcall vote No. 132 I would have voted "yes." On rollcall vote No. 133 I would have voted "no." On rollcall vote No. 134 I would have voted "yes." On rollcall vote No. 135 I would have voted "yes."

IN MEMORY OF RICHARD AND VIRGINIA DOAK

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Doak of Stover, MO.

Richard L. Doak was born on December 24, 1922, and was the second of seven children to the late Grace and Edgar Doak. Upon completion of high school, Richard became a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia. His college education was interrupted to volunteer for service in the United States Army in World War II. On August 19, 1944, he married Virginia Ray McClesky and soon after completed his undergraduate education, receiving a B.S. in Agriculture. He again served his country as an infantry platoon leader, 7th Division, 31st (Polar Bear) Regiment, Charlie Company, during the Korean War. In honor of his commitment to the U.S. Army, he was awarded both the Silver Star for gallantry in combat and the Bronze Star for meritorious service. After his service, the Doaks returned to Missouri where they would raise their four children on the family farm. Mr. Doak later earned a master's degree in Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and served as a teacher at Payne School and as an elementary school principal at Hallsville, Jefferson City, and Versailles, MO. In 1985, Richard retired from teaching and returned to work on his farm raising and showing Southdown sheep.

Virginia Ray (McClesky) Doak was born on December 8, 1922, in King, Texas, to Estelle and Henry McClesky. Virginia graduated from high school in Gatesville and attended the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. After receiving her degree, Virginia taught school at Purmela and Plainview in Texas and Payne School in Missouri. On August 19, 1944, she married Richard Doak, a Missourian she had met while he was stationed at Fort Hood. While raising a family in Missouri, Virginia remained close to her family in Texas and looked forward to visiting them at Christmas and during the summer.

Madam Speaker, Richard and Virginia Doak were great friends of mine and were valuable members of the Stover community. I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to their family.

TRIBUTE TO THELMA CLARK

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a community activist that touched many lives throughout her 79 years as a resident of Youngstown, Ohio. Thelma Clark, who was born in Youngstown on August 15, 1927, passed away this past October. Mrs. Clark graduated from The Rayen School and later went on to graduate from the Choffin School of Nursing as a licensed practical nurse. She worked at Northside as well as Southside Hospital, but Thelma Clark's career as a nurse is not what her family and friends will think of when reminiscing about her life.

Thelma Clark's most significant and lasting impact on the Youngstown community came through her many organization memberships and dedication to those organizations. Maybe no better example of this was her steadfast faith and love of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, to which she was a member for 63 years. Thelma served as the secretary for the church for 25 years and also played an important role as the official church historian.

Through her constant commitment to urban development and advancement of African Americans in the community, Thelma Clark was a shining example to her many children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Mrs. Clark was a member of the local branch of the NAACP for 52 years and served as 2nd vice president of the organization for many of those years. She was a member of the National Council of Negro Women while also serving as a co-chairperson of the Annual Negro College Fund Banquets.

These are just a few of the many activities that became intrinsically connected to the life of Thelma Clark. In addition, Mrs. Clark was a member of the Pink Carnation Club, treasurer of the McGuffey Football Boosters Club, and a member of the Parent Booster Club of the Boy Scouts.

Learning about people like Thelma Clark and the proactive and selfless life that she led, gives me a great sense of inspiration and optimism for the future of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley. The scope of Thelma Clark's influence on current and future generations is immeasurable, and I am deeply honored to have represented her.

WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER

SPEECH OF

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my extreme disappointment over the deplorable living conditions that our brave men and women of the Armed Services have been subjected to upon returning home from their courageous service in Iraq.

How can the same administration that is calling on these young soldiers to put their lives in harm's way over and over again, allow them, after they are subsequently injured, to come back to these shameful living conditions?

As a veteran, myself, I am truly ashamed and appalled. When our brave warriors are treated like second class citizens, after being injured fighting for the values and interests of this country, it sends a very dangerous signal to those presently serving in Iraq, as well as to those who are considering serving their country through military service.

Let us fix this mess today, and make the welfare of our Armed Service members a real priority, instead of treating them like pawns in this administration's war games.

WATER QUALITY INVESTMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 569, introduced by my colleagues Mr. PASCRELL and Mr. CAMP. This bill would reauthorize a grant program that expired in 2003, which authorized grants to States and municipalities to combat the problem of combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows. I was proud to be an original co-sponsor of this legislation.

