United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MAY 7, 2007 No. 74

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FILNER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 7, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BOB FILNER 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.

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 31 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. ALTMIRE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God, throughout our Nation's history, You have raised up men and women who have seen Your goodness in the beauty of nature and understand Your essential purpose in the unfolding of human events.

Henry Thoreau was an early American hero, and possibly a mystic, who wrote an account of his 2 years spent in quiet solitude at Walden Pond. What he wrote about early America became a classic, but he was an American classic himself.

Thoreau embodied the early spirit of nonconformity in breaking bonds of social hypocrisy. By taking time to seek spiritual truth, he wrapped himself in the beauty of nature and sought escape from a world in which ''the mass of people lead lives of quiet desperation.''

He wrote: ''I went to the woods because I wanted to live deliberately, to confront the essential facts of life and see if I could not learn what life had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.''

Lord, awaken America today. Lift the Nation above hypocrisy and enable its people to face the essentials of government, the essentials of religious faith and the power of transformative love and daily service to others.

Renew in us hope, O Lord, so with Thoreau we might say: We live ''with an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep.'' 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 American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 4, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 4, 2007, at 10:48 a.m.:

Reappointments:

President's Export Council (1)

Appointments:

President's Export Council (2)

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 7, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of

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Representatives, I herewith designate Ms. Deborah M. Spriggs, Deputy Clerk, and Mr. Jorge E. Sorensen, Deputy Clerk, to Sign any and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which they would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

These designations shall remain in effect for the 110th Congress or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

GET THERE FIRSTEST WITH THE MOSTEST

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, does anybody realize there's a war going on out there in the desert sands of Iraq and the rough mountains of Afghanistan? Apparently not, or Congress would be taking care of our troops.

Mr. Speaker, the troops will be out of funds to carry the fight to the enemy by the end of June. So where's the money?

Spending money is what Congress does. Why hasn't this body provided the funds for our troops and equipment and for more personnel?

This is an emergency. Delaying will put our troops at risk. We should authorize the funds now; send equipment now and, if needed, send more troops.

The American people expect our military to do their duty. Well, the American people expect us to do ours as well.

Congress needs to quit talking about supporting the troops and put money where our mouths seem to be.

Nathan Bedford Forrest, successful Confederate general, said it best about winning and victory and the means to do so. He said: ''Get there firstest with the mostest.''

Congress needs to send the generals the mostest, Mr. Speaker, needs to send equipment and personnel that is needed. Doing this will help our mission in spite of the Congressional Surrender Group's desire to retreat and quit.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT-ELECT NICOLAS SARKOZY

(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, I rise today to congratulate President-elect Nicolas Sarkozy, who the state newspaper has recognized as a ''blunt and uncompromising pro-American conservative.''

As a person of French heritage, I welcome this change of course in France. We appreciate that France was our first ally in the American Revolution, as symbolized by the portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette here in the Chamber. France is a major investor in America, and I am grateful the midlands of South Carolina is home to three Michelin plants.

America and France have a common enemy in the global war on terrorism, and we have mutually beneficial goals of economic development for our citizens. The French Caucus in Congress looks forward to promoting our vibrant partnership.

The election of Nicolas Sarkozy is a welcomed change to restore the warm relationship America desires with France.

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

COMMUNICATION FROM STAFF MEMBER OF HON. DAVID PRICE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Dave Russell, District Liaison, Office of the Honorable DAVID PRICE, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a judicial subpoena for trial testimony issued by the Orange County, North Carolina District Court.

After consulting with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

DAVE RUSSELL,
District Liaison.

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.

RECOGNIZING AND WELCOMING THE LEADERS OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 355) recognizing and welcoming the leaders of the Pacific Islands to Washington, D.C., and commending the East-West Center for hosting the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 355

Whereas the United States is a Pacific nation;

Whereas the East-West Center, as established by the United States Congress in 1960, contributes to a peaceful, prosperous, and just Asia Pacific community by conducting cooperative research, education, and dialogue programs on critical issues of common concern to the Asia Pacific region and the United States;

Whereas the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders was created in 1980 at the East-West Center, which sponsors and supports this regional institution through its Pacific Islands Development Program;

Whereas the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders is the most broadly-based regional cooperation institution in the Pacific, including 20 leaders from both independent Pacific island nations and other Pacific governments;

Whereas for the first the time in its history, through the cooperation of the East-West Center, the Department of State, and Congress, the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders is convening May 7, 2007, through May 9, 2007, in Washington, D.C.;

Whereas the United States has maintained deep and enduring relations with the peoples of the Pacific islands during times of peace and war and is linked to the Pacific not only through geography but also through common interest and values;

Whereas the governments of the Pacific Islands Region are key partners with the United States in combating terrorism in all its forms;

Whereas the United States and the Pacific island nations can enhance their cooperation in many other areas, including mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships, tourism, environmental protection, maintenance of fisheries, and other maritime resources, addressing climate change, democracy and good governance, and combating the spread of infectious diseases; and

Whereas there are increasing numbers of Americans of Pacific islander ancestry making myriad contributions to America's dynamism and diversity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes and welcomes the leaders of the Pacific Islands to Washington, D.C.; and

(2) commends the East-West Center for hosting the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

I would like to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Texas, for his assistance in managing this important legislation now before our colleagues.

I would also like to thank our distinguished chairman of the House Foreign

Affairs Committee, Mr. TOM LANTOS, for his support of this resolution which recognizes and welcomes the leaders of the Pacific Island nations to Washington, D.C., and certainly commends the East-West Center for hosting the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders.

The Pacific Island Conference of Leaders represents some 14 island nations, three French territories and three U.S. territories, including American Samoa. Each year these leaders meet at the East-West Center in Honolulu; but for the first time this year, this conference is being held here in our Nation's Capital.

Because this is a significant occasion, I want to thank our distinguished senior ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, as well as the ranking minority member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and the Global Environment, my good friend Mr. MANZULLO, for their support of this resolution.

I also thank the 24 Members, our distinguished colleagues, who joined us in cosponsoring this historic resolution, including Congresswoman MADELEINE BORDALLO of Guam. I also commend members of the Hawaii congressional delegation, Senator DANIEL INOUYE, Senator DANIEL AKAKA, Congressman NEIL ABERCROMBIE and Congresswoman MAZIE HIRONO, for their leadership in support of this legislation and other events and activities that will make the visit of our Pacific Island Leaders to Washington more meaningful and productive.

I especially want to thank also Governor Linda Lingle of the State of Hawaii for her support and for her cohosting one of the important events that have been featured here while the guests are here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to commend Dr. Charles Morrison, president of the East-West Center and members of his staff, Dr. Sitiveni Halapua, and Dr. Gerard Finin for their hard work in arranging meetings that are being held right now, as I speak, with officials of the U.S. Department of State and other agencies of the Federal Government.

I want to especially thank our Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, for taking the time from her busy schedule to meet with our guests from the Pacific, and also Assistant Secretary of State, Chris Hill, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Glyn Davies, and their staffs for arranging appropriate meetings with other officials representing the various agencies of the administration.

Mr. Speaker, this is truly a historical day in our Nation's Capital. With the exception of Australia and New Zealand, this is the first time in our country's history that this number of leaders representing the Pacific region are here as a group to meet with us and to discuss issues that are mutually important to them, as well as to us.

It was only in the last half century that our Nation was engaged in one of the bloodiest wars ever fought in the Pacific. World War II was fought in two fronts, one in Europe and the other in the Pacific. In the islands of the Solomons, where Guadalcanal, as some of you may have heard, is located in the Pacific, so are the Marshall Islands, the islands of Samoa, the Philippines, Papua, New Guinea, Palau, Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Tarawa, Midway, Borneo, Okinawa, Iwo Jima and several others. People of the Pacific played critical roles in U.S. efforts to fight Japanese military forces in response to the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

After World War II, with the exception of Guam, the United States unilaterally declared the rest of Micronesia as a strategic trust, which meant that these islands were placed under the jurisdiction and protection of the United States.

But a national debate also began as a result of the devastation and the loss of some 200,000 lives when we dropped two atom bombs by our military that conducted this arrangement, where two atom bombs were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

While the atom bombs brought an immediate end to World War II in the Pacific, scientists and political leaders in our country debated whether or not nuclear energy was to be used for military or peaceful purposes.

□ 1415

Although the military won its bid to conduct a nuclear testing program, the question was, where are we going to conduct the testing? Since it was obviously too dangerous to explode atomic bombs in any of the States in the continental United States, it was determined that a place far and away was needed, and thus the U.S. military command chose the Marshall Islands as the place to conduct our nuclear testing program.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that I am not sure if my colleagues are aware of the fact that the U.S. exploded some 67 nuclear bombs in the Marshall Islands. This also included the explosion of the first hydrogen bomb ever in the history of the world. In layman's terms, you must first explode an atomic bomb as a trigger to explode a hydrogen bomb. The hydrogen bomb that the U.S. exploded in the Marshall Islands in 1954 was known as the Bravo Shot, and it was measured as a 15-megaton nuclear device, a thousand times more powerful than the atom bombs we dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I submit to my colleagues in the House, at the height of the Cold War, the people of the Marshall Islands made tremendous sacrifices of their properties and, above all, of themselves after being exposed to nuclear radiation. To this day, our government, Mr. Speaker, with all its honor and glory, has not made good our promises to properly compensate these people for the loss of their properties and to provide adequate medical care, especially to those who were directly exposed to nuclear radiation as a result of our nuclear testing program.

In the near future, I will be proposing a bill that will address the needs of the people of the Marshall Islands as a result of our nuclear testing program, and I am hopeful that my colleagues will support me in this effort.

Some of my colleagues have asked me, why should the United States take an interest in these small islands out there in the middle of the Pacific? I need not repeat myself on the importance of these islands during World War II, and I have just shared with my colleagues the tremendous sacrifices the leaders and the people of the Marshall Islands made for the success of our nuclear testing program. I have also pointed out the shameful neglect on the part of our Nation to properly address the property rights and health care needs of these people who were exposed. All of them were exposed to nuclear radiation.

Having said this, I want to reemphasize the Pacific Islands were valuable to our Nation during World War II, and, believe me, these nations will be valuable to us again in the future. We fool ourselves if we believe we do not need allies in a volatile region that covers one-third of the world's surface.

We need the Pacific Island nations as they need us. The people of the Pacific nations do not want handouts, but they want equal treatment, respect, and economic assistance will be beneficial to them as well as to us. The seabed minerals within the exclusive economic zones of these island nations are worth hundreds of billions of dollars, but their potential use is priceless if together we can find ways to harness these resources. The same can be said of their fisheries and marine resources, which will continue to be an inestimable worth as the world struggles to feed a growing population.

There are many other areas in which we can work together if we can begin to establish even a USAID program in the Pacific region. As chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, I look forward to working with my colleagues to bring about needed and necessary changes in our current relations with our Pacific Island neighbors.

On this historic occasion, Mr. Speaker, I also welcome these leaders to our Nation's Capital, and I urge my colleagues to support this proposed legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from American Samoa for sponsorship of this resolution and Mr. LANTOS, the chairman, and the ranking member from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Today I rise to offer my endorsement of a resolution that recognizes the enduring ties of the United States and

the Pacific Island nations. Our Nation's links with the Pacific Islands extend back to the earliest days of the American Republic, when New England whalers, symbolized by Captain Ahab, sailed in the South Pacific. In those early days, clipper ships also set sail from American ports across the Pacific in pursuit of the China trade. American missionaries soon followed, journeying to the Pacific Islands to deepen the cultural and religious ties between our two peoples.

Our bonds to our Pacific neighbors have been further enhanced by their ethnic and historic links to our 50th State, Hawaii, America's gateway to the Pacific.

When war came to the Pacific at Pearl Harbor on that day of infamy, December 7, 1941, the peoples of the Pacific joined the United States in turning back the threat of the invader. It was two Solomon Islanders who bravely carried a coconut hidden in a canoe through enemy lines with the immortal words: ''Commander . . . native knows position . . . he can pilot . . . 11 alive . . . need small boat . . . Kennedy.''

The rescue of the crew of PT–109, including a future President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, is remembered as one of the great epic stories of the war in the Pacific.

In the six decades since the end of that war, our diplomatic, commercial and cultural ties have grown steadily with our Pacific neighbors. One legacy of the American President rescued by the Pacific Islanders has been the Peace Corps, which has sent volunteers to work together with the peoples of the Pacific for the past 40 years.

The East-West Center in Hawaii, established by the United States Congress in 1960, has been a vital source for cultural and academic exchange and for a dialogue on critical issues of mutual concern. The center has played a pivotal role in cementing the ties between the peoples of the United States and the peoples of the Pacific Islands. I commend the center for hosting the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders here in Washington, D.C. Therefore, I welcome the opportunity to offer my strong and enthusiastic support for House Resolution 355, welcoming America's good friends, the leaders of the Pacific Islands, to Washington, D.C.

I offer them and the people of the Pacific a warm welcome of ''aloha.''

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

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

I want to thank and commend my good friend, the gentleman from Texas, for a most eloquent statement and observations in terms of our relationship with these Pacific Island nations.

I recall years ago we took a congressional delegation. At that time, the chairman of our Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman Steve Solarz from New York; Congressman Bob Dornan from California; and myself. And we visited the various island nations and found out that we have become somewhat of a nation totally neglectful of our efforts to establish good relations with these island nations.

I recall we visited the Solomon Islands and specifically the Guadalcanal that most Americans have heard in the news of World War II, which was where some of the bloodiest battles were fought there by the Marines against Japanese forces. And in our efforts in trying to find out what can we do on behalf of our country in terms of how we can express a sense of token appreciation to the people of the Solomon Islands for the support they gave us during the famous battles that we had to endure during the war there in Guadalcanal. And in doing so, we came back and submitted to the Congress a proposal that what would be a good gesture on behalf of the people of America would be to build a parliamentary building for the Solomon Islands government. And in doing so, we provided the funding, and I was privileged and honored to accompany the good Senator from Rhode Island, Senator Chafee. And we went over to the Solomon Islands to dedicate this new parliamentary building and found out that Senator Chafee was a 19-year-old Marine fighting enemy forces in Guadalcanal, and it was quite a statement and a very moving experience that I had in noticing one of our national leaders, the great Senator from Rhode Island, revisited Guadalcanal where this battle was fought. And he was there as a 19-year-old Marine. And we did this, and the people of the Solomon Islands were very grateful that we were able to build this new parliamentary building as a token, as a gift, from the people of the United States to commemorate and to remember the tremendous sacrifices not only that our soldiers and our Marines made on these islands but also the support that the people of the Solomon Islands provided us in the war effort.

I also want to commend the Congress. I don't know if our colleagues are aware of the fact that, in 1960, Congress enacted special legislation to establish the East-West Center. And it was a tremendous effort to see what we could do to establish good relations between the East and the Asian countries and that of our own country. And that was the very purpose. To establish exchanges and to establish forums and symposiums to allow the leaders of the nations of Asia and the Pacific region to meet together with our leaders and to see if we could resolve some of the issues and problems confronting the region as well as our own Nation.

So with that, I wanted to just share those two points with our colleagues in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to my good friend, the gentlewoman from the Territory of Guam (Ms. BORDALLO).

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 355, a resolution recognizing and welcoming the leaders of the Pacific Islands to Washington, D.C., and commending the East-West Center for hosting the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.

I am encouraged by the strong support that Congress continues to display toward promoting closer political, economic and cultural ties among the islands and the countries of the Pacific region. This resolution is evidence of the East-West Center's excellent work toward facilitating the achievement of those goals.

We have the unique honor this week of hosting a State visit by the Queen of England. She and her husband, Prince Phillip, began their 6-day trip to the United States in Virginia last week. Notably, the Queen addressed the State's General Assembly and visited Jamestown, which is observing the 400th anniversary of the founding of the first permanent English settlement in the Americas.

Indeed, Great Britain and the United States enjoy close, special relations established in revolution, forged in world wars and tempered by peace and economic growth. This is a relationship to cherish. But let us not forget that the United States is fortunate to have formed special relationships elsewhere in the world. Those relationships are similarly important, especially those that we share with the islands of the Pacific region.

Like with Great Britain, the United States shares an ocean with its friends in the Pacific. But we also share common histories, culture and, among other things, a great desire for peace and economic security and prosperity that forge indelible bonds between our peoples. House Resolution 355 recognizes this. The resolution notes the United States is a Pacific nation, and I could not agree more wholeheartedly and firmly. The gaze of the United States must be west. The Pacific Century is undoubtedly upon us, and we are fortunate to have such strong friendships and alliances established there.

The eighth meeting of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders, which will occur this week in Washington, D.C., is evidence of the strong relationship that exists between the United States and the islands of the Pacific. The Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders, hosted by the East-West Center with the support of the Department of State, is comprised of 20 heads of government from the Pacific Islands region and meets once every 3 years. The conference members include: American Samoa, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, Hawaii, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

Notably, this is the first time the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders has been held in Washington, and that the commitment of the United States to the conference could not be stronger or broader is encouraging. Very encouraging.

□ 1430

Interagency delegations to the conference this week will include representatives from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the United States Agency for International Development, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the United States Coast Guard, the Peace Corps and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. These representatives' participation during the conference will further enhance the already excellent work on the part of their departments and agencies within the region.

Mr. Speaker, we owe special thanks to the East-West Center for its efforts to organize this event. The East-West Center is an education and research organization established by the United States Congress in 1960 in order to strengthen relations and understandings achieved between the United States and the peoples and the countries of Asia and the Pacific.

As noted in House Resolution 355, the center successfully contributes to a peaceful, a prosperous and a just Asia-Pacific community by serving as a vigorous hub for cooperative research, education and dialogue on critical issues of common concern to the Asia-Pacific region and the United States.

The East-West Center has established for itself a strong reputation as an ideal forum for emerging leaders and regional specialists to discuss issues and strengthen relations with their colleagues, and I strongly support their ongoing efforts in this regard.

Representing Guam at the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders will be the Honorable Felix Camacho, the Governor of Guam, and accompanying him will be his wife, our first lady of Guam, Joann Camacho. I welcome them to our Nation's capital and wish them the best during their discussions with their colleagues from the region.

Guam, both the United States territory and a Pacific Island, is a leader in the region economically, politically and in terms of regional security. Guam, and the perspective of its people, will continue to have a unique and influential role in the region in the years to come as a result of the changing posture of the United States military in the Asia-Pacific region and the increased economic activity that is planned for the island in the coming years. I sincerely hope that the relationship that Guam shares with its Pacific Island partners will grow stronger during this period.

And, finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and recognize our distinguished colleague from American Samoa, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for his leadership as chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, and the Global Environment. We are all indebted to him for his command of the issues of concern to our allies in the Pacific and for his leadership in strengthening United States foreign defense and economic policy.

I urge adoption of House Resolution 355.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to once again commend the gentleman from American Samoa for not only bringing forth this resolution, but his work in educating the American public on the Pacific Islands and the need for cooperation with the United States and the Pacific Islands.

He mentioned the Solomon Islands during World War II. The Solomon Islands, among many other island nations in the Pacific, helped the United States combat imperialism. And when the American troops left those islands, many of those nations had to suffer continuously for the destruction that occurred on their islands. And of course there are still Americans who are volunteering from American Samoa and Guam fighting in our American forces overseas. And some Americans sometimes forget that these two areas of our country help in the great war on terror. So I want to commend him for bringing this resolution, and I support the adoption of House Resolution 355.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I just wanted to add, as a matter of history here, it was during the 1970s, then-chairman of the House Subcommittee on Territories, the late Congressman Phillip Burton from San Francisco, who initiated the move in terms of finding out how the East-West Center was doing as far as the Pacific Islands were concerned. And as a result of the assistance also from then former Congresswoman Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, who served as a member of the Appropriations Committee, there was greater attention given to the needs of the Pacific Island nations. And I want to commend certainly the former Governor of the State of Hawaii, Governor George Ariyoshi, and the late Prime Minister of Fiji, Sir Ratu Kamisese Mara, for the outstanding leadership that they displayed and demonstrated in establishing this special program now allotting to the needs of our Pacific Island nations. Certainly Governor John Waihee and also Governor Linda Lingle were also very supportive of this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank again my colleague from Texas for his compliments and the remarks concerning this resolution. And, again, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 355, a resolution recognizing and welcoming the leaders of the Pacific Islands to Washington, D.C., and commending the East-West Center for hosting the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders.

