

## IRAQ WAR SUPPLEMENTAL BILL

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the issue of the Iraqi supplemental that we are currently about to redo.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the President in his regional message indicated that the bill "is loaded with billions of dollars in nonemergency spending that has nothing to do with fighting the war on terror." He went on to say that Congress should debate these spending measures on their own merits and not as a part of an emergency funding bill for our troops.

Mr. Speaker, for 19 months now, we have been trying to get this administration to pay attention to the people on the gulf coast. We have for weeks and months been trying to get the President to support our efforts to make sure that many of the families and friends of our troops, who have been affected in Louisiana, Mississippi, and even in Florida and Texas by this catastrophic event perpetrated by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, get help. Today, we have not been able to get the President to support our efforts as we have tried to address these emergencies.

And so, Mr. Speaker, since we are doing an emergency spending bill, we thought it very appropriate for us to do both international and domestic emergencies all in one piece of legislation. Consequently, we have moved in this legislation to address issues such as the East and West Bank Levee Protection and Coastal Restoration System in New Orleans and the surrounding parishes by inserting into this legislation \$1.3 billion. We have added another \$30 million for K-12 education recruitment assistance, another \$30 million for higher education assistance.

I plan to be in Baton Rouge next week to address Southern University's commencement exercises. I would hope that, as I go there, I can carry them more than mere promises to get them to feeling, once again, that we in this body are paying attention to and responding to the problems that they are suffering, many of them having lost a full year out of their educational pursuits.

I would hope that those children in K through 12 can begin to feel that here in this Congress, with this emergency supplemental, that we are going to respond to them as well.

And then there is the Community Disaster Loan Forgiveness Program. We have put language in this bill to address that issue, \$4.3 billion for FEMA disaster recovery grants. These State and local grants will be waived, meaning that the Federal Government will be able to finance 100 percent of the grants.

We have been trying for a long time now to get this administration to treat the victims of Katrina, Rita and Wilma

in the same way we treated disasters after 9/11 in New York, the same way we treated the earthquakes in California, the same way we treated the Hurricane Andrew down in Florida some years ago and Hurricane Anika out in Hawaii. In each one of those instances, we waived matching requirements. In this instance, we have not. And so we want, in this administration, to waive those requirements of the Stafford Act, the matching requirements, so that we can begin to address these emergencies.

There are other emergencies that we plan to address here, and that is the Children's Health Insurance Program. We think, with 14 States out of money, another 3 States expected to be out of money by September 1, it is an emergency for the children in those 17 States, and I would hope that when we put the final bill together to send back to the President, we will address these emergencies that we have with our people here at home.

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## REPUBLICAN STUDY GROUP

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minority Leader for affording not only myself, but other members of the Republican Study Committee, the House conservative caucus on the Republican side of the aisle, the opportunity to take advantage of these opportunities on the House floor periodically in the form of a Special Order.

While I come to the floor today with the objective, Mr. Speaker, of addressing this week's momentous events concerning the President's second veto in the history of this administration and the war supplemental bill, I wanted to also speak about an issue that House conservatives have been heard on and have been active on in the course of this week, and it has to do with today's passage, by a vote of 237-180, of H.R. 1592, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. This legislation passed the House today, but not without the strenuous opposition of both the Republican Study Committee, and virtually all of its members who represented a lion's share of the 180 Members who opposed this legislation.

And to lead is to be misunderstood. And it is very likely, Mr. Speaker, that both yourself and maybe others that might be looking in would question why anyone would oppose hate crimes legislation. And I thought I might, before I move on to the attendant topic of the day, address the concerns that House conservatives had with this legislation and why, last night, with the leadership of our caucus chairman, JEB HENSARLING of Texas, and with the support of myself as a former chairman of

our caucus, Mrs. SUE MYRICK of North Carolina, a former chairman of our conference, and JOHN SHADEGG of Arizona, we urged the President of the United States to issue a veto threat of this hate crimes legislation, which he did so earlier today by way of a statement of administration policy.

So let me speak to our concerns about this bill before I move on to the topic of the Iraq supplemental. Thomas Jefferson said, famously, "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative power of government reach actions only, and not opinions," Jefferson went on to say, "I contemplate with sovereign reverence that the act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state."

Again, Thomas Jefferson, framing, as perhaps only he in American history could, the issue that grounded conservative concern in the hate crimes legislation today, that legislative powers of government should reach actions only and not opinions, and then reflected on that as the core central logic behind the first amendment protections of the freedom of religion.

In the case of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, we did not meet that standard today, Mr. Speaker. I believe this legislation was bad public policy, and unnecessary, and many House conservatives in the Republican Study Committee agreed.

Violent attacks on people or property are already illegal, regardless of the motive behind them. And there is no evidence presented on the floor today or before the Judiciary Committee, on which I serve, that underlying violent crimes at issue are not already being fully and aggressively prosecuted in the States. Therefore, hate crimes laws truly serve no practical purpose and instead serve to penalize people for thoughts, for belief, for opinions.

Now, let's grant the point. Some thoughts, beliefs and opinions, like racism or sexism are abhorrent, and I disdain them and condemn them. However, hate crimes bills, as the one we passed today, are broad enough also to include legitimate beliefs, and protecting the rights of freedom and speech and religion must be paramount in cases like the bill we consider today.

The first amendment to the Constitution provides that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

Now, America was founded on the notion that the government should not interfere with the religious practices of its citizens. Constitutional protections for the free exercise of religion are at the very core of the American experiment in democracy.