In 2001, the EPA estimated there were 772 communities in the country that have combined sewer systems, including all of the communities in my district: Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, and Somerville. The EPA also estimated that to address these problems would cost communities $50.6 billion for CSOs and an additional $88.5 billion to address SSOs. These enormous costs cannot be borne by the communities alone.

Since the Clean Water Act was first passed in 1972, the condition of our Nation's waters has improved greatly. H.R. 569 demonstrates a renewed commitment by Congress to clean water by providing targeted assistance to address two large outstanding problems still affecting water quality, CSOs and SSOs. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

APPRECIATION OF ''100 WOMEN WHO CARE''

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support and admiration of the goals and efforts of Illinois' ''100 Women Who Care'' organization.

These 100 local women have seized on the remarkable idea that a small group of individuals pooling their talent, energy, and resources together can exercise an exponentially greater ability to affect positive change in our communities.

The concept is simple. ''100 Women Who Care'' meets four times a year to select a worthy local charity to support. At each meeting, its members contribute the seemingly insignificant sum of $100. But taken together, these 100 checks for $100 amount to the very significant sum of $10,000. This money has an incredible ability to impact the important community service work of local charities.

Already this year, ''100 Women Who Care'' has enabled Outreach Ministries in Carol Stream, Illinois, to provide two apartments for single, homeless refugee women and their children as they work to get back on their feet.

I commend the women of ''100 Women Who Care'' for their dedication to serving others. This organization is a wonderful example of how working together can have a huge impact on our local communities. I wish these ladies all the best for the future. Keep up the good work!

CHIROPRACTIC CARE FOR ALL VETERANS

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, since the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs' health care system, the Nation's doctors of chiropractic have been, until recently, kept outside and all but prevented from providing proven, cost-effective and much-needed care to veterans—including many in need of the health care services that doctors of chiropractic are licensed to provide.

A little history: Over the years, representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs have come before the House of Representatives Veterans' Affairs Committee and have insisted that chiropractic benefits are available to veterans and that no bias exists within the VA against the chiropractic profession. Access is becoming greater, and hopefully the bills I am introducing will not be necessary, but for all practical purposes, access to chiropractic care, until very recently, had been non-existent within the VA system. Chiropractic care was so seldom offered to veterans that it could have been fairly said to be a phantom benefit.

Because of the track record of neglect, in recent years Congress enacted 3 separate statutes seeking to ensure veterans access to chiropractic care (Public Law 106–117, Public Law 107–135 and Public Law 108–170). The last of those statutes gave explicit authority to the VA to hire doctors of chiropractic as full-time employees. I'm proud to have worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help advance those initiatives.

In addition, former VA Secretary Anthony Principi released policy directives before his departure regarding the true and full integration of chiropractic care within the VA, and it is beginning to happen, offered in more than 25 medical centers. But we must remain concerned until we see these polices firmly in place and working well in all VA treatment facilities.

As insurance, the enactment of the legislation I propose will guarantee the right of a veteran to obtain this important service at the local VA without the cost and stumbling blocks of going through potentially hostile gatekeepers.

I am proud to re-introduce a bill that former Congressman Jeb Bradley had introduced in the last session of Congress: H.R. 1470, the ''Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act,'' and to reintroduce my bill from the last session: H.R. 1471, the ''Better Access to Chiropractors to Keep Our Veterans Healthy Act (BACK Our Veterans Health Act).''

The first, H.R. 1470, requires that the provision of chiropractic services and care be phased in so that it will be provided at not fewer than 75 medical centers by December 31, 2009 and at all medical centers by December 31, 2011. Within five years, all veterans will have access to chiropractic care if and when they need it.

The second, H.R. 1471, is designed to provide veterans with direct access to chiropractic care at VA hospitals and clinics. The measure directly prohibits discrimination among licensed health care providers by the VA when determining which services a patient needs.

In developing these bills, I have worked closely with chiropractic patients, particularly our veterans, who know the benefits of chiropractic care and bear witness to the positive outcomes and preventative health benefits of chiropractic care. I also was pleased to work with the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), the nation's largest chiropractic organization and the national voice of doctors of chiropractic and their patients. I have been told by the ACA that there are more than 60,000 doctors of chiropractic and in excess of 25 million chiropractic patients across America. Some of these doctors certainly should be directly available to our veterans. Finally, I am a chiropractic patient myself and have been greatly helped by chiropractic care for physical problems caused by an automobile accident. I hate to think that veterans do not have this same opportunity for relief from pain.