The United States has always had a unique relationship to the Pacific Islands. Not only do they help play a key role in the fight against terrorism, but these governments also aid the U.S. in its overall security. Furthermore, both the U.S. and the Pacific Islands rely on the vast resources of the Pacific basin; these resources while enormous are not unlimited, and management requires cooperation across all of our governments. These islands also work closely with the U.S. on an important environmental and security concern, global climate change, which has the potential to drastically affect all who depend on the Pacific for their livelihood. Furthermore, trade, tourism, and other economic ties further reveal the interdependence between the Pacific Islands and the U.S. The resolution before us recognizes these factors.

As we mark Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage month, we would also be remiss to not point out that Americans of Pacific Island decent are a rapidly growing ethnic group within the U.S. They add strength to our communities with their diversity and values, and they make important contributions to the U.S. as a whole. The resolution also mentions this important fact.

Furthermore, the resolution discusses the importance of the East-West Center, which runs the Conference of Leaders. Congress established the East-West Center, which is based in my district, in 1960. The East-West Center seeks to establish a dialogue between the peoples and nations of Asia, the Pacific, and the U.S. The East-West Center provides a home for academics who perform vital research that helps all parties better understand each other's history and culture. The Center's Education and Outreach sphere helps disseminate what researchers learn to the broader public and to policymakers. Finally, the Center provides important dialogue programs. Under the effective leadership of Dr. Charles Morrison, the East-West Center continues to address the challenges of the Asian-Pacific 21st Century.

Established in 1980 the East-West Center's Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders grows out of these dialogue programs. It seeks to bring together leaders from the region to discuss many of the issues I mentioned earlier. In the era of growing interdependence between the U.S. and Pacific Island governments, both the work of the Center and the Conference of Leaders becomes more important.

I urge my colleagues to support both this resolution, and provide continued support to the East-West Center.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 355 welcoming the Leaders from the Pacific Island nations to the Eighth Pacific Island Conference being held in Washington. I commend my distinguished friend and colleague, Chairman FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this resolution.

The United States and the Pacific Island nations share strong economic and cultural ties

that have endured the test of time. The triennial meeting of the Pacific Island Conference is an important event that allows the U.S. to reaffirm its friendship and ties with the 20 nations participating in the Conference. This year's meeting will take place in Washington, DC, for the first time.

Our friends in the Pacific Island nations have stood by us steadfastly during the darkest moments of this Nation's history. A great number of the sons and daughters from the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau currently serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. They stand side by side with volunteers from American Samoa, the Northern Marianas, Guam, Hawaii, and other states to protect our freedom.

America's ties with the countries in the South Pacific date back centuries from the early days when American whalers sought safety in Fiji and Tonga and continuing through to the Pacific campaign during World War II. To this day, Pacific Island nations represent some of America's strongest allies at the United Nations.

I applaud the Administration and the East West Center for elevating the importance of this year's Pacific Island Conference to the highest level by holding it in our nation's capitol. I look forward to meeting with the Leaders during their visit to Congress.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 355.

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.

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 124) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 124

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary (in this resolution referred to as the ''sponsor'') shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, the 26th annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service (in this resolution referred to as the ''event''), on the Capitol Grounds, in order to honor the law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty during 2006.

(b) DATE OF EVENT.—The event shall be held on May 15, 2007, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate jointly designate.

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board, the event shall be—

(1) free of admission charge and open to the public; and

(2) arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress.

(b) EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES.—The sponsor shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the event.

SEC. 3. EVENT PREPARATIONS.

Subject to the approval of the Architect of the Capitol, the sponsor is authorized to erect upon the Capitol Grounds such stage, sound amplification devices, and other related structures and equipment, as may be required for the event.

SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS.

The Capitol Police Board shall provide for enforcement of the restrictions contained in section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, concerning sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the Capitol Grounds, as well as other restrictions applicable to the Capitol Grounds, in connection with the event.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) and the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maine.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Concurrent Resolution 124.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 124 authorizes the use of the Capitol grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service. Over 150 Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in 2006 will be honored at this memorial service.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed a proclamation which designated May 15 as Peace Officers' Memorial Day, and the week in which the date falls as Police Week.

The first official memorial service took place on May 15, 1982, at which 91 law enforcement officers were honored. Over the past 26 years, the memorial service has honored over 3,000 law enforcement officers from around our Nation.

Today, the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service on Capitol Hill has become one in a series of well-attended events during Police Week. Activities on Capitol grounds conducted under House Concurrent Resolution 124 will be coordinated with the Office of Architect of the Capitol, will be free and open to the public. I support this resolution and urge its passage.

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

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

House Concurrent Resolution 124 authorizes the use of the Capitol grounds for the annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service to be held Tuesday May 17, 2007. The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary annually sponsor this event honoring some of America's bravest men and women.

Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been more than 17,900 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. The memorial service will honor the 145 Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting their communities in 2006, as well as all law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty.

This will be the 26th time that this event has been held on the grounds of the Capitol. This memorial service is part of National Police Week, which was created by law in 1962 and runs this year from May 8 through May 15.

Police Week draws officers, their families and survivors of fallen officers from around the country and includes such events as the Blue Mass at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, the candlelight vigil at the National Law Enforcement Memorial, and a police unity tour featuring officers and historic vehicles.

The memorial service begins at noon on Tuesday. Following the ceremony on the Capitol Hill grounds, there will be a procession to the Law Enforcement Memorial and a wreath-laying ceremony.

I encourage my colleagues to attend this much deserved memorial service and honor those who protect our communities on the front lines.

I support the measure and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 124, which authorizes the use of the Capitol grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

Peace officers, the sworn, public-sector officers entrusted with law enforcement authority and the power of arrest, risk their lives daily to protect our nation. These individuals, who are responsible for safeguarding the rights and freedoms we enjoy as Americans, are true heroes.

Peace Officers Memorial Day honors those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety and security of their communities and our nation. Created by Public Law 87–726, signed by President Kennedy in 1962, this day gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and pay our respects to those who, through their courageous deeds, have fallen in the line of duty.

Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, May 13, 2007, 382 names will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial during the 19th Annual Candlelight Vigil. These 382 names include 145 officers who died in 2006, plus 237 from earlier years who had previously been lost to history. Of these 382 names, 55 represent Texas law officers who lost their lives in the line of duty, nine of them in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, one of the names of the fallen heroes to be added to the list is Officer Rodney J. Johnson of the Houston Police Department. Officer Johnson, a 12 year veteran of the Houston Police Department, was killed September 21, 2006, while taking a suspect in custody during a traffic stop. He leaves to honor his memory his beloved wife, Houston Police Department Officer Joslyn Johnson, and five teen-age children; three daughters and two sons, ages 14 to 19.

Officer Rodney Johnson was born in Houston and served in the U.S. Army as a military police officer until being honorably discharged in 1990. He then went to work as a corrections officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and then as a jail attendant. He graduated from the Houston police academy in 1994.

As a member of the department's Southeast Gang Task Force, Officer Rodney Johnson earned two Lifesaving Awards and one Medal of Valor from the state of Texas. In January 1998, Officer Rodney Johnson rescued a physically challenged driver trapped in rising floodwaters in January 1998 and later that year he rescued mentally challenged people trapped inside of a burning house.

Officer Rodney Johnson, who stood 6 feet 5 inches tall and weighed nearly 300 pounds, served on his union's board of directors. As Hans Marticiuc, the president of Officer Johnson's union stated, "he was big and he was intimidating-looking, but he was as gentle as a baby bear."

Mr. Speaker, the number of officers killed in the line of duty last year declined nearly 8 percent from 2005, when there were 157 officer deaths. The 2006 figure was the lowest annual total since 1999, when 143 officers were lost.

Although the number of officers killed in the line of duty has declined in recent years, the fact that one officer is killed every two-and-a-half days in our country is a sober reminder that protecting our communities and safeguarding our democracy come at a heavy price. Including this year's officers, there are now 17,917 names engraved on the Memorial, representing officers from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and federal law enforcement and military police agencies.

This resolution permits the Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary to sponsor a free public event, the 26th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service, on the Capitol grounds on May 15, 2007. This service will honor the law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty during 2006 who have died in the line of duty, as well as the 800,000 officers who continue to serve in federal, state and local law enforcement agencies nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important resolution. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. MICHAUD. 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 Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 124.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GUAM WORLD WAR II LOYALTY RECOGNITION ACT

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1595) to implement the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1595

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 "Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Recognition of the suffering and loyalty of the residents of Guam.
Sec. 3. Payments for Guam World War II claims.
Sec. 4. Adjudication.
Sec. 5. Grants program to memorialize the occupation of Guam during world war II.
Sec. 6. Authorization of Appropriations.

SEC. 2. RECOGNITION OF THE SUFFERING AND LOYALTY OF THE RESIDENTS OF GUAM.

(a) RECOGNITION OF THE SUFFERING OF THE RESIDENTS OF GUAM.—The United States recognizes that, as described by the Guam War Claims Review Commission, the residents of Guam, on account of their United States nationality, suffered unspeakable harm as a result of the occupation of Guam by Imperial Japanese military forces during World War II, by being subjected to death, rape, severe personal injury, personal injury, forced labor, forced march, or internment.

(b) RECOGNITION OF THE LOYALTY OF THE RESIDENTS OF GUAM.—The United States forever will be grateful to the residents of Guam for their steadfast loyalty to the United States of America, as demonstrated by the countless acts of courage they performed despite the threat of death or great bodily harm they faced at the hands of the Imperial Japanese military forces that occupied Guam during World War II.

SEC. 3. PAYMENTS FOR GUAM WORLD WAR II CLAIMS.

(a) PAYMENTS FOR DEATH, PERSONAL INJURY, FORCED LABOR, FORCED MARCH, AND INTERNMENT.—Subject to section 6(a), after receipt of certification pursuant to section 4(b)(8) and in accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall make payments as follows:

(1) RESIDENTS INJURED.—The Secretary shall pay compensable Guam victims who are not deceased before any payments are made to individuals described in paragraphs (2) and (3) as follows:

(A) If the victim has suffered an injury described in subsection (c)(2)(A), $15,000.

(B) If the victim is not described in subparagraph (A) but has suffered an injury described in subsection (c)(2)(B), $12,000.

(C) If the victim is not described in subparagraph (A) or (B) but has suffered an injury described in subsection (c)(2)(C), $10,000.

(2) SURVIVORS OF RESIDENTS WHO DIED IN WAR.—In the case of a compensable Guam decedent, the Secretary shall pay $25,000 for distribution to eligible survivors of the decedent as specified in subsection (b). The Secretary shall make payments under this paragraph after payments are made under paragraph (1) and before payments are made under paragraph (3).

(3) SURVIVORS OF DECEASED INJURED RESIDENTS.—In the case of a compensable Guam victim who is deceased, the Secretary shall pay $7,000 for distribution to eligible survivors of the victim as specified in subsection (b). The Secretary shall make payments under this paragraph after payments are made under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF SURVIVOR PAYMENTS.—Payments under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (a) to eligible survivors of an individual who is a compensable Guam decedent or a compensable Guam victim who is deceased shall be made as follows:

(1) If there is living a spouse of the individual, but no child of the individual, all of the payment shall be made to such spouse.

(2) If there is living a spouse of the individual and one or more children of the individual, one-half of the payment shall be made to the spouse and the other half to the child (or to the children in equal shares).

(3) If there is no living spouse of the individual, but there are one or more children of the individual alive, all of the payment shall be made to such child (or to such children in equal shares).

(4) If there is no living spouse or child of the individual but there is a living parent (or parents) of the individual, all of the payment shall be made to the parents (or to the parents in equal shares).

(5) If there is no such living spouse, child, or parent, no payment shall be made.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this Act:

(1) COMPENSABLE GUAM DECEDENT.—The term "compensable Guam decedent" means an individual determined under section 4(a)(1) to have been a resident of Guam who died or was killed as a result of the attack and occupation of Guam by Imperial Japanese military forces during World War II, or incident to the liberation of Guam by United States military forces, and whose death would have been compensable under the Guam Meritorious Claims Act of 1945 (Public Law 79–224) if a timely claim had been filed under the terms of such Act.

(2) COMPENSABLE GUAM VICTIM.—The term "compensable Guam victim" means an individual determined under section 4(a)(1) to have suffered, as a result of the attack and occupation of Guam by Imperial Japanese military forces during World War II, or incident to the liberation of Guam by United States military forces, any of the following:

(A) Rape or severe personal injury (such as loss of a limb, dismemberment, or paralysis).

(B) Forced labor or a personal injury not under subparagraph (A) (such as disfigurement, scarring, or burns).

(C) Forced march, internment, or hiding to evade internment.

(3) DEFINITIONS OF SEVERE PERSONAL INJURIES AND PERSONAL INJURIES.—The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall promulgate regulations to specify injuries that constitute a severe personal injury or a personal injury for purposes of subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, of paragraph (2).

SEC. 4. ADJUDICATION.

(a) AUTHORITY OF FOREIGN CLAIMS SETTLEMENT COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission is authorized to adjudicate claims and determine eligibility for payments under section 3.

(2) RULES AND REGULATIONS.—The chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary to enable it to

carry out its functions under this Act. Such rules and regulations shall be published in the Federal Register.

(b) CLAIMS SUBMITTED FOR PAYMENTS.—

(1) SUBMITTAL OF CLAIM.—For purposes of subsection (a)(1) and subject to paragraph (2), the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission may not determine an individual is eligible for a payment under section 3 unless the individual submits to the Commission a claim in such manner and form and containing such information as the Commission specifies.

(2) FILING PERIOD FOR CLAIMS AND NOTICE.—All claims for a payment under section 3 shall be filed within one year after the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission publishes public notice of the filing period in the Federal Register. The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall provide for the notice required under the previous sentence not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act. In addition, the Commission shall cause to be publicized the public notice of the deadline for filing claims in newspaper, radio, and television media on Guam.

(3) ADJUDICATORY DECISIONS.—The decision of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission on each claim shall be by majority vote, shall be in writing, and shall state the reasons for the approval or denial of the claim. If approved, the decision shall also state the amount of the payment awarded and the distribution, if any, to be made of the payment.

(4) DEDUCTIONS IN PAYMENT.—The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall deduct, from potential payments, amounts previously paid under the Guam Meritorious Claims Act of 1945 (Public Law 79–224).

(5) INTEREST.—No interest shall be paid on payments awarded by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

(6) REMUNERATION PROHIBITED.—No remuneration on account of representational services rendered on behalf of any claimant in connection with any claim filed with the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission under this Act shall exceed one percent of the total amount paid pursuant to any payment certified under the provisions of this Act on account of such claim. Any agreement to the contrary shall be unlawful and void. Whoever demands or receives, on account of services so rendered, any remuneration in excess of the maximum permitted by this section shall be fined not more than $5,000 or imprisoned not more than 12 months, or both.

(7) APPEALS AND FINALITY.—Objections and appeals of decisions of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall be to the Commission, and upon rehearing, the decision in each claim shall be final, and not subject to further review by any court or agency.

(8) CERTIFICATIONS FOR PAYMENT.—After a decision approving a claim becomes final, the chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall certify it to the Secretary of the Treasury for authorization of a payment under section 3.

(9) TREATMENT OF AFFIDAVITS.—For purposes of section 3 and subject to paragraph (2), the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission shall treat a claim that is accompanied by an affidavit of an individual that attests to all of the material facts required for establishing eligibility of such individual for payment under such section as establishing a prima facie case of the individual's eligibility for such payment without the need for further documentation, except as the Commission may otherwise require. Such material facts shall include, with respect to a claim under paragraph (2) or (3) of section 3(a), a detailed description of the injury or other circumstance supporting the claim involved, including the level of payment sought.

(10) RELEASE OF RELATED CLAIMS.—Acceptance of payment under section 3 by an individual for a claim related to a compensable Guam decedent or a compensable Guam victim shall be in full satisfaction of all claims related to such decedent or victim, respectively, arising under the Guam Meritorious Claims Act of 1945 (Public Law 79–224), the implementing regulations issued by the United States Navy pursuant thereto, or this Act.

(11) PENALTY FOR FALSE CLAIMS.—The provisions of section 1001 of title 18 of the United States Code (relating to criminal penalties for false statements) apply to claims submitted under this subsection.

SEC. 5. GRANTS PROGRAM TO MEMORIALIZE THE OCCUPATION OF GUAM DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to section 6(b) and in accordance with this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall establish a grants program under which the Secretary shall award grants for research, educational, and media activities that memorialize the events surrounding the occupation of Guam during World War II, honor the loyalty of the people of Guam during such occupation, or both, for purposes of appropriately illuminating and interpreting the causes and circumstances of such occupation and other similar occupations during a war.

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary of the Interior may not award to a person a grant under subsection (a) unless such person submits an application to the Secretary for such grant, in such time, manner, and form and containing such information as the Secretary specifies.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) GUAM WORLD WAR II CLAIMS PAYMENTS AND ADJUDICATION.—For purposes of carrying out sections 3 and 4, there are authorized to be appropriated $126,000,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2012, to the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission. Not more than 5 percent of funds made available under this subsection shall be used for administrative costs.

(b) GUAM WORLD WAR II GRANTS PROGRAM.—For purposes of carrying out section 5, there are authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2012.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include additional material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Guam?

There was no objection.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act; and I thank Chairman NICK RAHALL and Ranking Member DON YOUNG for their leadership on this issue and their assistance in bringing this bill to the floor today.

I also want to thank Majority Leader STENY HOYER and Chairman JOHN CONYERS of the House Committee on the Judiciary for their support of this bill and for their assistance in expediting its consideration today.

H.R. 1595 implements the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which was authorized by Public Law 107–333 to review the war claims program for Guam, which Congress provided for following the occupation of Guam from December 8, 1941 to July 21, 1944. The review commission, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton, in September of 2003, was mandated to determine whether there was parity of war claims paid to the residents of Guam under the Guam Meritorious Claims Act as compared with awards made to similarly affected United States citizens or nationals in territory occupied by the Imperial Japanese military forces during World War II.

Further, the review commission was mandated to advise on any additional compensation that may be necessary to compensate the people of Guam for death, personal injury, forced labor, forced march and internment. In accomplishing its task, the review commission held two days of hearings on Guam in December of 2003 to receive testimony from survivors of the occupation of Guam. The review commission also held hearings here in Washington, D.C. and consulted with a panel of experts in this field of law. The review commission completed its work and reported to Congress its findings and recommendations on June 9, 2004. The review commission found that there was a lack of parity between the war claims program authorized for Guam versus the programs authorized for all other Americans similarly affected and recommended that Congress remedy this injustice.

I want to quote the first finding of the review commission's report for the benefit of all of my colleagues: ''The review commission finds that there is a moral obligation on the part of our national government to pay compensation for war damages in order to ensure to the extent possible that no single individual or group of individuals bears more than a just part of the overall burden of war.''

□ 1445

Today, Mr. Speaker, we consider a bill that would fulfill this moral obligation on the part of our National Government to a group of citizens, the people of Guam, most of whom were indigenous Chamorros, who bore the burden of a brutal occupation. The people of Guam were brutalized through public executions, beheadings, rape and severe injury, forced labor, forced march and internment in concentration camps.