A large number of all medical problems in the returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan—42 percent—are musculoskeletal injuries, which are injuries that are often directed to chiropractors. So the timing could not be better for passage of these bills.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting unimpeded access to chiropractic care throughout the veterans' health care system and help enact these measures.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MARION BERRY TRIBUTE TO DONALD LYLE WATERWORTH

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to pay tribute to a dear friend, Donald Lyle Waterworth Sr. Don is a man who exemplifies the definition of public service. He has dedicated many of his God given talents to serving our country and making his community a better place for all. Don Waterworth is an example of what it means to be a true American.

Don is a decorated war veteran, who served our country in both World War II and the Vietnam War. Some of his most notable honors from the United States Air Force include the Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service Award, World War II Service award, and the Victory Medal.

Although Don has dedicated 30 years of his life to serving our country in the military, his commitment to serving others began at a young age. At the tender age of 6, Don volunteered to help his first grade teacher, Ms. Swanson with classroom chores. She later told his mother she had never had a student that was so helpful. After Don finished school, he volunteered with the United States Army and later joined the United States Air Force in 1953.

After he retired from the military, Don continued his service to our country in a different capacity. He immediately became a full-time volunteer and started his own non-profit organization called The Good Earth Association, which focused on restoring old farm machinery. While in Vietnam he organized a group to train troops in aviation skills so they could become pilots once they returned home from the war. While in Taiwan, he created a program to fund operations for crippled and disadvantaged children. The Freemasons recognized Don's lifetime of outstanding civic service and presented him with their most prestigious honor, the Solomon Award.

Despite his busy schedule, Don continues to give his time to a variety of organizations including the American Retired Military Association, Randolph County Food Bank, and The Randolph Chapter of the AARP. For over 20 years, Don has been a member of the local Masonic lodge and an observer for the Randolph County National Weather Service. He also worked for the Red Cross in Randolph County by helping families of dead or wounded soldiers get the resources they needed to care for their loved ones.

He has been married to his wife Elisabeth Waterworth for 35 years. They have 4 children, 1 foster daughter and 9 grandchildren. Don's commitment to our country through his decades of military and volunteer service is a remarkable achievement. I ask my fellow members of Congress to join me celebrating his extraordinary life on his upcoming 80th birthday.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF CLAUDE MOOSE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory Claude Moose. Claude was a longtime resident of San Lorenzo, California and died on February 17, 2007, a day before his 93rd birthday.

He was committed to his family of five children and his wife Betty, a former member of the San Lorenzo School Board. His commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of others also extended to the community in which he lived.

Claude Moose was very active in his community as a Scout leader and was also appreciated for his corny sense of humor. He was an avid golfer into his late 80s and won a hole-in-one contest and many trophies. He taught his daughter, Claudia, to play when she was nine years old and they enjoyed courses from Alameda to Skywest.

Claudia describes her father's golf game—''He may not have hit long, but he hit straight. He was a dead eye on the game, no short games with him.''

Retired for many years, Claude was active in the Friends of the Library-San Lorenzo, serving as the hospitality chair and book sale volunteer. He was a volunteer and active member of the Gray Panthers of Alameda County, Hayward Demos Democratic Club, Fairmont Service League Senior Meals Program, and San Lorenzo Heritage Society and was chaplain of Disabled Veterans Chapter 51 of San Lorenzo.

Claude worked 37 years as a mail carrier and postal clerk at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in Oakland, California. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II for five years in the South Pacific, with his last tour in New Guinea. He received many medals and was a staff sergeant in the 143rd Ordinance-Maintenance Company 77th Division.

The Mooses lived in the same San Lorenzo house for 56 years and have been members of Christ Lutheran Church since its inception 56 years ago. A memorial service will be held on March 1st at Christ Lutheran Church. A military service will be held on March 9th.

My family and staff join the community in paying tribute to Claude Moose and expressing sympathy to Betty and her family on the tremendous loss of this proud father, avid golfer and community activist. He is a model to follow.