H.R. 1595 is called the Loyalty Recognition Act because the loyalty of the people of Guam to the United States during this 32-month enemy occupation should be honored. It is a tragic injustice of history that, following liberation, Congress did not provide for war

claims for the people of Guam in the same manner and with the same opportunities that were afforded to other Americans.

The people who carried a disproportionate burden of the war were given less than other Americans when it came time to make our Nation whole, and those who gave more in blood got less in recognition. Over and over at the hearings on Guam, people said, ''We just want to be recognized. We just want to be treated with respect. We just want to receive the same restitution that other Americans received.''

I want to acknowledge the excellent work of the Guam War Claims Review Commission chaired by Mauricio Tamargo, with Members Robert Lagomarsino, a former Member of Congress; Ms. Ruth Van Cleve, Director of the Office of Territories in the Department of Interior; former Chief Justice Ben Benjamin J. Cruz of the Guam Supreme Court; and Senator Antonio Unpingco of the Guam legislature. Their report provided the basis for today's bill, and their contributions are greatly appreciated.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of my predecessors to bring the war claims issue to the attention of Congress, beginning with our very first Delegate to Congress, the late Mr. Antonio B. Won Pat, followed by the efforts of our second Delegate to Congress, retired Marine Brigadier General Ben Blaz, who is here with us today on the floor to witness this discussion, and my immediate predecessor, Congressman Robert A. Underwood, whose legislation in the 107th Congress created the review commission. Our work today, and the historic progress of the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, is possible only because of the foundation that each of these contributed to this bipartisan effort.

The issue of Guam war claims has been studied and examined by this body over the past 24 years. Several hearings have been held, and the record is replete with testimony from survivors, legal experts, historians and scholars. Committee staff members have played a valuable role in this process by ensuring the right questions were asked, that Members were briefed, and that the issue was thoroughly examined.

I want to thank Jim Zoia, Staff Director of the Natural Resources Committee, and Tony Babauta, Staff Director of the Insular Affairs Subcommittee. Tony is a Chamorro from Guam, whose insights have been invaluable. I also acknowledge the counsels to the committee, Jeff Petrich, Brian Modeste, Lisa Pittman and Rich Stanton, who have worked very hard on this legislation.

This afternoon, we stand on the brink of a historic moment for the people of Guam. I regret, Mr. Speaker, that many survivors of the occupation of Guam did not live to see this day, and I fear that some will pass away before this bill completes its legislative journey. But we have this moment to recall why we fight this fight, on whose behalf we are speaking today and why it is so vitally important to our Nation that we recognize the incredible sacrifices of the people of Guam during World War II.

I very much doubt that any foreign power will ever again occupy American soil and place American citizens under subjugation. The story of the people of Guam will thus be a unique story, less known than the bombing of Pearl Harbor and other heroic stories of World War II. It is a story of faith in our Nation, of hope in our God and of love for our families.

If I could vote, Mr. Speaker, on final passage of this bill, it would be my greatest honor to recognize the people of Guam by voting to pass this bill. But since I cannot vote as a Delegate, I offer all of my colleagues the honor of recognizing their fellow Americans and passing this bill today.

God bless Guam. God bless the United States of America.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the majority has adequately explained the bill, and we have no further comment.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. I commend my good friend and colleague, the gentlelady from Guam, for introducing this legislation designed to address the lack of parity in the war claims paid to the residents of the people of Guam as compared to other U.S. citizens or nationals who were similarly affected during World War II.

Mr. Speaker, every Guam Delegate to Congress has spoken about the deficiencies in making Guam whole after World War II. Our former colleagues Antonio Won Pat, General Ben Blaz, and former Congressman Robert Underwood had raised the issue throughout their service in the Congress.

Through the efforts of Congressman Robert Underwood, a commission was established in the 107th Congress to review the historical record of addressing Guam's war claims. After completing its work, the Guam War Claims Review Commission found that a lack of parity existed in the case of war claims for the people of Guam.

These were some of the key findings of the commission:

That the U.S. has a moral obligation to pay proper compensation for war damages.

That there is a lack of parity in war claims for Guam when compared to other war claims programs established by the U.S. Congress.

That Guam was erroneously excluded from coverage under Title II of the War Claims Act.

This legislation is vitally important because it addresses these long-standing inequities against the people of Guam by implementing the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission. It recognizes the sacrifices made by the people of Guam and their steadfast loyalty to the United States in the face of this adversity. It allows claims for death, personal injury, forced labor, forced marches and internment. It allows compensation to certain survivors of the deceased from the war; and it authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants in support of activities to remember Guam's occupation.

I strongly support this legislation.

I submit to my colleagues, our Nation committed a grave injustice some 60 years ago against the people of Guam. For some unknown and mysterious reason, Mr. Speaker, the native Guamanians, who are U.S. Nationals, U.S. Nationals, meaning owing permanent allegiance to the United States, were not evacuated along with U.S. citizens at the time that they were living in Guam before the arrival of the Japanese forces.

As a result, these patriotic Americans were left to fend for themselves, to contend with the Japanese takeover of the territory of Guam, and for nearly 3 years, the people of Guam were interned and were subjected to extreme tortures, even executions by public, beatings, rapes, forced labor, forced marches.

A good example is right here in our midst, Mr. Speaker, my good friend and former Member of Congress representing the territory of Guam, retired Brigadier General Ben Blaz, at that time was a youth and was part of this forced evacuation. He personally witnessed some of the atrocities that were committed against his people by Japanese military forces.

Our former colleague, Congressman Bob Underwood, also reiterated to our colleagues that some of his close relatives were beheaded in the presence of other people of Guam when this took place for some 3 years, some 3 years. And I can never forget the words echoed by my good friend, the general from Guam, when he said this, ''we are equal in war but not in peace.''

Why, for the life of me, Mr. Speaker, it has taken all these years in simply trying to make this inequity fair and just for the benefit of the people of Guam I do not understand. It is as if these people were aliens or not members of the American family. We have had Guam for how many years? It was a territory of the United States, and this is what we did against these good people of Guam at the time of the war. Why we never evacuated them along with other U.S. citizens to this day is still a question. Why the Navy never

took them out of there before the arrival of the Japanese.

I appeal to my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that we pass this bill. It is long overdue. For the sake of justice, pass this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Again, I thank the good lady from Guam for her leadership and sponsorship of this bill.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire if the majority has any more speakers?

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for a colloquy.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, it has been said among some of the critics of this legislation, saying that the people of Guam were properly compensated already. I am sure the gentlelady has the correct information so that we can inform our colleagues this is not true.

The way the whole thing has been presented, the procedures that were followed and the war claims that were made for the U.S. citizens left out the people of Guam. For some reason or another, I think our colleagues need to understand this a little more clearly.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, did the gentlelady just not state that she had no more speakers?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct. The gentlewoman from Guam nevertheless had time remaining and did not yield it back.

Ms. BORDALLO. That was my understanding at the time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I understood that she had not yielded her time. With 7 minutes remaining, I requested that there be a colloquy between myself and the gentlelady from Guam. Is there anything wrong with that?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Guam has 6 minutes remaining.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, in answer to the questions raised, let me just put it this way: There are several categories in the bill to pay for compensation. One is for living survivors of the occupation; $15,000 for rape or severe personal injury, such as loss of limb, dismemberment or paralysis; $12,000 for forced labor or personal injury that is less severe in nature, such as disfigurement, scaring or burns; $10,000 for forced march, internment or hiding to evade internment.

Category two is for death claims, $25,000 to a spouse or children of a Guamanian who died during the occupation.

Category three for descendants of deceased survivors; $7,000 to descendants of injured or interned survivors who have passed away, irrespective of the injury or the harm sustained.

The total of this legislation, we are asking $126 million for claims and $5 million for grants for the Department of Interior to promote activities related to the occupation.

Also another question, if I could answer, why is the U.S. paying for this instead of Japan? The United States inherited the obligation of reparations due to the treaty of peace with Japan which ended hostilities with Japan. It is the standard practice that citizens make claims to their own government arising from hostilities. It is the responsibility of the United States to make the people of Guam whole. Guamanians were U.S. nationals at the time of the occupation by Japan.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I ask the gentlelady, were there any provisions where it required the Japanese Government to restore or to provide some form of compensation as part of this treaty arrangement?

Ms. BORDALLO. Not to my knowledge. The U.S. inherited this.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. So the Japanese Government just simply said, well, don't ask us; ask the United States Government to provide this.

Ms. BORDALLO. Due to the treaty of peace.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. So there was never any compensation or any support even from the Japanese Government to make whole what they did against the people, the residents of Guam?

Ms. BORDALLO. That is correct. It is the United States responsibility to make Guam whole.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support legislation that has been introduced by my colleague, Congresswoman BORDALLO. H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, would honor the residents of Guam for their loyalty and compensate them for the atrocities they suffered during the Japanese occupation of Guam.

During World War II, Guam was invaded, seized and occupied by Imperial Japanese forces for nearly three years. The war destroyed much of Guam, including housing, public buildings, utilities and infrastructure. In addition, the people of Guam suffered many deaths and an untold number of acts of brutality. This ruthless brutality has left a lasting impact on the survivors of the war and the descendants of victims.

In 1947, the Secretary of the Navy commissioned a civilian committee on the Naval Administration of Guam and American Samoa to prepare a report with specific recommendations. The report became known as the Hopkins Report and was submitted to the Secretary of the Navy in 1947. Among other things, the report addressed deficiencies in the war claims process for Guam immediately after the war ended. In the cover letter submitted with the report, the committee stated, "Only so can justice be done to a valiant group of Americans who at great cost to themselves remained steadfastly loyal during the war . . . in so special a case this government could well be very generous in method of distributing its relief as well as generous in amount awarded. It has been neither."

Many decades later, the 107th Congress authorized the Guam War Claims Review Commission to determine if the people of Guam received parity in claims as compared to other Americans who experienced losses and damages during the war. In 2004, the Commission submitted their final report to Congress and found that Guam's residents were inequitably treated.

There has been legislation to address this inequitable treatment in every Congress since 1985. Two hearings have been held, one in the 108th Congress and one on in the 109th Congress. It is time to follow the recommendations made by both the Hopkins report and the Guam War Claims Review Commission by providing adequate reparations for the people of Guam. It is time to honor them for their sacrifices.

Congresswoman BORDALLO has done a fantastic job over the years to create the most fair and equitable legislation that Congress can pass. I hope the people of Guam know that this issue is being addressed and the people have not been forgotten.

I urge my colleagues to support the people of Guam and vote for final passage.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise this today in strong support of the passage of H.R. 1595—the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. I also commend the gentlelady from Guam for her leadership on this issue. This legislation has bipartisan support and is being considered today because of her determination to seek justice.

We are here this afternoon, taking a significant step forward to close a very painful chapter in Guam's history. From the time that Guam had been granted a delegate to Congress in the 1970's, throughout the service of our former colleagues—Mr. Won Pat, Mr. Blaz, and Mr. Underwood—this House has been made aware and constantly reminded that Guam and her people suffered unimaginable atrocities during its occupation by Japan during World War II. For nearly three years, the idyllic paradise became a land of panic, horror, suffering, and death.

The personal testimonies of survivors of Guam's occupation has a strong history with the Committee on Natural Resources. They are emotional, sad, and graphic. Many of those survivors who appeared before the Committee to re-tell and, in essence, re-live the pain of occupation have since passed on. There are very few of the estimated 22,000 Guamanians alive today who survived this era, and it is my hope that we can give them closure before none remain.

There now have been two federally appointed Commissions that have reviewed the implementation and the parity treatment of Guam's experience—the Hopkins Commission in 1947, and the Review Commission in 2004. Both concluded that the people of Guam were either misinformed or mistreated. Either way, their recommendations to Congress—be it in 1947 or in 2004—are that something needs to be done to make this right.

The weight of history now falls on the shoulders of this House, nearly sixty-three years

after Guam's liberation. We have the opportunity by passing H.R. 1595 to correct a great injustice for those patriotic Americans who withstood brutal occupation.

The issue has been studied to exhaustion and the recommendations have remained the same. We should never forget their sacrifice for our country, nor should we allow for this inequity to continue.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 1595—the Guam World War II Loyalty Act.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act and urge my colleagues to support its passage. I want to begin by commending my colleague and friend from Guam, the Honorable MADELEINE BORDALLO, for her steadfast and dedicated efforts towards enactment of this bill. Congresswoman BORDALLO has been singularly focused—since arriving in the House—on the enactment of legislation to provide compensation for those of her constituents who suffered unspeakable acts of horror during World War II.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Guam who were subject to public executions by beheading, personal injury, forced labor, forced march, rape and internment at the hands of the Japanese, have waited much too long for just compensation. The Guam War Claims Review Commission found that Guam's residents were inequitably treated under the Guam Meritorious Claims Act and subsequent Federal laws meant to address WWII personal injury claims.

This Commission, which was established pursuant to legislation sponored by our former colleague from Guam, Robert Underwood, recommended that Congress enact legislation providing for additional compensation to Guam's residents. Thus the bill we are discussing today.

The struggle for fair compensation for the people of Guam has been on-going for more than 60 years now. Sadly many of the Chamorros who suffered these atrocities have passed away but we must not let their suffering, largely due to the steadfast loyalty to the United States, be in vain. Passage of H.R. 1595 is long overdue and by doing so today, we will honor their memories and provide compensation to these brave Americans.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1595.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1595, 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. PRICE of Georgia. 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.

□ 1500

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY ACT

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 407) 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, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 407

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 ''Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area Study Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) HERITAGE AREA.—The term ''Heritage Area'' means the Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) STUDY AREA.—The term ''study area'' means—

(A) the coastal areas of Clatsop and Pacific Counties (also known as the North Beach Peninsula); and

(B) areas relating to Native American history, local history, Euro-American settlement culture, and related economic activities of the Columbia River within a corridor along the Columbia River eastward in Clatsop, Pacific, Columbia, and Wahkiakum Counties.

SEC. 3. COLUMBIA-PACIFIC NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the managers of any Federal land within the study area, appropriate State and local governmental agencies, tribal governments, and any interested organizations, shall conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designating the study area as the Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The study shall include analysis, documentation, and determinations on whether the study area—

(1) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;

(2) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;

(3) provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;

(4) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;

(5) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;

(6) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;

(7) has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity; and

(8) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public.

(c) PRIVATE PROPERTY.—In conducting the study required by this section, the Secretary shall analyze the potential impact that designation of the area as a national heritage area is likely to have on land within the proposed area or bordering the proposed area that is privately owned at the time that the study is conducted.

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than 3 fiscal years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out the study, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that describes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the study.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 407, sponsored by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designating a national heritage area in western Washington State. Specifically, the study would examine coastal areas in Clatsop and Pacific Counties at the mouth of the Columbia River, as well as inland areas along the river in two adjacent counties. The bill includes standard criteria for national heritage area studies, and requires completion of the study 3 years after the date funds are made available.

Mr. Speaker, the area included in this proposed study is not only beautiful, but is rich in Native American and European history. The area was a busy stop on European trade routes many years before Lewis and Clark famously visited the west coast. Representative BAIRD is to be commended for his hard work on behalf of this legislation. We look forward to working with him on the designation of a national heritage area should the study support such an action.

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 407 for both procedural and substantive reasons. I am very dismayed that this bill has been

rushed to the floor with no hearing or subcommittee or full committee consideration by the Committee on Natural Resources. The majority might say a hearing was held on the bill last September, and no opposition was present so there is no need for consideration by the committee this year; but I strongly disagree with this logic for several reasons.

First, the committee has received a strong letter of opposition to H.R. 407 by one of the largest private property rights groups, the American Land Rights Association, based in Battleground, Washington.

That letter states: ''We are curious why no hearings have been held on this bill during this Congress. Congress has the time and energy to congratulate victorious sports teams, but does not have the time and resources to hold a hearing on this bill which affects millions of acres of private property in Washington and Oregon.''

Second, I note that one-eighth of the Members of this body, including me, are new Members of the House and were unable to participate in hearings held in the last Congress on this bill. Although there might be some cases where a consensus bill from the last Congress could justifiably be forwarded to the House for expedited consideration on the floor, this bill should not be one of them. As I said previously, it is strongly opposed by a private rights based group in the area affected by the bill.

The substantive reasons to oppose this bill can best be summarized by the American Land Rights Association's May 3, 2007, letter to the Committee on Natural Resources which states: ''Although H.R. 407 is billed merely as a study, history shows the National Park Service rarely does a study that concludes a national heritage area is not feasible. Recent history also shows that national heritage areas cost the National Park Service $10 million during their 15-year life span. Moreover, once their 15-year authorization expires, heritage area proponents come back to Congress asking for even more Federal moneys so they can ultimately become self-sufficient. At a time when the National Park Service has a multi-billion dollar maintenance backlog for such basic visitor services as campgrounds, visitor centers and sanitation facilities, it should not be forced by Congress to create expensive new heritage areas that siphon precious Federal dollars from these higher and better uses.''

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letter I just referred to.

AMERICAN LAND RIGHTS ASSOCIATION,
Battle Ground, WA, May 3, 2007.

Re H.R. 407 (Columbia-Pacific Heritage Area Study authored by Congressman Baird and Wu).

Hon. NICK RAHALL,
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN RAHALL AND CONGRESSMAN YOUNG, The American Land Rights Association is headquartered is Southwest Washington State and is very involved with private property rights and land use issues here and throughout the United States.

We understand the House will soon consider H.R. 407, the Columbia-Pacific Heritage Area Study Act, which affects our members in this region. We are curious why no hearings have been held on this bill during this Congress. Congress has the time and energy to congratulate victorious sports teams but does not have the time and resources to hold a hearing on this bill that affects millions of acres of private property in Washington and Oregon.

Although H.R. 407 is billed as ''merely as study,'' history shows the National Park Service rarely does a study that concludes a national heritage area is not feasible. Recent history also shows that national heritage areas cost the National Park Service $10 million dollars during their 15-year life span. Moreover, once their 15-year authorization expires, heritage area proponents come back to Congress asking for even more federal money so they can ultimately become ''self sufficient.'' At a time when the National Park Service has a multi-billion dollar maintenance backlog for such basic visitor services as campgrounds, visitor centers and sanitation facilities, it should not be forced by Congress to create expensive new heritage areas that siphon precious federal dollars for these higher and better uses.

The American Land Rights Association respectfully requests the House Committee on Natural Resources hold a balanced hearing on H.R. 407 before bringing this bill to the House Floor. We are astonished with the sense of urgency to pass this bill so early in the new Congress.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CUSHMAN,
Executive Director.

As I have stated publicly before, enacting legislation that actually works for the American people requires thoughtfulness and dialogue so all options are on the table. To reject that just because a numerical majority is available does a tremendous disservice to the American people. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on H.R. 407.

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

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

I would first point out that almost identical legislation, H.R. 5485, was the subject of a subcommittee hearing in the Resources Committee during the previous Congress.

During that hearing, the Bush administration and local business leaders expressed support for the legislation. That hearing, organized by then-Republican majority, featured no testimony opposing the bill. Further, the companion to this bill was sponsored by the Republican Senator from Oregon. Given that bipartisan and noncontroversial legislative history, and the fact that the bill simply authorizes a study, it is perfectly appropriate that the measure be before the House today. We have used similar procedures to bring other measures left over from the previous Congress to the floor, measures sponsored by both Republicans and Democrats.

The one organization mentioned as opposing the bill failed to make their opposition known to the committee or the sponsor, nor did they testify at last year's hearing. Further, the group has no real relevance because it opposes all heritage area study proposals on ideological, rather than substantive, grounds which have nothing to do with this specific proposal.

Lastly, this legislation simply authorizes a study, not a national heritage area. To oppose the study because you assume you will oppose what the study will recommend is premature at best. There is no real controversy regarding this legislation, and we urge our colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), for such time as he may consume.

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 407, the Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area Study Act.

The Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area Study Act is an important piece of legislation to my district and the entire Pacific Northwest. I have been privileged to work with DAVID WU from Oregon in introducing this legislation. In the Senate, the companion legislation has been introduced by Senator GORDON SMITH from Oregon and is supported by Washington Senators MURRAY and CANTWELL, as well as Oregon Senator RON WYDEN. Hence, this legislation has both bipartisan and bicameral support.

The mouth of the Columbia is a special place with a very rich history. Native American communities have flourished there for thousands of years. It is home to the first American settlement on the Pacific, Astoria. It served as a major trading post for European, American, Chinese, and other nations' ships, and earned its nickname the ''Graveyard of the Pacific'' from the hundreds of shipwrecks along its dangerous coast. Lewis and Clark ended their westward trek there in 1805. Today, the area is home to the fishing, seafood processing, and timber communities that embody the Pacific Northwest.

Establishing a national heritage area at the mouth of the river is fitting in recognition of the region and its importance historically. As you know, the national heritage area unites parts of historically and culturally significant areas under a common purpose. In this

case, it will help continue the cooperative efforts that the Lewis and Clark bicentennial helped to create. The bicentennial commemoration helped bring community interests together to plan and work in a collaborative fashion. A national heritage area will continue this momentum and ensure the region continues to attract families, outdoorsmen and women, history buffs, and others to enhance its sustainable tourism economy.

Most impressive is that the effort to create a national heritage area at the mouth of the Columbia is really an idea driven by the local community. We have received letters of support from local governments, local businesses, trade associations, chambers of commerce, ports and others who have heard about this effort and wholeheartedly endorsed it. A brief sample of support includes the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, the Office of the Governor of Oregon, the city of Astoria, Shorebank Pacific Bank, Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce, the Port of Peninsula, and the Clatsop County Historical Society.

During the prior Congress, the legislation was subject to an oversight hearing in the National Parks Subcommittee where the administration expressed their support for the bill. We were also joined by small business owners from the area, notably Bob Andrews, who expressed his particular support.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Resource Committee chairman, NICK RAHALL; the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands chairman, Mr. GRIJALVA; and their staffs, including David Watkins and Rick Healy, for their work in bringing this to the floor. I would also like to thank Marc Korman in my office for his work on this important legislation. And especially, my dear friend, DAVID WU. Again, I thank the Chair for bringing this to the floor and urge final passage.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, let me yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU).

Mr. WU. I thank the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the creation of a Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area. I have worked closely with my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), to introduce H.R. 407 to study the feasibility of a national heritage area at the mouth of the Columbia River between Oregon and Washington.

Like the river itself, the journey to get to where we are has been lengthy. In 2001, I took the initial steps with Mr. BAIRD and with the help of the National Resources Committee and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER), and we were able to expand Fort Clatsop National Historic Monument and extend it to the sea.

Next, Congressman BAIRD and I together created Oregon's and Washington's newest national park, the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Parks. No one person could have accomplished the many steps to this point. I thank the hard work of the Natural Resources Committee, Congressmen BAIRD and SOUDER, Oregon State Senator Betsy Johnson and former park superintendent Chip Jenkins.

I would especially like to thank all of the local citizens, such as Astoria's Cindy Mudge who has put tremendous time and effort into the heritage area. The history that shaped this part of our Nation should be preserved and celebrated.

Here, where the Columbia, the great river of the West, meets the ocean, strong men and women have left their indelible imprint for millennia. Native cultures, such as the Clatsop Nehalem, Chinook and other Indian tribes, were joined by the Spanish, Russians and British. Lewis and Clark began an American tie to the river, and Americans of diverse descent, including Americans of Scandinavian, Chinese and other heritages, together built the history of the region.

This is the way that America was or should be, a close-knit community where everyone, from the Indians to Lewis and Clark to Scandinavians to Chinese, were and are welcome; where work, and not parentage, determines one's worth.

From forestry to fisheries, the land and waters have provided. Today, human hands provide for the future. We are trying to build a college to help create the education and research-based economy of the future. Here also are the helping hands of the Columbia River bar pilots who since 1846 have guided ships across the Columbia River bar, and the United States Coast Guard, who faithfully protect local and international commerce on the roughest, toughest water in the world.

The mouth of the Columbia River presents layers of history and culture like an ancient buried city, except that the river rolls on today. Unlike the Hudson or the Mississippi, we do not have a large city at the river's mouth to preserve its stories and heritage; an act of Congress shall do so.

I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 407 and note that the opposition which has been expressed comes from an organization which is not within the historic study area.

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

□ 1515

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. BAIRD. I thank my friend from Arizona.

I would just like to correct the record of the gentleman from Colorado. I know a little bit about Colorado myself. I have lived there. I doubt the gentleman from Colorado has lived in my district.

I do happen to know that Battleground, Washington, is not anywhere near the affected area. The affected area encompasses Pacific County and Wahkiakum County on my side of the river, two counties on the gentleman from Oregon's side of the river. Battleground is not there.

As far as the massive size of this organization you describe, it is not so large. I appreciate they have a voice. I am happy to listen to the voice. This Congress should listen to the voice. But it should not overwhelm the unanimous sense of the people who sponsored this legislation. The committee jurisdiction has had a hearing on this, and I do not think we want to make it the practice of this body, we certainly never have before, to say that every time a relatively noncontroversial bill has been heard well out in the prior Congress, we have to have another hearing.

If the gentleman pretends to say that it is his concern that we try to save the taxpayers' money, having continuous, multiple hearings every time a bill does not quite pass out both bodies, both the House and the Senate, from one Congress to the next, I think it would actually cost the taxpayers a lot more money than you would hope to save.

Let me speak to the substance of this. My friend from Oregon said it well. If you know the history of this great country and if you know the history of the Pacific Northwest, there can be no doubt that this area warrants designation such as we think this study will ultimately lend it.

My friend mentioned Lewis and Clark. Prior to them, the historical trade that went along among the native tribes at the mouth of the Columbia River was legendary. Lewis and Clark, the first American settlement in the Pacific Northwest, the key to trade with Asia in the early years of this great country, it was this mouth of this river where the first northwest settlement of the United States by Americans expanded. The mouth of this river is a key to the commerce, not only of the Pacific Northwest but the inland Northwest, the greater Northwest where great quantities of grain and other cargos are shipped out.

This region has a rich cultural, historical legacy that we need to honor and respect and preserve. That is why the administration supports this bill. That is why our friend and colleague in the other body, Senator SMITH, supports this bill. That is why we have I think the unanimous support of both delegations. This should be a noncontroversial bill.

The gentleman from Colorado I think has raised rather specious arguments against it, and I think we should pass this fine legislation and move forward with honoring a very richly deserving part of this country with this designation.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me thank the sponsors, Congressman BAIRD and Congressman WU, for this fine legislation and to remind our colleagues that this is the beginning of a process for a designation. This is the study process, and it is noncontroversial. And as mentioned before, the organization opposing it has a protected record of opposing any heritage area, without any substantive qualification to that opposition.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 407, 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. RYAN of Wisconsin. 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.

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK EXTENSION ACT OF 2007

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1080) to modify the boundaries of Grand Teton National Park to include certain land within the GT Park Subdivision, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1080

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 ''Grand Teton National Park Extension Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) PARK.—The term ''Park'' means the Grand Teton National Park.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) SUBDIVISION.—The term ''Subdivision'' means the GT Park Subdivision, with an area of approximately 49.67 acres, as generally depicted on—

(A) the plat recorded in the Office of the Teton County Clerk and Recorder on December 16, 1997, numbered 918, entitled ''Final Plat GT Park Subdivision'', and dated June 18, 1997; and

(B) the map entitled ''2006 Proposed Grand Teton Boundary Adjustment'', numbered 136/80,198, and dated March 21, 2006, which shall be on file and available for inspection in appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

SEC. 3. ACQUISITION OF LAND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept from any willing donor the donation of any land or interest in land of the Subdivision.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—On acquisition of land or an interest in land under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) include the land or interest in the boundaries of the Park; and

(2) administer the land or interest as part of the Park, in accordance with all applicable laws (including regulations).

(c) DEADLINE FOR ACQUISITION.—It is the intent of Congress that the acquisition of land or an interest in land under subsection (a) be completed not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) RESTRICTION ON TRANSFER.—The Secretary shall not donate, sell, exchange, or otherwise transfer any land acquired under this section without express authorization from Congress.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 1080 was introduced by our colleague from Wyoming, Representative BARBARA CUBIN. The legislation would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to expand the boundaries of the Grand Teton National Park to include approximately 50 acres that landowners in the adjacent Grand Teton Park Subdivision wish to donate to the park.

The subdivision is located adjacent to the park's eastern boundary and is visible from the park's main road. According to the National Park Service, the land is similar in character and quality to the adjacent parklands and offers unobstructed views of the Teton range and across the broad valley of Jackson Hole.

One lot in the subdivision was owned by the Gerald Halpin family. The remaining seven lots were donated by the Halpin family to private organizations, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the National Park Foundation, and the Grand Teton National Park Foundation.

All of these owners would like to donate their land to the park, but the parcels lie outside the existing park boundary. The 1950 law creating the park includes a provision forbidding expansion of any national park or monument in Wyoming without the express authorization of Congress.

H.R. 1080 would authorize the Secretary to accept the donation of lands within the subdivision and, upon acquisition, adjust the boundary of Grand Teton National Park. The bill would also prohibit the future sale, donation, exchange or other transfer of the acquired land without congressional approval.

Related legislation passed the other body in the 109th Congress and has been reintroduced by Senator CRAIG THOMAS of Wyoming and approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, the National Park Service has testified in support of the bill, and it cleared the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee, and the full Natural Resources Committee on voice votes without any amendments.

Mr. Speaker, Representative CUBIN is to be commended for her work on this legislation. We support passage of H.R. 1080 and urge its adoption by the House today.

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

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

H.R. 1080, introduced by our colleague Congresswoman BARBARA CUBIN, would modify the boundaries of the Grand Teton National Park to include 49 acres of privately donated land. I commend Mrs. CUBIN for her work on this legislation. This highly valuable land, which has been valued at nearly $20 million, is being conveyed to the Park Service at very minimal cost.

Representative CUBIN and her staff did an excellent job working with the private individuals and groups who are donating the land and with the Park Service. The 49 acres are beautiful and highly desirable land that will enhance Grand Teton National Park.

This noncontroversial bill was favorably reported by the Natural Resources Committee by unanimous consent, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1080.

I would also like to add that our thoughts and prayers are with Representative CUBIN and her husband, Dr. Cubin. We wish him a quick and speedy recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1080.

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.

CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE EQUITABLE COMPENSATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 487) to amend the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act to provide compensation to members of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe for damage resulting from the

Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 487

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 ''Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin program, authorized by section 9 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 891), was intended to promote the general economic development of the United States;

(2) the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project—

(A) is a major component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin program; and

(B) contributes to the national economy;

(3) the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project flooded the fertile bottom land of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, which greatly damaged the economy and cultural resources of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and caused the loss of many homes and communities of members of the Tribe;

(4) Congress has provided compensation to several Indian tribes, including the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, that border the Missouri River and suffered injury as a result of 1 or more of the Pick-Sloan projects;

(5) on determining that the compensation paid to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe was inadequate, Congress enacted the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2365), which created the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Recovery Trust Fund; and

(6) that Act did not provide for additional compensation to members of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe that lost land as a result of the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to provide that the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Recovery Trust Fund may be used to provide compensation to members of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe that lost land as a result of the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project; and

(2) to provide for the capitalization of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Recovery Trust Fund.

SEC. 3. CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE EQUITABLE COMPENSATION.

(a) FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.—Section 102 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2365) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting the following:

''(A) the United States did not justly or fairly compensate the Tribe and member landowners for the Oahe Dam and Reservation project, under which the United States acquired 104,492 acres of land of the Tribe and member landowners; and

''(B) the Tribe and member landowners should be adequately compensated for that land;''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by inserting ''and member landowners'' after ''Tribe'' each place it appears.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 103 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2365) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (1) as paragraph (3) and moving the paragraph so as to appear after paragraph (2); and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2) the following:

''(1) MEMBER LANDOWNER.—The term 'member landowner' means a member of the Tribe (or an heir of such a member) that owned land (including land allotted under the Act of February 8, 1887 (24 Stat. 388, chapter 119)) located on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation that was acquired by the United States for the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project.''.

(c) CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBAL RECOVERY TRUST FUND.—Section 104 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2365) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) FUNDING.—On the first day of the fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act of 2007 and on the first day of each of the following 4 fiscal years (referred to in this section as the 'capitalization dates'), the Secretary of the Treasury shall deposit into the Fund, from amounts in the general fund of the Treasury—

''(1) $58,144,591.60; and

''(2) an additional amount equal to the amount of interest that would have accrued if—

''(A) the amount described in paragraph (1) had been—

''(i) credited to the principal account as described in subsection (c)(2)(B)(i)(I) on the first day of the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2001; and

''(ii) invested as described in subsection (c)(2)(C) during the period beginning on the date described in clause (i) and ending on the last day of the fiscal year before the fiscal year in which that amount is deposited into the Fund; and

''(B) the interest that would have accrued under subparagraph (A) during the period described in subparagraph (A)(ii) had been—

''(i) credited to the interest account under subsection (c)(2)(B)(ii); and

''(ii) invested during that period in accordance with subsection (c)(2)(D)(i).'';

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) INVESTMENTS.—

''(1) ELIGIBLE OBLIGATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Treasury shall invest the Fund only in interest-bearing obligations of the United States issued directly to the Fund.

''(2) INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest the Fund in accordance with this paragraph.

''(B) SEPARATE INVESTMENTS OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST.—

''(i) PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT.—The amounts deposited into the Fund under subsection (b)(1) shall be—

''(I) credited to a principal account within the Fund (referred to in this paragraph as the 'principal account'); and

''(II) invested in accordance with subparagraph (C).

''(ii) INTEREST ACCOUNT.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The interest earned from investing amounts in the principal account shall be—

''(aa) transferred to a separate interest account within the Fund (referred to in this paragraph as the 'interest account'); and

''(bb) invested in accordance with subparagraph (D).

''(II) CREDITING.—The interest earned from investing amounts in the interest account, and the amounts deposited into the Fund under subsection (b)(2), shall be credited to the interest account.

''(C) INVESTMENT OF PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT.—

''(i) INITIAL INVESTMENT.—Amounts in the principal account shall be initially invested in eligible obligations with the shortest available maturity.

''(ii) SUBSEQUENT INVESTMENTS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—On the date on which the amount in the principal account is divisible into 3 substantially equal portions, each portion shall be invested in eligible obligations that are identical (except for transferability) to the next-issued publicly-issued Treasury obligations having a 2-year maturity, a 5-year maturity, and a 10-year maturity, respectively.

''(II) MATURITY OF OBLIGATIONS.—As each 2-year, 5-year, and 10-year eligible obligation under subclause (I) matures, the principal of the maturing eligible obligation shall be initially invested in accordance with clause (i) until the date on which the principal is reinvested substantially equally in the eligible obligations that are identical (except for transferability) to the next-issued publicly-issued Treasury obligations having 2-year, 5-year, and 10-year maturities.

''(iii) DISCONTINUATION OF ISSUANCE OF OBLIGATIONS.—If the Department of the Treasury discontinues issuing to the public obligations having 2-year, 5-year, or 10-year maturities, the principal of any maturing eligible obligation shall be reinvested substantially equally in available eligible obligations that are identical (except for transferability) to the next-issued publicly-issued Treasury obligations with maturities of longer than 1 year.

''(D) INVESTMENT OF INTEREST ACCOUNT.—

''(i) BEFORE EACH CAPITALIZATION DATE.—For purposes of subsection (b)(2)(B), amounts considered as if they were in the interest account of the Fund shall be invested in eligible obligations that are identical (except for transferability) to publicly-issued Treasury obligations that have maturities that coincide, to the greatest extent practicable, with the applicable capitalization date for the Fund.

''(ii) ON AND AFTER EACH CAPITALIZATION DATE.—On and after each capitalization date, amounts in the interest account shall be invested and reinvested in eligible obligations that are identical (except for transferability) to publicly-issued Treasury obligations that have maturities that coincide, to the greatest extent practicable, with the date on which the amounts will be withdrawn by the Secretary of the Treasury and transferred to the Secretary of the Interior for use in accordance with subsection (d).

''(E) PAR PURCHASE PRICE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—To preserve in perpetuity the amount in the principal account, the purchase price of an eligible obligation purchased as an investment of the principal account shall not exceed the par value of the obligation.

''(ii) TREATMENT.—At the maturity of an eligible obligation described in clause (i), any discount from par in the purchase price of the eligible obligation shall be treated as interest paid at maturity.

''(F) HOLDING TO MATURITY.—Eligible obligations purchased pursuant to this paragraph shall be held to their maturities.

''(3) ANNUAL REVIEW OF INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES.—Not less frequently than once each calendar year, the Secretary of the Treasury shall review with the Tribe the results of the investment activities and financial status of the Fund during the preceding calendar year.

''(4) MODIFICATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary of the Treasury determines that investing the Fund in accordance with paragraph (2) is not practicable or would result in adverse consequences to the Fund, the Secretary of the Treasury shall modify the requirements to

the least extent necessary, as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

''(B) CONSULTATION.—Before making a modification under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of the Treasury shall consult with the Tribe with respect to the modification.'';

(3) in subsection (d), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) WITHDRAWAL OF INTEREST.—Beginning on the first day of the fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act of 2007, and on the first day of each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury shall withdraw and transfer all funds in the interest account of the Fund to the Secretary of the Interior for use in accordance with paragraph (2), to be available without fiscal year limitation.''; and

(4) in subsection (f)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) MEMBER LANDOWNERS.—

''(A) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (iii), the plan may provide for the payment of additional compensation to member landowners for acquisition of land by the United States for use in the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project.

''(ii) DETERMINATION OF HEIRS.—An heir of a member land owner shall be determined pursuant to the applicable probate code of the Tribe.

''(iii) EXCEPTION.—During any fiscal year, payments of additional compensation to a member landowner under clause (i) shall not—

''(I) be deposited or transferred into—

''(aa) the Individual Indian Money account of the member landowner; or

''(bb) any other fund held by the United States on behalf of the member landowner; or

''(II) exceed an amount equal to 44.3 percent of the amount transferred by the Secretary of the Interior to the Tribe under paragraph (2).

''(B) PROVISION OF RECORDS.—To assist the Tribe in processing claims of heirs of member landowners for land acquired by the United States for use in the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project, the Secretary of the Interior shall provide to the Tribe, in accordance with applicable laws (including regulations), any record requested by the Tribe to identify the heirs of member landowners by the date that is 90 days after the date of receipt of a request from the Tribe.''.

(d) ELIGIBILITY OF TRIBE FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.—Section 105 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2365) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by inserting ''or any member landowner'' after ''Tribe''.

(e) EXTINGUISHMENT OF CLAIMS.—Section 107 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act (Public Law 106–511; 114 Stat. 2368) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 107. EXTINGUISHMENT OF CLAIMS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—On the date on which the final payment is deposited into the Fund under section 104(b), all monetary claims that the Tribe has or may have against the United States for the taking by the United States of land and property of the Tribe for the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin program shall be extinguished.

''(b) EFFECT OF ACCEPTANCE OF PAYMENT.—On acceptance by a member landowner or an heir of a member landowner of any payment by the Tribe for damages resulting from the taking by the United States of land or property of the Tribe for the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin program, all monetary claims that the member landowner or heir has or may have against the United States for the taking shall be extinguished.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I would like to commend my colleague from South Dakota, Representative HERSETH SANDLIN, for her very dedicated hard work and her persistence on this piece of legislation.