WELCOMING KOREA INTERNATIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATION DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, a delegation headed by the Chairman of the Korea International Trade Association (KITA), The Honorable Hee-Beom Lee, will visit Washington during the week of March 12 for a series of meetings with business leaders, government officials, members of this House, the Senate, journalists, and members of the Korean-American community in the metropolitan area. The purpose of the delegation's visit is to commemorate the U.S.-Korea business and trade relationship as well as support the progress of talks designed to lead to a Free Trade Agreement between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Founded in 1946 with 105 members, KITA now represents more than 80,000 Korean businesses seeking to sell their products and services overseas, and in turn buying products and services from foreign countries. KITA, which owns office buildings in Washington and New York City, participates in the World Trade Centers Association, which has more than 300 members in 101 countries. It works closely with virtually all World Trade Centers to promote trade by providing facilities and services on a reciprocal basis.

In addition, to promote bilateral economic cooperation, KITA sponsors the Korea-U.S. Economic Council, the Korea-Japan Industry and Trade Committee, and the Korea-Hong Kong Business Roundtable.

In its efforts to promote freer trade, not only between the U.S. and Korea, but around the world, KITA organizes various functions and events to enhance mutual understanding on trade issues, seeking to resolve private-sector trade disputes through dialogue. It also works together with its overseas counterparts and international economic organizations to provide member firms with opportunities to interact fully with the international community.

Moreover, KITA places special emphasis on developing and maintaining cooperative relationships with overseas trade promotion organizations as well as major international organizations to facilitate trade and investment on a reciprocal basis. These cooperation activities include trade information exchange, organizing trade promotional events, joint research, and provision of facilities.

Barely half a century ago, the Republic of Korea was an impoverished casualty of imperialism and war; it has now grown to be the 12th-largest trading nation in the world. Korea is also the largest trading partner of the United States, with over $70 billion in business between our countries each year. Credit for such remarkable development belongs in large part to the efforts of the Korea International Trade Association.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to extend their good wishes to Chairman Hee-Beom Lee, and welcome the delegation of the Korea International Trade Association as it visits Washington, D.C. I hope you join me in wishing them a pleasant and productive stay in our Nation's Capital.

SALUTING THE BLACK PRESS ON ITS 180TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Ms. KILPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and salute the 80th anniversary of the Black Press, and issue the following statement in support of the National Newspaper Publishers Association:

Whereas, the Black Press has been a main recorder of the history of Black people in America and has courageously told the violent and often painful history of Blacks in their struggles for freedom and equality in America;

Whereas, the first Black newspaper, Freedom's Journal, was published in 1827, in which this abolitionist paper served as a catalytic agent in support of the anti-slavery movement;

Whereas, one of the most famous and effective fighters against the inhumanity of American slavery, Frederick Douglass, published The North Star as a voice of American Blacks crying out in the wilderness of slavery for freedom and justice;

Whereas, Black newspapers led the fight against lynching and other cruel acts against Black people at the turn of the century;

Whereas, Black editors and publishers, as leaders in their communities, joined the NAACP, National Urban League, the Black church, and other organizations in pushing for the Federal Government and the U.S. Congress to take decisive steps to protect and expand the civil rights of African American citizens;

Whereas, reporters of Black newspapers risked their lives in covering the Civil Rights Movement, including the Emmett Till trial, the violent integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, the Freedom Rides, and lunch counter sit-ins, in the South;

Whereas, the Black Press produced a long list of outstanding publishers such as John H. Murphy, Sr., Robert S. Abbott, Robert V. Vann, John H. Johnson, John S. Sengstacke, Claude A. Bennett, Louis Martin, and Dr. Carlton Goodlett;

Whereas, the Black Press continues to serve as a vital source of information about the lifestyle, culture, achievements, activities, and ongoing struggles of African American citizens for equal opportunities in education, employment, housing, and healthcare in order to live a quality life in America's democracy.

I know that my colleagues will join me in giving special recognition to what has become a great American institution, the Black Press, on its 180th anniversary in this year of 2007, especially during its annual celebration of Black Press Week March 14 through March 16. We commend the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the trade group for more than 200 Black newspapers across the country, for organizing an annual observance of Black Press Week. We celebrate the thousands of publishers, editors, and staff of the Black Press who have documented the stories of Black Americans and continue to make sure the world is aware of the African American experience. Finally, we appreciate the struggle, the challenge and the success that is the unique contribution of the Black Press and the NNPA during this week.

HONORING WENDELL W. YOUNG III AND DR. REGINA M. BENJAMIN

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to recognize the remarkable work of Dr. Regina M. Benjamin and Mr. Wendell W. Young III, recipients of the Saint Katharine

Drexel National Justice Award. These two outstanding individuals were recognized by The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for their dedication and commitment to the betterment of others.