H.R. 487 makes several technical corrections to address inequities that surfaced after the enactment of the original Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act of 2000. In short, this legislation provides for accelerated compensation for tribal members and landowners impacted by the construction of the Oahe Dam in 1962. It also satisfies a request from the administration to amend the underlying structure of the compensation fund.

H.R. 487 will assist the tribe in addressing this loss and help to ensure a positive future for the Cheyenne River Sioux.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN), the bill's sponsor, to further describe the legislation.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairwoman NAPOLITANO for her support of this important legislation to my constituents and for her leadership on the subcommittee.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 487, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Amendments Act of 2007. This legislation is the result of a collaborative effort between the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the South Dakota congressional delegation, the House Natural Resources Committee and the Department of the Treasury. I am very pleased to stand before my colleagues in the House today and urge final passage of this important bill.

The need for this legislation began more than 50 years ago with the construction of a series of dams and reservoir projects along the upper Missouri River basin. One of those projects, the Oahe Dam and Reservoir, caused flooding on over 100,000 acres of the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation in north central South Dakota. The loss of these lands was particularly devastating to the tribe and included some of their most important cropland, wildlife habitat and spiritually significant places.

Though the tribe did receive some initial compensation for this loss, the amount was woefully inadequate and did not reflect the magnitude of the loss imposed on the tribe. In 2000, Congress recognized this injustice when it passed legislation to provide additional compensation for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and created a trust fund for additional tribal development. Unfortunately, the 2000 legislation was incomplete and flawed, requiring a number of amendments to the underlying law.

In addition to several technical changes advocated by the Department of the Treasury, H.R. 487 will allow for the immediate capitalization of the trust fund and also give the tribe the authority to redirect a limited amount of the fund towards private tribal landowners. Many of the 100,000-plus acres that were inundated due to the dam were actually privately owned by tribal members. Now tribal elders, these individuals have been waiting decades for fair compensation and will finally have that opportunity.

Not only will H.R. 487 capitalize the fund to allow immediate implementation of the tribe's poverty reduction program, it will help to right a historic wrong and ultimately saves the Federal Government approximately $9 million.

The merits of this legislation are clear, both through its history and the spirit of bipartisan collaboration that brought it to the floor today.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 487.

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

This well-intended legislation improves current law by directly compensating landowners whose tribal lands were flooded by the construction of the Federal Oahe Dam in South Dakota. It also releases Federal funding to the Cheyenne River Sioux who were affected by the dam and, in doing so, reduces Federal taxpayer expenditures throughout the life of the program.

In the last Congress, this bill had major issues, but all parties worked in good faith to resolve their disagreements. It now enjoys broad support.

We have no objection to this legislation and urge its adoption.

□ 1530

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, we have no objection to this noncontroversial bill. I would like to thank my colleague on the other side and also, especially, the sponsor of the bill, Ms.

HERSETH SANDLIN, for her very hard work and strong leadership.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 487.

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.

CITY OF OXNARD WATER RECYCLING AND DESALINATION ACT OF 2007

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1737) to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of permanent facilities for the GREAT project to reclaim, reuse, and treat impaired waters in the area of Oxnard, California.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1737

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

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''City of Oxnard Water Recycling and Desalination Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. OXNARD, CALIFORNIA, WATER RECLAMATION, REUSE, AND TREATMENT PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (title XVI of Public Law 102–575; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. ___. OXNARD, CALIFORNIA, WATER RECLAMATION, REUSE, AND TREATMENT PROJECT.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the City of Oxnard, California, may participate in the design, planning, and construction of Phase I permanent facilities for the GREAT project to reclaim, reuse, and treat impaired water in the area of Oxnard, California.

''(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of the project described in subsection (a) shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost.

''(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the following:

''(1) The operations and maintenance of the project described in subsection (a).

''(2) The construction, operations, and maintenance of the visitor's center related to the project described in subsection (a).

''(d) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this section shall terminate 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 is amended by inserting after the last item the following:

''Sec. ___. Oxnard, California, water reclamation, reuse, and treatment project.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I would like to commend foremost my colleague from California (Mrs. CAPPS) again for the hard work and dedication to this great piece of legislation for her district.

The purpose of H.R. 1737 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design and planning and construction of permanent facilities for the Groundwater Recovery Enhancement Treatment project, the GREAT project.

H.R. 1737, when enacted, authorizes limited Federal financial assistance to develop a facility that will reclaim, reuse and treat impaired water in the Oxnard, California, area. It is my hope that the administration will understand the significance of this very critical litigation for Oxnard as the shining example of the role water recycling plays in balancing our water management portfolio.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1737.

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

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

This legislation will help meet the City of Oxnard, California, water supply needs through the year 2030 and will reduce the city's dependence on imported water. A provision in the bill ensures that no Federal taxpayer dollars will be used to construct or operate a nearby visitor center connected to this water project. We have no objection to this bill and urge its adoption.

Mrs. CAPPS. I rise in strong support of H.R. 1737, the City of Oxnard Water Recycling and Desalination Act.

First, I want to thank the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, Mr. RAHALL, and chairwoman or the Subcommittee on Water and Power, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, as well as the ranking members of the full Committee and Subcommittee for expediting the consideration of this legislation and for bringing H.R. 1737 before us today. This bill was passed by the House of Representatives last year but was never acted on by the Senate.

H.R. 1737 would authorize a proposed regional water resources project—the Groundwater Recovery Enhancement and Treatment or GREAT Program—located in my congressional district. As you know many communities today are faced with the difficult task of providing reliable and safe water to their customers. The City of Oxnard is no exception.

Oxnard is on of California's fastest growing cities and is facing an ever growing crisis: it's running out of affordable water. The water needs for the city's agricultural and industrial base, together with its growing population, has exceed its local water resources. As a result, over 50 percent of its water has to be Imported from outside sources.

However, through a series of local, state and federal restrictions the amount of imported water available to the city is shrinking, while the cost of that water is rising. Recognizing these challenges, Oxnard developed the GREAT Program to address its long term water needs.

The GREAT Program elements include:

A new regional groundwater desalination facility to serve potable water customers in Oxnard and adjacent communities;

A recycled water system to serve agricultural water users, and added protection against seawater intrusion and saltwater contamination; and

A wetlands restoration and enhancement component that efficiently reuses the brine discharges from both the groundwater desalination and recycled water treatment facilities.

Implementation of the GREAT Program will provide many significant regional benefits.

First, the new desalination project will serve ratepayers in Oxnard and adjacent communities, guaranteeing sufficient water supplies for the area.

Second, Oxnard's current water infrastructure delivers approximately 30 million gallons of treated wastewater per day to an ocean outfall. The GREAT Program will utilize the resource currently wasted to the ocean and treat it so that it can be reused by the agricultural water users in the area.

During the non-growing season, it will inject the resource into to the ground to serve as a barrier against seawater intrusion and saltwater contamination. To alleviate severely depressed groundwater levels, this component also includes pumping groundwater into the aquifer to enhance groundwater recharge.

Finally, the brine produced as a by-product of the desalination and recycling plants will provide a year-round supply of nutrient rich water to the existing wetlands at Ormond Beach.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Natural Resources Committee for trying to find innovative and effective ways of extending water supplies in the West. In my view, the City of Oxnard Water Recycling and Desalination Act offers such a creative solution. It will reduce the consumption of groundwater for agricultural and industrial purposes, cut imported water delivery requirements, and improve local reliability of high quality water deliveries.

Again, I would like to thank the Natural Resources Committee for supporting this bill, and urge its immediate passage.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1737.

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.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM PRESSURIZATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 30) to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Eastern Municipal Water District Recycled Water System Pressurization and Expansion Project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 30

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 ''Eastern Municipal Water District Recycled Water System Pressurization and Expansion Project''.

SEC. 2. PROJECT AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by adding after section 16XX the following:

''SEC. 16XX. EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM PRESSURIZATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT, CALIFORNIA.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Eastern Municipal Water District, California, may participate in the design, planning, and construction of permanent facilities needed to establish operational pressure zones that will be used to provide recycled water in the district.

''(b) COST SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of the project described in subsection (a) shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

''(c) LIMITATION.—Funds provided by the Secretary shall not be used for operation or maintenance of the project described in subsection (a).

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $12,000,000.

''(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this section shall terminate 10 years after the date of enactment of this section.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of Public Law 102-575 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 16XX the following:

''Sec. 16XX. Eastern Municipal Water District Recycled Water System Pressurization and Expansion Project, California.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 30, as introduced by our colleague, Mr. DARRELL ISSA from California, amends the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Eastern Municipal Water District Recycled Water System Pressurization and Expansion Project.

This legislation will provide limited financial assistance to the district for the expansion of the Eastern Municipal Water District pressure zone system, a critical part of their water recycling system. The legislation will help the district maintain a stable, secure water supply to strengthen the community's ability to attract business, sustain its economy, protect its environment, and deal with the community's needs.

I thank Mr. ISSA for his hard work on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 30.

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

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

H.R. 30 recognizes the need to capture and treat waste runoff to meet growing water supply needs in arid Southern California. The water recycling project envisioned in this legislation will help drought-proof the region and reduce its dependence on imported water from the Colorado River.

I commend our colleague from California (Mr. ISSA) for his continued leadership and attention on developing new water supplies. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, this bill is not new. In fact, this is the second go-around for it, but that doesn't make it any easier. This bill, like many in the last Congress, died in the Senate.

That's going to be different this time thanks to Chairman RAHALL and Ranking Member YOUNG. They considered this, reviewed to see if there were any significant changes, and quickly reported it out of committee. I want to thank them for working on a bipartisan basis to do that early on.

This is important to the people of Southern California. As the gentlelady, who will speak, hopefully, next, will tell you, California has water. Unfortunately, we don't capture enough, and it isn't where we need it and when we need it.

H.R. 30 is designed to bring some of that availability by significantly increasing our use of recycled water, both helping maintain the aquifer and providing safe, clean water for a multitude of uses for the people of Southern California. I urge the support of this bill, and I will not mention the other body again, except to say that I am looking forward to this early passage turning into an early signature by the President.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 30.

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.

LOWER REPUBLICAN RIVER BASIN STUDY ACT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1025) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of implementing a water supply and conservation project to improve water supply reliability, increase the capacity of water storage, and improve water management efficiency in the Republican River Basin between Harlan County Lake in Nebraska and Milford Lake in Kansas.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1025

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 ''Lower Republican River Basin Study Act''.

SEC. 2. REPUBLICAN RIVER BASIN FEASIBILITY STUDY.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF STUDY.—Pursuant to reclamation laws, the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation and in consultation and cooperation with the States of Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado, may conduct a study to—

(1) determine the feasibility of implementing a water supply and conservation project that will—

(A) improve water supply reliability in the Republican River Basin between Harlan County Lake in Nebraska and Milford Lake in Kansas, including areas in the counties of Harlan, Franklin, Webster, and Nuckolls in Nebraska and Jewel, Republic, Cloud, Washington, and Clay in Kansas (in this section referred to as the ''Republican River Basin'');

(B) increase the capacity of water storage through modifications of existing projects or through new projects that serve areas in the Republican River Basin; and

(C) improve water management efficiency in the Republican River Basin through conservation and other available means and, where appropriate, evaluate integrated water resource management and supply needs in the Republican River Basin; and

(2) consider appropriate cost-sharing options for implementation of the project.

(b) COST SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of the study shall not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the study, and shall be nonreimbursable.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary shall undertake the study through cooperative agreements with the State of Kansas or Nebraska and other appropriate entities determined by the Secretary.

(d) COMPLETION AND REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this section the Secretary of the Interior shall complete the study and transmit to the Congress a report containing the results of the study.

(2) EXTENSION.—If the Secretary determines that the study cannot be completed within the 3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary—

(A) shall, at the time of that determination, report to the Congress on the status of the study, including an estimate of the date of completion; and

(B) complete the study and transmit to the Congress a report containing the results of the study by not later than that date.

(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this Act shall terminate 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

The purpose of H.R. 1025, as introduced by our colleague from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a feasibility study on the Republican River Basin between Harlan County Lake in Nebraska and Milford Lake in Kansas.

H.R. 1025 is a cooperative agreement between Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, and the Federal Government that calls for a feasibility study of water resources of that river basin. The goal is to find new solutions to provide water reliability, increase the capacity of the current water storage, which is so important, and improve water management efficiency. This study is imperative to the responsible management of our water supplies.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1025.

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

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

H.R. 1025, introduced by our colleagues JERRY MORAN and ADRIAN SMITH, implements the Republican River Compact Settlement as negotiated between the States of Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas. This legislation serves as the first step to increase water storage and water use efficiency to benefit those served by the waters of the Republican River.

I commend Mr. MORAN and Mr. SMITH for their leadership on this important matter. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I thank the gentleman for yielding me time and bringing this bill forward today.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1025 would authorize one of the requirements of the Republican River Compact Settlement negotiated between the States of Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado and approved by the Supreme Court in 2003. It is not only necessary to ensure the States remain in compliance with this agreement, but to make certain the agriculture, industrial and domestic use of the water is carried out in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

The Lower Republican River Basin Study will examine how to better utilize opportunities to increase water storage in the river basin. I am hopeful the results of this study will lead to an increase in water availability while we continue to encourage more efficient water use.

As many of you know, especially those from the Midwest, the current water shortage has made this a very critical issue for my congressional district. So if we can, through this study, allocate more water, allocate water more effectively, it will help farmers, ranchers, municipalities both in Nebraska and Kansas in the long term.

I want to thank Mr. RAHALL, Mr. YOUNG, and the Natural Resources Committee staff for bringing forth this bill. I appreciate the cooperation on both sides of the aisle. I urge Members of Congress to approve this legislation.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1025, the Lower Republican River Basin Study Act. I would like to thank Chairman Rahall and the Resources Committee for helping to bring this legislation before the House today.

The timing of this legislation is significant, not only for farmers in Kansas who have dealt with successive years of drought and decreased water supplies, but because the respective states have already appropriated funds for the current fiscal year to conduct the feasibility study authorized by this legislation.

H.R. 1025 is a product of the Republican River Compact Settlement. That settlement resulted from litigation filed by the State of Kansas against the States of Nebraska and Colorado in 1998 because required amounts of water were not reaching Kansas under the Republican River Compact terms. In 2003, the Republican River Compact Settlement brought that litigation to an end.

The Settlement was signed not only by the party States, but also administration officials and was subsequently approved by the United States Supreme Court in 2003. As part of that Settlement, the Parties agreed to have the Secretary of the Interior conduct a study to determine the feasibility of implementing water supply and conservation projects in the Republican River Basin below Harlan Reservoir. In accordance with the Settlement Agreement, H.R. 1025 provides that the cost of the study will be shared between the Federal Government and the States of Kansas and Nebraska.

As of today, the States have done their part under the settlement agreement. In fact, my home State of Kansas has already appropriated funds for the current fiscal year. I also understand that Mr. Smith's State of Nebraska has done the same.

Mr. Speaker, all that remains is for the Federal Government to meet its obligation under the settlement agreement. The feasibility study is desperately needed to increase water availability and encourage more efficient water use and delivery systems.

The Lower Republican Basin has a history of periodic droughts and water shortages. The upper third of the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District, which lies above Lovewell Reservoir, received limited water allocations in 2003 and no water allocations in 2004 and 2005.

Producers in the lower two-thirds of the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District have also experienced water shortages since 2003. Irrigators in this portion of the District have only received half of the base supply they were supposed to receive. The project facilities in the Lower Republican River Basin are over 50 years old. Changed hydrological conditions and aging facilities require better utilization of limited water supplies.

Mr. Speaker, the feasibility study authorized by H.R. 1025 is not only necessary to ensure the states remain in compliance with an interstate compact, but also to ensure the economic viability of the rural communities that rely on delivery of a consistent supply of water, and I urge Members to approve this legislation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1025.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. 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.

ALASKA WATER RESOURCES ACT OF 2007

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1114) to require the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey, to conduct a study on groundwater resources in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1114

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 ''Alaska Water Resources Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Alaska.

SEC. 3. ALASKA WATER RESOURCES STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation and the Director of the United States Geological Survey, where appropriate, and in accordance with this Act and other applicable provisions of law, shall conduct a study that includes—

(1) a survey of accessible water supplies, including aquifers, on the Kenai Peninsula and in the Municipality of Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the city of Fairbanks, and the Fairbanks Northstar Borough;

(2) a survey of water treatment needs and technologies, including desalination, applicable to the water resources of the State; and

(3) a review of the need for enhancement of the streamflow information collected by the United States Geological Survey in the State relating to critical water needs in areas such as—

(A) infrastructure risks to State transportation,

(B) flood forecasting,

(C) resource extraction; and

(D) fire management.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report describing the results of the study required by subsection (a).

SEC. 4. SUNSET.

The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this Act shall terminate 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

The purpose of 1114, as introduced by the ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee, the Honorable Representative DON YOUNG, is to require the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey, to conduct a study on groundwater resources in the State of Alaska.

□ 1545

The assessment and evaluation of current water resources is essential to understanding the needs of that community and its environment. H.R. 1114 would require the Bureau of Reclamation and the USGS to do exactly that, to study the water supplies, the water treatment, and the water distribution needs of Alaska. The bill requires the Secretary of Interior to report the findings of this study to Congress no later than 2 years after enactment.

A study of this magnitude, Mr. Speaker, is vital to the proper management of our most precious natural resource. I do greatly appreciate the hard work of Representative YOUNG on this legislation and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1114.

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

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

This important legislation introduced by the distinguished ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee, DON YOUNG, will help Alaskans through water infrastructure study and development, and improved flood control management.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill and the ranking Republican of the Natural Resources Committee, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the chairman of the committee, Mrs. NAPOLITANO from California, for bringing this bill up with Mr. RAHALL.

This bill seeks to expand Alaska's water supply system and reduce flood threats. My State's combined water bodies comprise one-third of all the fresh water in the United States, but communities are struggling to provide drinking water due to the outdated water distribution system and lack of information on groundwater resources. For this reason, this bill will include a survey of potential water supplies in the City of Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the City of Fairbanks and Fairbanks Northstar Borough.

The bill also improves streamflow information to improve flood forecasting, resource extraction and fire management. Streamflow information in the form of USGS streamgaging stations is insufficient in Alaska compared to other States. In fact, Alaska has only 100 streamgage stations, which is less than 10 percent of the information available in many other States. This bill will help alleviate that situation.

Again, I want to thank Mr. RAHALL and Mrs. NAPOLITANO of California for bringing this bill, and I urge passage of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, may I say that I am so happy today we are talking about water, water in California, water in Alaska, water in Nebraska. Water is going to be our next big crisis that we are going to be faced with in this Nation, it is energy now, and we must do something. We have to learn how to use water better, how to impound water, and how to deliver water so we have that which supports our life, and that is water.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more with Congressman YOUNG about the importance of water for our country, and I would hope that we can work in a bipartisan manner to continue to look at other areas that will be in dire need of help, Federal help, to be able to determine what needs to be done to help them address their water concerns, and I thank the gentleman.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1114.

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.

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY RECYCLED WATER ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1140) to authorize the Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Juan Capistrano, California, to participate in the design, planning, and construction of an advanced water treatment plant facility and recycled water system, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1140

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 ''South Orange County Recycled Water Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. PROJECT AUTHORIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102–575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 16xx. SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Juan Capistrano, California, is authorized to participate in the design, planning, and construction of an advanced water treatment plant facility and recycled water system.

''(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of the project authorized by this section shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

''(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the operation and maintenance of the project authorized by this section.

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $18,500,000.

''(e) SUNSET.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this section shall terminate 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

''SEC. 163X. SAN CLEMENTE RECLAIMED WATER PROJECT.

''(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Clemente, California, is authorized to participate in the design, planning, and construction of a project to expand reclaimed water distribution, storage and treatment facilities.

''(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of the project authorized by this section shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

''(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the operation and maintenance of the project authorized by this section.