Dr. Regina M. Benjamin, a graduate of Xavier University and Morehouse School of Medicine, has dedicated her life to caring for the health and social welfare needs of the people in Bayou La Batre, Alabama. She is committed to enhancing physician access and patient care through her work as a member of local, state and federal boards.

Mr. Wendell W. Young III, as President of the Retail Clerk International Association of Philadelphia Local Union, promoted and created equity and equality for workers. His life has been dedicated to Catholic social teachings.

Madam Speaker, on the occasion of the Feastday of Saint Katherine Drexel, March 3, 2007, we honor both recipients for their tireless efforts to bring peace and justice to their communities. The selfless work of both Mr. Young and Dr. Benjamin has been on the behalf of those in need, a calling that is truly noble. Madam Speaker, these two individuals have taken up the fight for equality, justice and the well-being of all Americans, and for that we are all grateful.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 13, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 14

9:30 a.m.
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the threat of Islamic radicalism to the homeland.
SD–342

10 a.m.
Finance
To hold hearings to examine charting a course for health care moving toward universal coverage.
SD–215

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider S. 624, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide waivers relating to grants for preventive health measures with respect to breast and cervical cancers, Keeping Seniors Safe From Act of 2007, S. 657, to amend the Public Health Service Act to add requirements regarding trauma care, and any pending nominations.
SD–430

Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine reinvigorating the Freedom of Information Act relating to open government.
SD–226

Rules and Administration
To hold hearings to examine S. 223, to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.
SR–301

10:15 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine enhancing patient access and drug safety relating to Prescription Drug User Fees.
SD–430

10:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the Army.
SD–192

2 p.m.
Budget
Business meeting to consider the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for the fiscal year 2008.
SD–608

2:30 p.m.
Foreign Relations
East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine strategies to end the violence relating to extrajudicial killings in the Philippines.
SD–419

Appropriations
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine federal funding for the No Child Left Behind Act.
SD–124

MARCH 15

9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To receive testimony on the posture of the United States Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2008 and the future years Defense Program.
SH–216

Budget
Business meeting to consider the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for the fiscal year 2008.
SD–608

Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Zalmay Khalilzad to be a Representative to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador, and the Representative in the Security Council of the United Nations, and to be a Representative to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during his tenure of service as Representative to the United Nations.
SD–419

Appropriations
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine solvency and reform proposals for the Federal Housing Administration.
SD–138

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine international food assistance.
SD–124

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Gregory B. Cade, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, Department of Homeland Security.
SD–342

Judiciary
Business meeting to consider S. 236, to require reports to Congress on Federal agency use of data mining, S. 261, to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen prohibitions against animal fighting, S. 376, to amend title 18, United States Code, to improve the provisions relating to the carrying of concealed weapons by law enforcement officers, S. 231, to authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012, S. 368, to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the COPS ON THE BEAT grant program, S. 627, to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to improve the health and well-being of maltreated infants and toddlers through the creation of a National Court Teams Resource Center, to assist local Court Teams, and S. Con. Res. 14, commemorating the 85th anniversary of the founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, a leading association for the 1,300,000 United States citizens of Greek ancestry and Philhellenes in the United States and possibility of certain subpoenas in connection with investigation into replacement of United States Attorneys.
SD–226

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard Subcommittee
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the U.S. Coast Guard.
SR–253

Environment and Public Works
Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine water resources needs and the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the Army Corps of Engineers.
SD–406

2 p.m.
Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
SD–138

2:30 p.m.
Appropriations
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of the Army, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior.
SD–192

Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

MARCH 16

10 a.m.
Appropriations
Legislative Branch Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for the fiscal year 2008 for the Government Accountability Office, Government Printing Office, Congressional Budget Office, and the Office of Compliance.
SD–138

MARCH 19

1 p.m.
Appropriations
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the National Institutes of Health.
SH–216

MARCH 20

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Interstate Commerce, Trade, and Tourism Subcommittee
To continue hearings to examine economic and safety concerns relating to promoting travel to America (Part II).
SR–253
Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine combating war profiteering, focusing on investigating and prosecuting contracting fraud and abuse in Iraq.
SD–226
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Retirement and Aging Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the state of Alzheimer's disease research 100 years later.
SH–216

2:30 p.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
National Parks Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine S. 126, to modify the boundary of Mesa Verde National Park, S. 257, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of establishing the Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area in the States of Washington and Oregon, S. 289, to establish the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, S. 443, to establish the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado, S. 444, to establish the South Park National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado, S. 500, to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of the National Museum of the American Latino to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, H.R.512, to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of the National Museum of the American Latino to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, S. 637, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Chattahoochee Trace National Heritage Corridor in Alabama and Georgia, S. 817, to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to provide additional authorizations for certain National heritage Areas, and for other proposes; and S. Con. Res. 6, expressing the sense of Congress that the National Museum of Wildlife Art, located in Jackson, Wyoming, should be designated as the ''National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States''.
SD–366
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Investigations Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine medicare doctors who cheat on their taxes.
SD–342
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Innovation Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine energy innovation.
SR–253

MARCH 21

10 a.m.
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine assessing the effectiveness of the current United States sanctions on Iran relating to minimizing potential threats from Iran.
SD–538

MARCH 26

2 p.m.
Armed Services
Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee
To receive a briefing on the reorganization of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for policy.
SR–232A
Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the progress of the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme and to receive information on lessons learned for policymakers who want to better understand how a market-based trading program could operate efficiently and effectively in the United States.
SD–G50

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.
Judiciary
To hold oversight hearings to examine the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
SH–216
Veterans' Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense cooperation and collaboration, focusing on health care issues.
SR–418

MARCH 28

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the future of the Coast Guard Dive Program.
SR–253

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Space, Aeronautics, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine transitioning to a next generation Human Space Flight System.
SR–253

MARCH 29

9:30 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of AMVETS, Ex-POWs, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and Fleet Reserve Association.
SD–106

APRIL 11

10 a.m.
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the availability and affordability of property and casualty insurance in the Gulf Coast and other coastal regions.
SD–538

CANCELLATIONS

MARCH 14

9:30 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense cooperation and collaboration, focusing on education and training.
SR–418

MARCH 15

8:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To receive a closed briefing on Iraq.
S–407, Capitol

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 14

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Innovation Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine technology solutions for climate change.
SR–253

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2991–S3012

Measures Introduced: Nine bills were introduced, as follows: S. 838–846. **Page S3000**

Measures Considered:

Iraq Resolution: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S.J. Res. 9, to revise United States policy on Iraq. **Page S3011**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of S.J. Res. 9, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, March 14, 2007. **Page S3011**

Subsequently, the motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution was withdrawn. **Page S3011**

Preserving United States Attorney Independence Act: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 214, to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to preserve the independence of United States attorneys. **Pages S3011–12**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 214, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, March 14, 2007. **Page S3011**

Subsequently, the motion to proceed to the consideration of the bill was withdrawn. **Page S3012**

Improving America's Security by Implementing Unfinished Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 11 a.m., on Tuesday, March 13, 2007, Senate resume consideration of S. 4, to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security; that the time until 11:45 a.m., be for debate with respect to Coburn Amendment No. 294 (to Amendment No. 275), to provide that the provisions of the Act shall cease to have any force or effect on and after December 31, 2012, to ensure congressional review and oversight of the Act, and Coburn Amendment No. 325 (to Amendment No. 275), to ensure the fiscal integrity of grants awarded by the Department of Homeland Security, and that the time run concurrently and be equally divided and controlled between Senators Lieberman and Coburn, or their designees; that at 11:45 a.m., Senate vote on, or in relation to, Coburn Amendment No. 294 (listed above), to be followed by a vote on, or in relation to Amendment No. 325 (listed above), regardless of the outcome of the first vote; that there be 2 minutes of debate between the votes, equally divided and controlled. **Page S3012**

Appointments:

Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d–276g, as amended, appointed the following Senator as Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group conference during the 110th Congress: Senator Klobuchar. **Page S3012**

U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276n, as amended, appointed the following Senator as Chairman of the U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group conference during the 110th Congress: Senator Inouye. **Page S3012**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

William Herbert Heyman, of New York, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2007 vice Deborah Doyle McWhinney, term expired.

William Herbert Heyman, of New York, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2010.

Anne Cahn, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2009.

Bruce P. Jackson, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United

States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2011.

Kathleen Martinez, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2011.

George E. Moose, of Colorado, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2009.

Jeremy A. Rabkin, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2009.

Dale Cabaniss, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 29, 2012.

Carol Waller Pope, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for the term of five years expiring July 1, 2009.