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $5,000,000

''(e) SUNSET.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out any provisions of this section shall terminate 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections in section 2 of Public Law 102–575 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 163X the following:

''Sec. 163X. San Juan Capistrano Recycled Water System.

''Sec. 163X. San Clemente Reclaimed Water Project.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of H.R. 1140, as introduced by my colleague and former chair of the subcommittee, Mr. KEN CALVERT, is to authorize the Secretary to participate in the design, planning and construction of an advanced water treatment facility and recycled water system.

The continuing drought and the decrease in snow pack have led to a reduction in water supplies in many parts of the West. Water recycling projects can help communities protect against the adverse consequences of drought.

H.R. 1140 will authorize limited Federal financial assistance for two separate water recycling projects in Southern California. One, beautiful San Juan Capistrano, and the other in great San Clemente.

Recycled water can satisfy many water demands, and the enactment of this bill will continue our efforts to encourage the administration to include recycling as an effective water management strategy. I note it was left out of Water 2025, and I want to be sure that we continue to push forward for that which is very, very helpful to many communities.

I do urge my colleagues to join me in supporting 1140.

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

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

This legislation, H.R. 1140, introduced by the distinguished former chairman of the Water and Power Subcommittee, KEN CALVERT of California, authorizes limited Federal assistance for two water recycling projects in southern Orange County. This bill helps the cities of San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente meet their water supply needs, and reduces their dependence on imported water.

I commend Representative CALVERT for his longstanding leadership in helping all of Southern California meet its future water needs through a combination of water recycling, desalting, conservation and water storage. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), the author of the bill.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my chairman, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, for the hard work that she has put into all these water bills and for her desire to make sure that areas such as southern California have water for the future.

The South Orange County Recycled Water Enhancement Act is a relatively modest yet important step toward meeting the long-term water needs for the West. Water recycling is an approach that more and more communities are tapping to meet local and regional water demand. To address the continued growth of water users, communities are truly maximizing the use of every drop of water.

The South Orange County Recycled Water Enhancement Act authorizes two water reclamation projects in the South Orange County portion of my district. South Orange County relies heavily on imported water from sources such as the Colorado River and the Bay Delta in northern California.

Water reclamation projects and other steps which reduce demand for imported water benefit all regional water uses. The first project outlined in this legislation is the San Juan Capistrano recycled water system, which would enable the City of San Juan Capistrano to provide recycled water to users throughout the city and its neighboring communities. To meet the local demand, the City has developed a project that includes the construction of a water treatment facility as well as transmission infrastructure.

I want to thank the San Juan Capistrano Mayor Sam Allevato and the rest of the city council for their dedication to this important project.

The second part of this project is the San Clemente Reclaimed Water Project, which would expand San Clemente's reclaimed water infrastructure by doubling its production capability. When completed, San Clemente's recycled water project will reduce the city's demand of domestic water by 3,300 acre feet of water per year. I applaud San Clemente Mayor Jim Dahl and the entire city council for their entire commitment to water recycling.

Again, I want to thank my good friend GRACE NAPOLITANO, our chairwoman of the Water and Power Subcommittee, for her leadership and support of my legislation. I know she shares my belief that water recycling is an important tool in addressing growing water needs in the west. Mr. Speaker, I think it is crucial that we recognize and assist communities that are working to reduce their reliance on imported water, and I urge all colleagues to support the South Orange County Recycled Water Enhancement Act.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank staff on both sides who have been working collaboratively and in a bipartisan manner.

Water knows no political colors or boundaries. I think we need to work together to be able to ensure that our economy continues growing, that water will continue to flow through the faucets and in the rivers and dams and aquifers.

And along with Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. Speaker, I want to urge all Members to look at their district water needs, and begin to understand it and be able to work with it so that we can protect the rest of the States that are going through, whether it is droughts or other areas that they need help with.

I certainly want to thank my ranking member, KATHY MCMORRIS, who isn't here, but certainly Mr. LAMBORN, who has done a great job. And I want to thank him specifically, because to work collaboratively and get these bills out is critical not only in time but in the effect it has on our economy throughout the Nation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1140.

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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. CON RES. 21, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I

call up House Resolution 370 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 370

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 21) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2008 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 and 2009 through 2012. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of House Concurrent Resolution 99, as adopted by the House, shall be considered as adopted. All points of order against the concurrent resolution, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution, as amended, to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question. If the Senate concurrent resolution, as amended, is adopted, then it shall be in order to move that the House insist on its amendment to the concurrent resolution and request a conference with the Senate thereon. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on that motion to adoption without intervening motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume and I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks. I also ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 370.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 370 provides for consideration in the House of S. Con. Res. 21, the Senate version of the concurrent budget resolution for 2008. It also provides for the House to insist on the House-passed version of the budget resolution and to request a conference with the Senate.

The rule is very simple. It allows the House to disagree with the Senate budget resolution and request a conference. It doesn't interfere with the motion to instruct conferees; it just allows the House to go to conference and appoint conferees.

This rule is necessary, Mr. Speaker, because the Republican leadership refused to agree to the customary unanimous consent request required to go to conference on a Senate numbered bill. In fact, there is no instance in recent memory where a separate rule has been adopted to go to conference with the Senate on a budget resolution due to the objection of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. Speaker, I am having a hard time figuring out why my Republican friends are choosing to be obstructionists on even the most routine housekeeping measures. They talk a lot about civility and comity in the House, but apparently it is just that, talk, because their actions point to a very different strategy.

The new Democratic majority, on the other hand, is committed to results. We were elected to get things done, and that is exactly what we will do, with or without the cooperation of the Republican minority.

This rule does not block a vote on approval of the Senate budget resolution, as amended. It does not interfere with the motion to instruct conferees. It simply allows the House to insist on its version of the budget resolution and to request a conference with the Senate, nothing more. So let's pass this rule and get the budget resolution into conference.

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

□ 1600

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this rule and the unprecedented tax increase that the Democrat majority is bringing back to the House today.

I wish I could report to my colleagues that this legislation was improved since the last time the House considered it in March. Unfortunately, the massive and irresponsible tax increase included in the House version of this budget would still be the largest tax increase in American history, weighing in at a shocking $392.5 billion over the next 5 years.

This Democrat budget, which is balanced on the backs of everyday taxpayers, would be used to finance bloated new government spending that will grow well above the rate of inflation through 2012, while also ignoring the brewing entitlement crisis. Around 77 million baby boomers will be retiring in the very near future and will begin collecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Funding this new spending represents the greatest economic challenge of our era, and it is a challenge that the Democrat budget has chosen to completely ignore, while going on its own spending spree elsewhere.

In the 32nd Congressional District of Texas, which I have the honor to represent, the Heritage Foundation estimates that the passage of this budget will cost every single taxpayer an additional $2,920 in 2012. It will also mean a per capita loss of $474 in personal income, as well as 2,389 lost jobs as a result of a loss of $328 million to the local economy of the 32nd Congressional District of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD this entire document which details the severe negative impact on the passage that this budget will have on every single taxpayer from every single district across the country.

Mr. Speaker, if fiscal discipline is what the Democrats promised voters this past fall, then, by my account, it took only 3 months for the Democrat candidates to abandon their campaign promises and an additional 2 months for Democrats to reiterate their really true support for tax-and-spend policies again here on the House floor today.

This deeply flawed budget would increase taxes on almost 8 million taxpayers just in my home State of Texas alone. It would collect these taxes by allowing the 2001 and 2003 tax relief provided by the Republican Congress to expire.

In real terms, for every American taxpayer, this means reducing the child tax credit for working families so that the government can collect $27 billion more to finance, yes, you've got it, Mr. Speaker, brand-new spending.

It means reinstating the marriage penalty and the death tax to collect an additional $104 billion so that the new majority Democrats can kick the can further down the road, rather than reforming and strengthening our Nation's entitlement programs.

And it means completely ignoring the alternative minimum tax crisis which is projected to hit 23 million middle-class families if not dealt with in a responsible manner.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the voters watching this debate on C–SPAN understand what these tax increases mean for them, the economy, and for our ability to compete globally. But they may not realize what they mean for the average family of four with $60,000 in earnings. It will mean a tax increase of 61 percent. It means that a single parent with two children and $30,000 in earnings would see a tax increase of 67 percent. And it means that an elderly couple with $40,000 of income would see their taxes increase by a whopping 156 percent.

Mr. Speaker, you can see the advantages of the Republican tax cut and what it means to every single middle-class American.

Now, one would think that a hike of almost $400 billion impacting every American taxpayer would be enough to finance the Democrats' appetite for big government. But trust me, it's just the start. This budget also contains 12 reserve funds or pet initiative IOUs which set the stage for more than $115 billion in higher future spending which would have to be financed by, you guessed it, even higher taxes.

For the last 4 years, responsible budgets passed by the Republican Party kept discretionary spending at or below inflation for all nondefense, non-homeland security spending. This budget plan brought forward by the Democrats brings this fiscally disciplined tradition to a screeching halt by allowing about $25 billion more in discretionary spending than President Bush or even the spendthrift Senate, for that matter, which asked for about $7 billion less than the House.

Thankfully, it's not too late to stop this fiscal train wreck. By voting against this rule, every Member of this

body can demonstrate their opposition to the Federal largesse included in this budget, as well as their opposition to the largest tax increase in American history.

Without the meaningful tax relief passed by this recent Republican Congress, our economy would not have seen the massive job growth with 7.6 million new jobs created for American workers and tremendous economic growth of 3.5 percent per year that has our economy growing at the highest rate and has done so over the last 15 quarters.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to stand up for fiscal discipline, economic growth, and responsible budgeting by opposing this rule and the underlying tax increase.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, if I could respond to the gentleman from Texas, I don't know what he's talking about. The fact of the matter is that the Democratic budget resolution does not contain a single tax increase. Period. The Concord Coalition stated that the budget resolution does not call for or require a tax increase. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said the House plan does not include a tax increase. The Hamilton Project of the Brookings Institute says the budget would not raise taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I sat on the Budget Committee. I had the honor of serving under Chairman SPRATT. And I would say to the gentleman from Texas, if he reads the budget resolution, it actually supports the renewal of the middle-class income tax cut.

Section 401 of the budget resolution commits the budget to the support of the middle-class tax cuts passed in 2001 and 2003, including the child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief, the 10 percent individual income tax bracket, estate tax reform, research and development tax credit, and the deduction of State and local sales taxes.

Section 203 of the budget resolution clearly provides a reserve fund for the extension of those tax cuts so long as the legislation complies with the House pay-as-you-go rule.

Now, the gentleman from Texas gets up here and brags about the fiscal record of the Republicans in the Congress. Well, the American people, I think, saw through the misplaced priorities of the Republican Congresses, as evidenced by the results of the November election.

But so there is no misunderstanding, let me make it very clear to everybody who is watching. We need to correct the fiscal course of the country because the fiscal outlook that we are confronting has deteriorated dramatically over the past 6 years because of the Republicans misplaced priorities.

In 2001, the Bush administration inherited a projected 10-year budget surplus of $5.6 trillion. That's $5.6 trillion. Within 2 years, that surplus was gone, and the United States began accumulating an amount of national debt, adding $2.8 trillion to our Federal debt burden since 2001.

Now, to make matters worse, most of that debt has been purchased by foreign investors, making the U.S. economy more vulnerable to economic and political instability and political pressure from abroad.

So for anyone to get up here and to brag about the Republican record on fiscal matters, I think, to me, defies comprehension. The record is clear. You have messed up the economy of this country in terms of this incredible debt that we have now put on the backs of our kids and our grandkids and our great grandkids. What the Democratic budget is trying to do is restore some fiscal discipline, pay-as-you-go, and to get this country back on the right course.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to yield 8 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina, the chairman of the House Budget Committee, Mr. SPRATT.

(Mr. SPRATT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, this rule simply makes in order a motion to go to conference on the House and Senate budget resolution. That's all it does.

The budget resolution, in turn, frames all that we will do in fiscal year 2008, next year; and it helps keep the process fiscally disciplined as we move forward. Usually, this procedure is accompanied by, expedited by, unanimous consent. In this case, we couldn't be assured of unanimous consent, so we are, instead, moving forward with the rule.

Now, naturally, we in the House think that the House-passed budget is a better expression of our goals. But both resolutions to be resolved in conference, both are Democratic products, and we think both are vastly better, far better budgets than the Republicans offered this year or last year, for that matter. It's a matter of record. Last year the Republicans failed to pass a concurrent budget resolution. They couldn't get the two Houses together.

When we came back here in November, we had to finish up the unfinished work. Only 2 of 11 appropriations bills were passed, partly because they didn't have the framework of a budget resolution in which to proceed.

Just weeks ago, we had the Republican budget on the House floor. It fell 60 votes short of a majority, way behind. So unless we do what we are doing today, we are going to find ourselves shortly in the same situation we were last fall when the work was undone at the end of the year.

Both budgets, both the House and the Senate budgets, have this goal. Both budgets are designed to bring the budget back to balance by the year 2012. The House resolution carries forward, I'm proud to say, carries forward our commitment to pay-as-you-go. And the Senate resolution includes a pay-as-you-go rule of its own.

There are a number of initiatives, it's true, in this bill. A number of new initiatives. One is the Children's Health Insurance Initiative, but none of these initiatives, including CHIP, will be undertaken, none of them will be undertaken unless there are offsetting revenues or offsetting expenses to make them budget neutral so they do not have any impact on the bottom line.

This budget resolution and the Senate resolution both contain program integrity measures requested by the President, augmented by us in our budget resolution to crack down on wasteful spending. We're proud of that. We want to see that money appropriated. We want to see some that could be saved on wasteful sending.

Both budgets, and let me emphasize this, both budgets support middle-income tax relief. We'll say it again and again and again. It bears repeating because it's absolutely true.

The House budget resolution sites in its text income tax cuts that were passed in 2001 and 2003, and it supports, not in one place, but two, wholesomely supports the extension and renewal of those tax cuts past 2010, when they will all expire.

Now, let me make something clear. This budget resolution for the next 4 years does not take a thing away from any taxpayer. The tax cuts passed in 2001 and 2003 remain unaffected, remain standing and in place.

In addition, let me make clear that when the tax cuts adopted in 2001 and 2003 expire at the end of 2010, it's by design. That's the way you wrote the resolution. That's the way you wrote the bill that passed it. And we do not propose anything here in this bill about not renewing those tax cuts when they come up. We simply say that's a bridge we will cross when we get to it.

But in the Senate, Senator BAUCUS has offered an amendment that will require a vote before the year 2010 to renew those middle-income tax cuts that sunset in the year 2010. The Baucus amendment limits these tax cuts to $180 billion in annual revenue reduction, the amount of the surplus that is anticipated in 2012 in the budget resolution.

□ 1615

In the meantime, let me say again, all the tax cuts passed in 2001 and 2003 were provided for, allowed and in place under this budget resolution. It is completely specious to say that we have raised taxes by one dime. Completely specious.

If you don't believe, let me say once again or let me show you in writing what Mr. MCGOVERN just introduced. Here is the Concord Coalition. Nobody would dispute their bona fides or their unpartisan character. Here is how they sum up their analysis of our budget resolution: ''Thus to be clear, the budget resolution does not call for or require a tax increase.'' That is the Concord Coalition.

Next is the Brookings Institution, Hamilton Project: ''This budget would not raise taxes.'' An independent group, no axes to grind. That is their opinion.

And, finally, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: ''This claim is incorrect. The House plan does not include a single tax increase.''

Those are three outside organizations with no axes to grind. They looked at our resolution. That is the judgment they rendered on it.

Now, let me move on to say that both the House and Senate budget resolutions meet the President's request for national defense. They protect our country, and they exceed the President's request for veterans' health care. Funding for veterans' health care in our resolution is 6 billion bucks, $6 billion, above the 2007 level and more than $3 billion above the President's request.

Both budgets are also designed to reduce the deficit and bring the budget back to balance, as I said earlier. That will decrease our reliance on foreigners who buy our debt. Since 2001, foreign ownership of Treasury bonds has more than doubled to $2.2 trillion, making our economy vulnerable to global markets and the whims of foreign investors.

If I could see this chart next to show you the total debt accumulation under this administration. On the back of an envelope, this shows you what we are about, what we want to avoid. When this administration came to office, the national debt was $5.7 trillion. In the last 6 years, they have added 60 percent to that sum, $3.1 trillion in additional debt. And as a consequence, the national debt stands at $8.8 trillion. This is what Republicans have produced. This isn't about claiming or argumentation or anything else. This is a matter of record. You can look it up, from $5.7 to $8.8 trillion.

Finally, this budget resolution maintains the priorities that we Democrats stand for and are proud of. We put families first. We put children first by investing in health care; child care; education; Head Start; and as I said earlier, tax relief to middle-income families. Both budgets, both budgets, plan huge steps, and this is one of the great initiatives we hope to achieve in this Congress, huge steps to expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program so that it covers most of the 9 million children without health insurance in this country, and we propose to do that with offsets so that there will not be a dime of the cost of that added to the bottom line.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, in short, this rule will make in order the steps necessary to send our budget resolution to conference so that they can move us forward on a fiscally responsible, fiscally disciplined path.

I urge support for this resolution so that we can move forward with the budget process.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, my wonderful colleague from Massachusetts is trying to have it both ways: We're going to balance the budget; we're not going to cut taxes. We're going to balance the budget; we're not going to cut taxes. But, in fact, what happens is this budget relies on every single tax cut going away so that they can then say they balance the budget, but the fact of the matter is that they do not even address the biggest issues and the problems that face the Nation.

He is correct. The gentleman from Massachusetts is correct. Republicans did produce a balanced budget as a result of cutting taxes and fiscal discipline in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000. And in 2001, the day America was attacked, we had a balanced budget. He is absolutely correct. Since that time, we have not had a balanced budget. One million jobs were lost within 1 month after 9/11, 2001. And so as a result of that, Republicans decided that in order for us to gain financial advantage, that we would have tax cuts.

It is true that, as a result of rules in the Senate, the other body, that we could not make these tax cuts permanent. It is also true that every single year since that period of time that Republicans have asked Democrats, please make every single one of these tax cuts permanent, well, that's like light to a vampire. Absolutely no, not for the Democrats, because they're opposed to the tax cuts. They're on record of opposing the tax cuts. And today they come to the floor, oh, we're not taking away any of the tax cuts. Of course they are. Because if they didn't, they couldn't then ''balance the budget'' that they have on the floor today. That is exactly what they are doing.

Second point, Social Security, as a result of our growing economy, every single new worker that comes in, Social Security has to add to its deficit the amount of money that is owed to Social Security every time we get a new worker, and that is more than half of this deficit. It's an accounting gimmick because what happens is that Social Security accounts for what they have to have as an unfunded liability out for 50 years.

So to talk about the irresponsibility, I will take part of the blame. But growing this economy, having increased tax revenue, having the greatest single economy we have ever had, more people than ever living in homes, their own homes and our challenging the Democrat minority and now majority to say, why don't we get on with the real things that are important like worrying about Medicare and Medicaid? Nothing. Why don't we make sure that families do not have to pay after-tax dollars for health care? Silence. Silence from our Democrat majority.

The new Democrats want to tax and spend. That's what they've always been about. That's what they're about on the floor of the House of Representatives today. And they're trying to get it both ways.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to the ranking member from the Budget Committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to echo the point he made.

Our chairman, the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina, came to the floor and accurately said both budgets, the Senate budget resolution and the House-passed budget resolution, balance the budget. That is correct. They do. It is certified by the Congressional Budget Office. There is only one reason and way and method how they balance the budget, though, Mr. Speaker: by raising taxes.

The House-passed budget resolution relies upon, requires, in fact, makes sure that it passes the largest tax increase in American history in order to balance the budget. The Senate-passed budget resolution relies upon, requires and ensures that the second largest tax increase in American history be enacted on the American people, on the American taxpayers, in order to achieve balance.