1 Army nomination in the rank of general.

1 Marine Corps nomination in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Navy. **Page S3012**

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

William Herbert Heyman, of New York, to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation for a term expiring December 31, 2008, which was sent to the Senate on January 29, 2007. **Page S3012**

Messages From the House: **Page S3000**

Messages Referred: **Page S3000**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S3000–01**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S3001–11**

Additional Statements: **Page S2999**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 2:30 p.m., and adjourned at 6:05 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 13, 2007. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3012.)

Committee Meetings

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 17 public bills, H.R. 1468–1484; 1 private bill, H.R. 1485; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 90; and H. Res. 236–238 were introduced. **Pages H2435–36**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2436–37**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1309, to promote openness in Government by strengthening section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), with amendments (H. Rept. 110–45);

H.R. 1045, to designate the Federal building located at 210 Walnut Street in Des Moines, Iowa, as the "Neal Smith Federal Building" (H. Rept. 110–46);

Supplemental report on H.R. 985, to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify which disclosures of information are protected from prohibited personnel practices; to require a statement in nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements to the effect that such policies, forms, and agreements are consistent with certain disclosure protections (H. Rept. 110–42, Pt. 2); and

H.R. 1362, to reform acquisition practices of the Federal Government, with an amendment (H. Rept. 110–47, Pt. 1). **Page H2435**

Speaker Pro Tempore: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Shea-Porter to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2403**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:50 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H2405**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Amending the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991: H.R. 1068, amended, to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991; **Pages H2406–08**

Energy Technology Transfer Act: H.R. 85, to provide for the establishment of centers to encourage demonstration and commercial application of advanced energy methods and technologies, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 395 yeas to 1 nay, Roll No. 136; **Pages H2408–10, H2418–19**

Reauthorizing the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988: H.R. 1126, to reauthorize the Steel and

Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988; **Pages H2411–12**

Commending the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the occasion of their 95th anniversary: H. Res. 136, to commend the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the occasion of their 95th anniversary, for providing quality age-appropriate experiences that prepare girls to become the leaders of tomorrow and for raising issues important to girls, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 395 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 137; **Pages H2412–14, H2419**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day: H. Res. 89, to express the sense of the House of Representatives that a day should be established as Dutch-American Friendship Day to celebrate the historic ties of the United States and the Netherlands, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 391 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 138; and **Pages H2414–16, H2419–20**

Recognizing the significance of Black History Month: H. Res. 198, to recognize the significance of Black History Month. **Pages H2416–18**

Recess: The House recessed at 3:23 p.m. and reconvened at 6:35 p.m. **Page H2418**

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in honor of Captain William Anderson, former Member of Congress. **Page H2419**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Blackburn wherein she resigned from the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Financial Services pending her appointment to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. **Page H2420**

Supplemental Report: Agreed that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform have until midnight on March 12th to file a supplemental report on H.R. 985, to amend title 5, United States Code, to clarify which disclosures of information are protected from prohibited personnel practices; to require a statement in nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements to the effect that such policies, forms, and agreements are consistent with certain disclosure protections. **Page H2420**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 236, removing Representative Burton from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and electing the following Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives: Committee on Education and Labor: Representative Heller (NV), to rank immediately after Representative Walberg; Committee on Energy and Commerce: Representative Blackburn. **Pages H2420–21**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2418–19, H2419, H2419–20. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12:30 p.m. and adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Committee Meetings

LABOR, HHS, EDUCATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies held a hearing on the Secretary of Education. Testimony was heard from Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education.

SELECT INTELLIGENCE OVERSIGHT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Select Intelligence Oversight met in executive session to hold a hearing on the CIA Budget. Testimony was heard from departmental witnesses.

GSE REFORM—LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government Sponsored Enterprises held a hearing entitled ''Legislative Proposals on GSE Reform.'' Testimony was heard from John R. Price, President and CEO, Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, Federal Housing Finance Board; and public witnesses.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the Environmental Protection Agency, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of James R. Kunder, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator, Douglas Menarchik, of Texas, to be an Assistant Administrator, Paul J. Bonicelli, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator, and Katherine Almquist, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the United States Agency for International Development, Margrethe Lundsager, of Virginia, to be United States Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund, Eli Whitney Debevoise II, of Maryland, to be United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Curtis S.