I have two major concerns with this budget resolution, Mr. Speaker. Number one, it is very bad economic policy. And number two, it is an enormous missed opportunity.

Why is this budget resolution bad economic policy? Inflicting the largest tax increase in American history on the American family, business, entrepreneur, on American taxpayers, is bad economic policy. And here is why: Back in 2001, where we realized we had 9/11, and in 2003, where we realized we had a recession, with the dot-com bubble burst, with Enron scandals, we had job losses to the tune where we were losing about 124,000 jobs a month. We had to act quickly to get people back to work, so we cut taxes across the board. We cut taxes on entrepreneurs, on families, on workers, on businesses, on capital. What happened: 7.6 million new jobs were created since then. We have been creating on average over 200,000 jobs a month since then. The stock market turned around. The savings portfolios of senior citizens which were eviscerated in the market crash came back. The Dow hit 13,000 last week, an all-time high. We saw business investment, from negative decline after negative decline for 11 consecutive quarters, turn around and hit all-time highs. More jobs were created. And what happened at these lower tax rates? Revenues came into the Federal Government at a much, much faster pace, at about a 25-year high. So we saw more revenues coming into the Federal Government, which actually brought the deficit down at these lower tax rates.

What this budget resolution does is it puts that economic recovery plan in jeopardy. By raising taxes on people and businesses and entrepreneurs, you are reducing job growth in America. You are raising the cost of capital.

We have a problem, Mr. Speaker, and that is we live in the era of

globalization. The oceans no longer separate our economy from the rest of the world. Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers don't live in this country. They are overseas.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have got to wake up. Wake up to the fact that we have real competitive pressures. Countries like China and India, let alone Japan and Europe, are giving us real competitive pressures, real competitive challenges. And when we go back to the old adage of taxing, taxing and taxing, what we are going to do is tax more and more jobs overseas to these other countries. By taxing our economy and our businesses and our workers more and more than our competitors tax theirs, you know what happens? They get our jobs. That is a mistake. That is wrong.

America taxes capital more than any other industrialized country in the world except for one, Japan, and they just finished two decades of recession. So it is really bad economic policy to have all these tax increases.

You just heard the gentleman from Massachusetts talk about the reserve funds they have in this budget. They really want to make sure that they don't raise these taxes. So they put a reserve fund in the budget. And the reserve fund basically says, we don't want to raise these taxes; we would like to come up and pay for them, but our money is not there.

A budget is basically a page full of numbers, and numbers don't lie. The numbers in this budget require these taxes to go up, require these taxes to sunset; otherwise, they don't balance the budget.

You can't have it both ways. You can't balance the budget on the left hand and then say we are not raising taxes on the right hand. It is one or the other. So regardless of how many empty promise reserve funds you have in a budget resolution, the numbers don't lie, and the numbers say these taxes are being raised.

Now, as to the point that the sunset was put in by the Republicans, not by the Democrats, and we are simply letting this Republican policy manifest itself, and we are budgeting for it, that is not quite true, Mr. Speaker. And I remember being a member of the Ways and Means Committee and working on the conference committee at this time. When these tax cuts went through the Ways and Means Committee in the House, when these tax cuts passed the House floor, they were permanent. They never had a sunset in them. What happened? This arcane rule in the Senate called the Byrd rule was put in place. And the Byrd rule said for these tax cuts to be permanent, it needs 60 votes in the Senate. What happened? We had 52 Republicans voting to make them permanent; no Democrats would vote to make these tax cuts permanent. So the Democrats filibustered making these tax cuts permanent, and because of the Democrat filibuster in the Senate, these tax cuts were made temporary. The only way to get this tax relief to the American economy, to the American people, to get out of the job loss, to get out of the recession, was this temporary tax policy because of the Democrat-led filibuster by then Senator Daschle at the time in the Senate. That's why there's a sunset in this law.

We always kind of wondered at the time, why would they stand in the way of the taxpayer and make these tax cuts temporary? Why would they insist upon these sunsets? Well, now we know why. Because it is how they balance the budget because they plan on, bank for, certify, require, rely on these tax cuts going away.

The second reason I think this is a bad policy is it is an enormous missed opportunity, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman from South Carolina, who really is a gentleman from South Carolina, and I mean that sincerely, had a lot of good hearings in the Budget Committee. We have had a few in Ways and Means as well. We had all these experts coming to us from the left and from the right, from think tanks on the left side of the aisle and think tanks on the right side of the aisle, we had the Congressional Budget Office, the Federal Reserve Chairman, the Treasury Department coming to us, all saying the same thing: Entitlements are growing out of control. The entitlement program problem is enormous. We are doubling the amount of retirees in this country within one generation; yet we are only increasing the amount of workers coming in behind them by 17 percent.

□ 1630

We have an enormous unfunded liability, about $49 trillion. It's a mind-boggling number. But when you take three entitlements, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, those three entitlements right there, Mr. Speaker, will consume 100 percent of the Federal budget by the time my children are my age.

So all these experts came to us and said, Do something. You're the Budget Committee, you've got to do something to control the growth of entitlements. It's going to bankrupt America. And if we don't do anything, if we keep the government we have today and do nothing to reform entitlements, by the time my children are my age, they will literally have to pay double the amount of taxes for that Federal Government at that time.

Let me say it one other way, Mr. Speaker. Since about 1960, Washington has funded the Federal Government by taxing the U.S. economy by about 18 percent of the economy. About 18 percent of the gross domestic product has been required to pay for the Federal Government. It's been remarkably consistent. Now, if you take today's government, add no new programs, take none away, and transfer that out to about 2040 when my kids are my age, just to keep today's government afloat at that time you will have to tax 40 percent of GDP, 40 percent of the national economy just to pay for that government because of three entitlement programs.

You can't compete with China and India by taxing our economy at 40 percent, let alone Germany and Japan. You can't prepare for globalization. You can't help people get careers for tomorrow and enjoy higher standards of living if we don't address our entitlements right now.

That is the biggest travesty of this bill, Mr. Speaker. This bill says we will do absolutely nothing, nada, zilch, nothing at all either in the Senate budget resolution or the House budget resolution to attack and reform entitlement programs, to attack this problem for 5 years. This budget says let's do nothing to fix our entitlement programs for 5 years. That means we accelerate and exacerbate the bankruptcy of Social Security, of Medicare, of Medicaid. How is that helping senior citizens if we push these programs faster toward bankruptcy? I think that's wrong. I think we need to fix these programs so seniors can better rely on these programs.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? In Wisconsin we say this a lot, and I think people say it around the country, and prior generations always told this to me, my parents and my grandparents, they said, the thing about America, what's beautiful about America is that one generation works hard and leaves to the next generation a country that's better off. The dream of parents is to leave your children with a country that's better off so you can enjoy a higher standard of living. That is the beautiful legacy of America.

Mr. Speaker, we are at risk of severing that legacy. If we don't address these entitlements, if we simply go the old easy Washington route of simply raising taxes and raising spending and doing nothing to address this entitlement problem, we will really run the risk of severing that legacy and giving our children a lower standard of living than that which we enjoy today.

We have new competitive pressures from other countries unlike any we have seen before. Raising taxes on families and workers will not bring more prosperity to America. It will give jobs to other countries. Doing nothing to attack the entitlement problem in this country will only ensure that an unprecedented mountain of debt is befallen onto our children and our grandchildren, and they are going to have to pay far higher taxes than any American has ever paid in the past.

This, Mr. Speaker, is why I say vote against this rule and vote against this budget resolution, which includes and relies on the largest tax increase in American history and the biggest missed opportunity by doing nothing to reform entitlements over the next 5 years.

This could have been a bipartisan opportunity to fix these problems. Sadly, it's not.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, just because my colleagues on the Republican side say that the Democratic budget raises taxes doesn't mean it's true. Let me repeat that so no one misses this point. The budget resolution that we are talking about does not contain a single tax increase. That is a fact. Sometimes facts are a stubborn thing, but that is the fact. And the Republican spin machine can say whatever it wants; but the fact of the matter is, and I repeat, this budget resolution does not increase any taxes.

Secondly, I appreciate the fact that the gentleman from Texas was waxing nostalgic about the Clinton years when President Bill Clinton was the President of the United States and we were getting our fiscal house in order. But what I was talking about was what happened when President Bush became President and we had Republicans in the White House and in the Congress, and that is when we saw the skyrocketing of our Federal debt.

You know, budgets do reflect the priorities of a nation. And one of the reasons that I think people decided to vote for change in the last election is because they did not appreciate the priorities that were put forth by the previous Republican Congresses. They did not appreciate our veterans being shortchanged; they did not appreciate the most vulnerable in our country being shortchanged. If anyone has any questions about whether or not we were adequately funding veterans health, just recall the recent scandals of Walter Reed and at so many other of our veteran hospitals all across the country. You know, we voted in this Congress to send our young men and women into war. The least we can do is to make sure that the necessary funding is there to take care of them when they return, and the Democratic budget does that.

Let me also say for the record, Mr. Speaker, that notwithstanding all of the flowery language that we've heard from the other side, it is important to remember that in the last 6 years poverty has gotten worse in America. There are more people today than 6 years ago that need to rely on food stamps and other government programs just to get by.

So these fiscal policies that have resulted in skyrocketing debt, that have resulted in foreign countries like China purchasing our debt, I don't know how that serves our national interest, have not produced this incredible economic boom that we're hearing today. And I would encourage my colleagues to look at the statistics, to look at the facts, to talk to some of the people who have gone from being in the middle class, who have now fallen below the poverty line. There are far too many people that have done that, and what we are trying to do is to make sure that there is opportunity for everyone.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee, Mr. SPRATT.

Mr. SPRATT. I would say to my friend, the gentleman from Wisconsin, and I mean that compliment, I return the compliment, that I nevertheless vigorously disagree with some of the points you just made.

Facts are stubborn things, and the fact of the matter is that during the Clinton years, on average 237,000 jobs were created every month over an 8-year period of time. The Bush record is half that amount, if that. During the past month, you're leading with your left making that point at this point in time because during the past month job growth was just 88,000 jobs.

Secondly, with respect to Medicare, we know that Medicare has to be dealt with, but you know as well as I that this is not the forum. We need a much bigger group. We need the administration involved in the process. It is a very difficult undertaking to make the systemic changes that are necessary. And before we commence those negotiations, we need to do what President Clinton required in 1997, everybody needs to put some ante on the table. Everybody's got to have some skin in this game to be a player in this process of trying to diminish the cost of the health care entitlements to the United States. It has to be done, but this is not the correct forum for doing it.

The gentleman's budget resolution, I believe, cuts Medicare by $250 billion.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SPRATT. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. No. It increased Medicare spending. It just didn't increase it as fast as it is projected to grow at this time.

Mr. SPRATT. Well, the President's budget cut Medicare by $252 billion over a 10-year period of time and cut Medicaid by 50 to $60 billion over the same 10-year period of time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. SPRATT. Those numbers are correct, are they not?

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. The President's numbers on the 10-year? I think they are probably correct; I have no reason to dispute them. But remember, Medicare spending goes up every year and thereon after under either of these budgets.

Mr. SPRATT. Well, I can only surmise what happened to your budget resolution. One reason it didn't muster, besides the fact that you lost 40 votes, as you recall, is I am sure there are certain Republicans on your side of the aisle who did not want to vote for those massive cuts emasculating Medicare and Medicaid.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. The question I have for the chairman is, if we're not going to fix these entitlements in the budget, then where are we going to fix them? If we don't put it in the Federal budget, then how do you get it done? If you don't have reconciliation protection to do entitlement reform, then when are you ever going to do it?

The 1997 bill that President Clinton passed through on a bipartisan basis was reconciliation.

Mr. SPRATT. If I could reclaim my time, it takes a bigger forum than the Budget Committee provides. It takes more participants than just the Congress. Everybody has got to be a player in this game to make it happen in a significant way because it has got to involve, as you and I know, systemic change. No question about it.

And, finally, PAYGO. We are proud of the fact that we adopted the PAYGO rule in 1991, and it contributed significantly to the fact that over a period of 8 years during the Clinton administration the bottom line of the budget got better every year for 8 straight years to the point where we had a surplus of $236 billion under the Clinton administration resulting in part from the Balanced Budget Act of 1993 and 1997. $236 billion we handed over to President Bush. By the year 2004, between 2001 and 2004, we went from a surplus of $236 billion to a deficit of $412 billion. That happened on your watch. The Republicans controlled the House, they controlled the Senate, they controlled the White House. There is no way you can escape responsibility for what happened in those circumstances.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Will the chairman yield for an additional question?

Mr. SPRATT. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Why doesn't the gentleman's PAYGO apply to discretionary spending? Why doesn't the gentleman's PAYGO apply to current Federal spending?

Mr. SPRATT. PAYGO is never applied to discretionary spending. It would be very difficult at this time to do it when every year we have an end run around discretionary budget with the President's supplementals for Iraq and Afghanistan. It would be very difficult to cap discretionary.

Your party, on its watch, allowed PAYGO discretionary spending caps, all of those constraints in 1990, to expire and did not renew them. The main reason you didn't was you knew if we had a double-edge PAYGO applicable to tax cuts as well as mandatory increases, you would be unable to pass additional tax cuts as part of your agenda.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. May I make an entreaty to the chairman?

Mr. SPRATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I would love to work on a bipartisan basis to put discretionary caps in place. I would be delighted to work with the chairman of the Budget Committee to put discretionary spending caps in place. Is that something that you would be willing to work with us on?

Mr. SPRATT. We'll talk about it. If we've got a forum, the Budget Committee, once we've got this budget resolution behind us, and that is the order of the day, there are lots of things along those lines that we can explore, and we will.

Let me conclude by saying everybody should vote for this budget resolution if they want to see an orderly, fiscally responsible, disciplined process in the next fiscal year.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a second and highlight the admiration that this House has for the two gentlemen who have just been speaking. The gentleman, Mr. SPRATT, and the gentleman, Mr. RYAN, have conducted themselves despite tough differences, and I applaud both of them, in particular my good friend from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) for the conduct that he has on this floor.

Now back to the real issues.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the Republican minority is here on the floor of the House today opposing this bill. We are opposing this resolution because we do not believe that this properly talks about the future of this country for entitlement spending, raising taxes and not being responsible for the future opportunity for America to compete.

So we, once again, continue our opposition to the process that is happening today, as well as the underlying legislation.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the Fifth Congressional District of Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule and to this underlying resolution.

I have listened to my chairman carefully, the gentleman from South Carolina, and I wish to add my respect along with that of the gentleman, ranking member from Wisconsin. He conducts our committee in a very fair-minded manner, and I appreciate and respect him for that. And I take him at his word when he says that he believes that he is putting forth on this floor a fiscally responsible budget. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a distinct difference in our philosophies. How you look the American people in the eye and impose upon them the single largest tax increase in American history and call that fiscally responsible is simply beyond me. Our chairman has a different definition.

Now, I believe that what we need to do is try to help protect the family budget from the Federal budget. Already, Mr. Speaker, we are awash in Federal tax revenues. And we've heard the gentleman from South Carolina and many other people from this side of the aisle extol the virtues of their balanced budget. Okay. If they have a balanced budget, did they cut spending to get there? No. There is only one other option, and that is that they increase taxes.

And don't take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. Go, for example, to the Washington Post, not exactly a bastion of conservative thought in our Nation. They have said that the only way the Democrat budget will achieve balance is they assume the tax relief goes away, and thus it imposes the single largest tax increase in American history.

Now, I have heard our chairman and other people from this side of the aisle, different colleagues get up and say, well, we're not really raising taxes on the American people, we're just letting the tax relief expire.

□ 1645

But if you make the same paycheck last year that you made this year and your tax bill is higher, that is going to be a distinction that is lost on the American people.

Is it letting tax relief expire if it is a tax increase? I have to tell you, if the people in the Fifth Congressional District of Texas have to pay a larger tax bill, they call it a tax increase, and the sooner that we in this body recognize that fact, the better off America will be. Under the Democrat's budget resolution, the average family, the average family in Texas will have a $2,700 a year tax increased phased in over 5 years.

Something else we need to remember, Mr. Speaker, is that every time you are taking money away from the American family to plus-up some Federal budget category, you are having to subtract from some family budget category; $2,700 a year is a lot of money to Texas families. How many families can no longer send a child to college because of the single largest tax increase in American history that the Democrats are trying to impose upon us? How many American families will not be able to find their American dream, to put together their savings and invest in that first small business because the Democrats are imposing the single largest tax increase in American history? How many families will no longer be able to afford their healthcare premiums because the Democrats are imposing the single largest tax increase in American history? $2,700 a year.

First, the working poor under this plan would have their taxes increased 50 percent, from the 10 percent bracket to the 15 percent bracket. The child tax credit would be cut in half. The death tax would come up to where Uncle Sam could take as much as 55 percent of your estate.

Mr. Speaker, as bad as this budget is for what it does, it is even worse for what it doesn't do, because I know the chairman presided over the hearings that I attended with the Federal Reserve Chairman, with the head of OMB, with the Secretary of the Treasury, with CBO, who all said the same thing: The single largest fiscal challenge in this Nation is out of control entitlement spending, and this budget is stone-cold silent on that number one challenge.

As bad as the tax imposition is going to be on this generation, if we don't act, if we kick the can down the road, if we avoid leadership, the next generation will see their taxes double. There is nothing fiscally responsible about doubling taxes on the next generation, nothing fiscally responsible about taking their dreams away.

Mr. Speaker, we must defeat this rule and defeat this budget. Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why you would avoid dealing with the number one fiscal challenge in the Nation.

I know the chairman, the gentleman from South Carolina, said this isn't the place to do it. Well, I will ask a question that was asked by a very famous President: If not us, who? If not now, when?

I am curious as to what advantage we have by somehow kicking this can down the road to some other body or to some other bill or to some other institution. At least in the last two Republican Congresses, we had two budgets in a row from the House, from the House, that actually made steps toward reforming entitlement spending.

Now, it is a huge challenge, I admit, but every year we avoid it. In Social Security alone, we run up an extra $400 billion of debt, of unfunded obligations to pass on to the next generation. And yet the Democrats turn their back on this once again. That is another reason to defeat this.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just repeat for the record that section 401 of the budget resolution commits the budget to support the middle-class income tax cuts passed in 2001 and 2003, including the child tax credit, marriage penalty relief, the 10 percent individual income tax bracket, estate tax reform, research and development tax credit, and the deduction of State and local sales taxes.

Section 203 of the budget resolution clearly provides a reserve fund for the extension of those tax cuts so long as the legislation complies with the House pay-as-you-go rule.

I would simply say to my colleagues that under their watch, that many middle-class taxpayers actually saw their taxes go up, because when the Federal Government cut essential programs to States and cities and towns, people saw their property taxes go through the roof.

I think one can make an argument that people are paying far too high gas prices right now because of the years that were squandered under the Republican leadership, emboldened to the oil industry and refusing to invest adequately in alternative sources of energy.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that this is a good budget, and I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the rule and support the budget.

Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 1 minute remaining.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, we are opposed to this bill. The first thing this is going to do is provide for higher taxes, $392 billion worth of new taxes between now and 2012. Secondly, this budget outspends inflation. It outspends inflation moving forward that will increase higher than the average of 2.4 percent. It is reckless entitlement spending increases. It is either empty promises or tax increases that they have.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, it is very obvious that there is no entitlement reform that will take place. They had a 5-year budget to do it. They had 5 years to look out and say, we are going to match our Republican colleagues. It is now our chance, because the Republicans tried and got no support from the Democrats for the last 12 years to make sure we could do entitlement reform. Now it is their turn. Nothing. Nada. They are ignoring the future. This is a bad precedent.

We know that the Democratic party is about taxing and spending. It is obvious. It is there today. We will let them vote for the tax increases. We will continue on the Republican side to make sure that we are for growing the economy and cutting taxes.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me just say that I think there is a reason why the Republicans lost the last election, and that is that the people of this country were fed up with their priorities. They were tired of budget resolution after budget resolution that shortchanged our veterans, that shortchanged our schools, that shortchanged our environment, that shortchanged our senior citizens, that shortchanged health care.