Chin, of New York, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador, 3 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold joint hearings with House Committee on Education and Labor to examine improving No Child Left Behind to close the achievement gap, relating to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorzation, 9:30 a.m., 2175 RHOB.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, to hold hearings to examine United States international efforts to secure radiological materials, focusing on Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission efforts to secure radiological materials through the International Atomic Energy Agency and the other multilateral organizations, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Benjamin Hale Settle, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington, Frederick J. Kapala, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, and Halil Suleyman Ozerden, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry, hearing to review the federal food stamp program and its impact on children's health, 10 a.m., 1302 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations,, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, on Secretary of Agriculture, 2 p.m., 2362A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, on NASA, 10 a.m., 2362A Rayburn and 2 p.m., 2362B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 10 a.m., 2362B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, on Secret Service, 10 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, on Arts Panel, 10:30 a.m., on the Social and Economic Status of Native Americans, 1:30 p.m., and on Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of the Special Trustee, 2 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, on Department of Education: Elementary and Secondary Education, and Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, on Capitol Visitor Center, 1:30 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans' Affairs, and Related Agencies, on Navy Budget, 9:30 and a hearing on Veterans' Claims Process, 1 p.m., H–143 Capitol.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, on Millenium Challenge Account, 2 p.m., 2358 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, on Status of Public Housing and HOPE VI, 10 a.m., 2358 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, to mark up H.R. 1362, Accountability in Contracting Act, 8:30 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Personnel, hearing on overview of military resale programs, 10 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing on the adequacy of the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Authorization Budget Request to meet readiness needs, 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 477, Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act; H.R. 727, Trauma Care Systems Planning and Development Act of 2007; H.R. 545, Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007; H.R. 1132, National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2007; and H.R. 493, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007, 3 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "Post Katrina Health Care: Continuing Concerns and Immediate Needs in the New Orleans Region," 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, hearing entitled "Hedge Funds and Systemic Risk in the Financial Markets," 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, hearing on Tibet: Status of the Sino-Tibetan Dialogue, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, hearing on Haiti's Development Needs, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, to mark up H.R. 1401, Rail and Public Transportation Security Act of 2007, 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans, hearing on the following bills: H.R. 50, Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2007; and H.R. 465, Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2007, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Reform, to consider H.R. 1433, to provide for the treatment of the District of Columbia as a Congressional district for the purposes of representation in the House of Representatives, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, to consider H.R. 985, Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2007, 3:30 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science and Technology, hearing on Science and Technology Leadership in a 21st Century Global Economy, 1 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, hearing on U.S./Mexican Trucking: Safety and the Cross Border Demonstration Project," 1 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 797, Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act; and H.R. 1284, Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007; followed by a hearing on the Impact of OIF/OEF on the VA Claims Process, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Health, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 612, Returning Servicemember VA Healthcare Insurance Act of 2007; and H.R. 327, Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, 1:30 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing on Katrina Redevelopment Tax Issues, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, executive, hearing on Facilities and Infrastructures, 2 p.m., H–405 Capitol.

Joint Meetings

Joint Hearing: Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, to hold joint hearings with House Committee on Education and Labor to examine improving No Child Left Behind to close the achievement gap, relating to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization, 9:30 a.m., 2175 RHOB.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 13

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 60 minutes), Senate will resume consideration of S. 4, Improving America's Security by Implementing Unfinished Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act, and after a period of debate, vote on, or in relation to Coburn Amendment No. 294 (to Amendment No. 275) and Coburn Amendment No. 325 (to Amendment No. 275).

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

10:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 13

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of the following suspensions: (1) H.R. 1003—To amend the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 to reauthorize the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy; (2) H. Res. 107—Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Israeli soldiers held captive by Hamas and Hezbollah; (3) H. Res. 64—Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Bangladesh should immediately drop all pending charges against Bangladeshi journalist Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury; (4) H. Res. 228—Recognizing the 186th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating Greek and American Democracy; (5) H. Res. 230—Recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome signed on March 25, 1957; (6) H. Res. 222—Expressing the support of the House of Representatives for the Good Friday Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998; (7) H.R. 478—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''; (8) H.R. 429—To designate the United States courthouse located at 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York, as the ''Hugh L. Carey United States Courthouse''; (9) H.R. 430—To designate the United States bankruptcy courthouse located at 271 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York, as the ''Conrad Duberstein United States Bankruptcy Courthouse''; and (10) H.R. 1045—To designate the Federal building located at 210 Walnut Street in Des Moines, Iowa, as the ''Neal Smith Federal Building''.

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