As I pointed out earlier, Mr. Speaker, there are more people in poverty today than 6 years ago. There are more people who are food insecure today than 6 years ago. That is not a record of accomplishment that I would want to brag about on the House floor.

The budget that Mr. SPRATT has brought before us achieves key objectives in six areas. It is fiscal responsibility, defending our Nation, putting our children and families first, growing our economy, preserving our planet, and promoting an accountable and efficient government.

Mr. Speaker, we have inherited this incredible budget deficit and this debt from the previous majority. It is not easy to try to clean up this mess, but that is what the underlying budget before us tries to do.

I would urge all my colleagues to vote for it. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SESSIONS. 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, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

HOMELESS VETERANS HOUSING AT SEPULVEDA AMBULATORY CARE CENTER PROMOTION ACT

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1642) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that, to the extent possible, an enhanced-use lease for a homeless housing project at the Department of Veterans Affairs facility known as the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, located in North Hills, California, shall provide that such housing project shall be maintained as a sober living facility for veterans only, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1642

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 ''Homeless Veterans Housing at Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center Promotion Act''.

SEC. 2. ENHANCED USE LEASE FOR SEPULVEDA AMBULATORY CARE CENTER, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR LEASE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into an enhanced-use lease under section 8162 of title 38, United States Code, at the Department facility known as the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center (in this Act referred to as the ''Center''), for a homeless housing project, only to the extent, subject to the exceptions provided in subsection (d), that any such lease contains legally enforceable provisions that the tenant under the lease shall comply with the following terms and conditions:

(1) That the housing project located at the Center shall provide housing exclusively for veterans, as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) That such housing project shall be maintained, for the duration of the lease, as a sober living facility.

(3) That the housing project shall be adequately staffed with health care, counseling, and security personnel, taking into account the ratio of such staff to residents, in order to protect residents of the housing project and of the community, and that the minimum staffing ratios shall be specified in an enforceable provision of the lease.

(4) That the housing project shall provide housing to not fewer than 150 and not more than 225 residents.

(b) CONSIDERATION OF QUALIFIED ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary shall consider proposals for the enhanced-use lease under subsection (a) from all organizations determined by the Secretary to be qualified, and which are capable and willing to comply with the terms and conditions described in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) of subsection (a).

(c) SELECTION OF ORGANIZATION.—In the event that there are more than one qualified organizations described in subsection (b) which submit a proposal, the Secretary shall enter into the enhanced-use lease under subsection (a) with the organization that the Secretary determines shall offer the best treatment services, security staffing, and supervision with respect to residents of the housing project. The Secretary shall give preference to entering into such a lease with a qualified organization which has the most experience nationwide in providing housing and treatment for homeless veterans.

(d) EXCEPTIONS.—If the Secretary, after a diligent search, is unable to enter into an enhanced-use lease with a qualified organization containing all of the terms and conditions specified in subsection (a) on or before a date that is 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary—

(1) may enter into such a lease with a qualified organization providing that the housing project shall be exclusively for veterans during the duration of the lease, with preference given to an organization which housing project shall provide housing to the highest number of residents not exceeding 225; and

(2) if, after a diligent search, the Secretary is unable to enter into such a lease with a qualified organization that provides that the housing project shall be exclusively for veterans during the duration of the lease, may enter into such a lease with an organization providing that not less than 80 percent of the residents of the housing project shall be veterans throughout the duration of the lease.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BAIRD). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2642. We all know that homelessness among veterans is a pervasive problem. Estimates are that there are 20,000 to 30,000 homeless veterans in the Los Angeles area alone and more than 200,000 probably on the streets of our entire Nation. Many of these homeless veterans also have substance abuse problems.

My colleague and friend, Congressman BRAD SHERMAN, has worked with veterans in the San Fernando Valley community to mobilize community support for veterans-only housing, a project that will use two buildings at the VA Sepulveda complex to provide housing and supportive services for homeless veterans with substance abuse problems.

The bill before you will ensure that the Sepulveda veterans facilities and resources are used for veterans only. It also provides that all qualified housing organizations receive the opportunity to compete for the homeless veterans housing project at Sepulveda. Most importantly, this bill directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that, to the extent possible, an enhanced use lease for a homeless housing project at Sepulveda shall be maintained as a sober living facility for veterans only with adequate staffing and security.

Additionally, this bill will ensure that all qualified housing organizations receive the opportunity to present competing proposals to the VA for a

homeless veterans project at the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center in North Hills, California.

Mr. Speaker, two worthy and good nonprofit organizations, New Directions, Incorporated, and their partner, A Community of Friends, made a proposal to local VA administrators and local elected officials and community representatives to enter into this lease with the VA for a veterans-only housing project for recovering substance abusers that would in fact be alcohol-free and would have adequate staffing and security. All the parties that were brought together by Mr. SHERMAN agreed to these commitments.

But just last summer, the nonprofits abandoned that proposal and sought enhanced-use lease to deliver a project that was substantially different than what everyone had agreed to earlier. They took these steps after discovering additional funding sources through Housing and Urban Development that it believes might be available for this project if it opens these facilities to residency by non-veterans and allows the use of alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, how can you begin to help homeless veterans who are trying to get their lives together, trying to recover from addictions to drugs and alcohol, but putting them in a facility that allows the very thing from which they are trying to recover? It does not make any sense.

This bill does not stop the Secretary of the VA from entering into a lease, but it does ensure that the Secretary conduct a diligent search to find a qualified organization with the experience, efficiency and funding sources to deliver a veterans-only, sober living facility and to enter into a lease with the organization best suited to deliver the projects.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 1642. I also ask for their continued support for our Nation's veterans. This bill is the least we can do to help ensure our homeless and recovering veterans have an environment that allows them to reach their goal, clean and sober.

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

□ 1700

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, while I do not oppose H.R. 1642, the Homeless Housing at Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center Promotion Act, I do have some concerns about the bill.

This legislation would require that the enhanced-use lease for a homeless veterans housing project at the Sepulveda VA Outpatient Clinic provide sober-living housing exclusively for veterans. The bill also mandates that the housing project be adequately staffed and provide for not fewer than 150, nor more than 250, residents.

At first glance, this sounds like a reasonable requirement. In fact, it is my understanding that the original lease proposal by New Directions, which received the support of the local community leaders, contained a veterans-only facility with a sober-living campus. However, when New Directions sought additional funding through the Housing and Urban Development Agency, HUD, due to Federal HUD's governance requirements, they could no longer stipulate in the contract that the facility would be a veterans-only ''with no alcohol on the premises'' facility.

New Directions is a residential substance abuse and mental health treatment program created by a Vietnam veteran and former homeless veteran John Keaveney. Since 1991, New Directions has been working in conjunction with other service providers and the Department of Veterans Affairs to help assist homeless veterans. In 1994, New Directions became the first social services agency in the country to provide temporary housing and services to homeless female veterans as well as family members of veterans.

To address these issues, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, James Nicholson, on March 8, 2007, sent a letter to the New Directions administration that would operate the housing under a dry-housing model whereby the residents would agree not to use alcohol or intoxicating drugs. With more than 20,000 homeless veterans in that area, it was anticipated that all of the beds could be filled entirely with veterans.

Mr. Speaker, here is my concern: the Congressional Budget Office in their April 30, 2007 cost estimate for this bill stated: ''VA is currently in the process of finalizing an enhanced-use lease for the Sepulveda facility with a nonprofit organization, New Directions. However, New Directions cannot reach the specified conditions in this bill. Based on information from VA, CBO expects that under the bill, the Department would be required to break off arrangements with New Directions and search for qualified organizations, a process that could take a few years.''

New Directions has agreed to operate under a dry-housing model, and there is certainly a sufficiently large veterans homeless population in the area to virtually guarantee that the facility will be occupied entirely with veterans. Yet my colleagues wish to impose this legislation which would significantly delay the project.

Mr. Speaker, I understand why the local community would want this legislation. However, H.R. 1642 does not address what happens to the hundreds of homeless veterans in the north Los Angeles area who would have been helped by this facility while they wait several years for the VA to begin this process to enter into a new lease.

With the passage of this legislation, are these homeless veterans still on the street waiting for a lease with better terms? That's the question that the American public deserves an answer to.

I would hope that this body can be offered some assurances that temporary provision will be made for the many homeless veterans during this hopefully brief period of delay while a new lease is negotiated. Then, Mr. Speaker, I would be more comfortable in supporting this bill.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concerns that the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) raised. I think the concern should be directed to the VA Secretary who, if he had asked for a competition on proposals, wouldn't be negotiating with just one group.

I personally have talked to groups that say they would offer proposals which would guarantee all veterans and would guarantee sober living, and we are convinced it would not take 2 years, but could be done rather quickly.

I think Congressman SHERMAN can answer with much greater expertise and I would yield to him such time as he may consume.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the House for taking the time and focusing on an issue that is relevant to just one district, namely mine, a facility that is in my district.

I would like to thank the chairman of the committee for coming out to my district and for meeting with veterans and for meeting with those who run the VA in our area and for understanding this issue so well; and for meeting with the one developer who opposes this bill.

And I want to thank the gentlelady from Florida for taking her time to study an issue that after all just relates to one district and one facility.

Now, let me tell you why we are here. It is a story that I can relate briefly.

A developer came to our community and said they would like to provide housing for 150 homeless veterans with substance abuse problems in our suburban neighborhood. You can imagine in some communities those who believe in NIMBY-ism, ''not in my backyard,'' would have said, oh, take care of veterans, but not here. I am proud of my community.

I had countless meetings. Yes, there were a few naysayers. But finally after many meetings, the community was clear, we want to help this project. We want to help veterans, particularly those that are homeless and suffering from substance abuse problems. We as community organizations want to volunteer, our veterans organizations want to send people, our employers want to provide jobs, all so homeless veterans can get the help they need not only with housing but with substance abuse problems.

What we got in return was a clear statement of three principles: that the facility would be for veterans only; that there would be adequate staffing ratios set forth in the lease so that as long as the lease would run, we would know that it was adequately staffed;

and, finally, that the facility be clean and sober because it was designed for homeless veterans with substance abuse problems. We wanted to provide the special environment these veterans need to recover.

And we assumed that once we as a community urged the VA to go forward with a program, they would open it up to a variety of organizations and say we've got two empty buildings right here in the City of Los Angeles in the North Hills community; come and give us your proposals. Instead, something else happened.

First, for reasons I do not understand, the VA decided to spend a lot of time just focused on one developer. Second, that developer, who had promised our community, and these promises were reduced to writing, that the program would have guaranteed staffing ratios, decided to back out of that promise, decided that they would rather not have to provide any particular level of funding.

They had come to us and said the program would be veterans only and would be alcohol free. But then they discovered that certain sources of funds would be available to them only if it was for general public housing; and that in order to get certain sources of funding from HUD, they would have to open it up to non-veterans and they would have to allow alcohol because in a general housing facility open to all types of homeless people, you don't turn to every homeless person and say, We will give you a roof, but you can't have a beer.

So they had to change the proposal from a design to treat homeless veterans' abuse problems in the best way possible, to one that was a general proposal. And VA headquarters decided they had already had so many discussions, it was easier for them, they wanted their statistics to look good, they wanted to cut the ribbon on a facility, that they would just go down the road and provide a 75-year, rent-free lease on valuable land in valuable buildings in the City of Los Angeles to this developer, allow non-veterans, allow alcohol use, not require any staffing ratios.

Now, what does my bill provide? It says to the VA: have an open process; allow the Salvation Army to submit a proposal; allow U.S. Vets to submit a proposal; allow the groups that met with the chairman in my district to submit proposals; and do your best to get a facility that is veterans only; that has adequate staffing ratios guaranteed; and that provides the alcohol-free therapeutic environment these veterans need. Do it in less than a year, says the bill. And if for some reason you can't find some qualified organization to submit a qualified proposal, then go forward. Do your best for veterans, but go forward, because we don't want to delay the use of these buildings to provide care for veterans for any significant amount of time.

I am confident that if the VA opens its process that these groups who have met with me and who have met with the chairman will come forward.

Now, I have recently seen a letter that is issued by the one organization that does not want an open process. They would rather just go ahead and sign a lease. Keep in mind the four issues: staffing; alcohol prohibited; veterans only; competitive bidding.

This comprehensive and long-letter response doesn't deal with the staffing issues because there is no reason to sign a 75-year, no-rent lease without the VA at least putting in there you will have so much staff. This long response does not deal with the issue of alcohol use because there is no reason that an organization that wants to help homeless veterans with substance abuse problems would allow alcohol except for the reason that that opens up funding sources that they otherwise don't have.

Instead, they focus on two other issues. The first is they say legal counsel has advised us that restricting the project to veterans only would expose us to legal liability. That is their phony argument for not having it veterans-only. Why is it phony? I used to be a lawyer. I could have advised any client who paid me that they would face legal liability if they scratched their nose. The fact is while anybody can get sued for anything, any activity, including breathing, can subject you to theoretical legal liability, all over this country we have veterans-only housing. We have a dozen projects in L.A. County alone.

And while you can always find a lawyer to say something could subject you to possible legal liability, none of these hundreds of veterans-only housing facilities has been sued.

What is the real reason? They say we have located funding sources that will not allow veterans only. That happens to be true. The Salvation Army and U.S. Vets, I am convinced and they are convinced, can find the funding sources that will allow for veterans-only projects. But this New Directions group has found only the wrong funding sources.

It is true there are many properly funded veterans-only clean and sober housing facilities across this country, but it is harder to do that kind of project than to do a project that can accept funding from those sources dedicated to general public use.

This may be an issue we in Congress want to look at. We may want to make it easier to have veterans housing in this country, to allow veterans-only projects that are alcohol-free to compete for the HUD money from particular programs, but that is a national issue. The local issue is that many organizations can do it right and can get their funding from sources that want to fund veterans-only clean and sober facilities.

Now this organization has given me an oral promise that at least initially they will only have veterans living there; but it is a 75-year, rent free, no-competitive bidding contract; and we will have no assurance that within years this project will not include both veterans and non-veterans.

This is of such importance to veterans of L.A. County because there is valuable land owned by the VA in my district, and even more valuable in an adjoining district, and every group with a good cause comes and says, Let us use this land for a non-veterans project. Sell this land and give us the money and we will help people somewhere.

But the veterans of L.A. County are very clear.

□ 1715

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SHERMAN. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to commend you for working with the community to establish a homeless shelter. Having been a county commissioner, I know how heated those public hearings can be when people think that there is going to be a homeless shelter anywhere in the county, let alone anywhere near their particular residence or business.

Having a homeless shelter for veterans only is a very, very laudable goal, and there is a camaraderie there that I understand where you are going with that.

My question is, do you have any idea how long it would take to go out to competitive bid? And also, as you know and when you were practicing law you may have participated in this, the unsuccessful bidders very often can drag it on ad nauseam because they did not get the bid. Do you have any estimate of how long this process would take, because I think our goals are mutual of having a facility there for veterans?

Mr. SHERMAN. I am convinced the goal could be done in months. The bill does not provide for a super technical process. It simply says invite other groups under this bill to provide competitive bids, and it provides an absolute limit of 1 year. So this is a short-term process.

We already have other groups thinking about making proposals. They are reluctant to make proposals until they are asked for it.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. I thank the gentleman for the response.

Mr. SHERMAN. So what this bill does is it opens the process to competitive proposals. It allows other groups like U.S. Vets and the Salvation Army to submit proposals. It urges the VA to try to create what we always wanted to create—veterans-only, staffing ratios, alcohol-free, and it gives them 1 year to do this. I hope they will act much, much more quickly, and I will push those other groups to submit their proposals very quickly.

Speaking of quickly, I should end this speech quickly.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, and like her, I commend the gentleman from California for his tireless work on an issue that rarely gets community support, and I am convinced, as he said I visited the area, that we will have an up-and-running homeless program for veterans with substance abuse in a very short time. It is a place where the VA is using its facilities, and it is a great opportunity for anybody who wants to help this issue.

So I thank the gentleman and I thank the gentlewoman.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1642, the "Homeless Veterans Housing at Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center Promotion Act."

America's veterans have risked their lives for their country. They deserve the best treatment and support that we can offer them. Despite this, homelessness remains a pervasive problem among veterans, with many homeless veterans also fighting substance abuse problems. It is our responsibility, as our Nation's leaders, to work to ensure they receive the assistance they need.

This bill is an important step toward that goal. The Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, located in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley, exists to provide care to veterans. It is currently the major outpatient facility for the 1.4 million veterans living in northern Los Angeles. The Center falls under the purview of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and includes education and research facilities, in addition to comprehensive ambulatory care. This facility serves a vital role for the region's veterans.

This bill would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to maintain a homeless housing project at the Sepulveda Center as a sober living facility for veterans only. H.R. 1642 also requires that this housing project be provided with adequate staffing and security.

This legislation is a necessary step in ensuring that our veterans receive the support that they need. I strongly support this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BAIRD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1642.

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 MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY SPARTANS FOR THEIR VICTORY IN THE 2007 NCAA HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 325) commending the Michigan State University Spartans for their victory in the 2007 NCAA Hockey Championship, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 325

Whereas Michigan State University is one of the premier academic institutions in the nation;

Whereas on April 9, 2007, the Michigan State University Spartans won their first National Collegiate Athletic Association Hockey Championship in 21 years;

Whereas the members of the Michigan State University 2007 hockey team include Jeff Lerg, Chris Snavely, Ethan Graham, Brandon Gentile, Brandon Warner, Justin Abdelkader, Tim Kennedy, Bryan Lerg, Ryan Turek, Zak McClellan, Jeff Dunne, Tyler Howells, Jay Sprague, Chris Mueller, Chris Lawrence, Nick Sucharski, Matt Schepke, Jim McKenzie, Kurt Kivisto, Daniel Sturges, Daniel Vukovic, Steve Mnich, Bobby Jarosz, Tim Crowder, Justin Johnston, and Michael Ratchuk;

Whereas Head Coach Rick Comley and Assistant Coaches Tom Newton, Brian Renfrew, and Rob Woodward are to be commended for outstanding coaching throughout the 2007 season;

Whereas the Spartans won the championship game by coming from behind to score 3 goals in a stunning third-period upset;

Whereas the Spartans succeeded not only because of the skills of talented individual players but because those players worked so well together as a team;

Whereas in the championship game, the Spartans beat Boston College, a team that had won 13 straight games, featured 12 National Hockey League draft picks, and had played in the 2006 NCAA championship game as well;

Whereas Spartan head coach Rick Comley has now won 3 national hockey championships (one with the NAIA and 2 with the NCAA) with 3 different Michigan universities: Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University, and Michigan State University;

Whereas when the Spartans last won a national hockey championship, they were coached by Ron Mason, who continues to serve Michigan State University as the school's Athletic Director and who in fact hired Coach Comley as his replacement;

Whereas Michigan State University and the East Lansing community honored the Spartans upon their return in a manner befitting of champions; and

Whereas Michigan State University students, faculty, alumni, and all Michigan State fans are deeply committed to bringing pride to Michigan State University and to the entire state of Michigan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the Michigan State University Spartans for their victory in the 2007 NCAA Hockey Championship;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the players, coaches, students, and staff whose hard work and dedication helped Michigan State University win the championship; and

(3) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to transmit a copy of this resolution to Michigan State University President Lou Anna Simon, hockey Head Coach Rick Comley, and Athletic Director Ron Mason for appropriate display.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, on April 7 in St. Louis, Missouri, the Michigan State Spartans beat the Boston College Eagles 3–1 to win the 2007 NCAA Hockey Championship, affectionately known annually as the Frozen Four.

The win gave the Michigan State hockey team their first championship in 21 years, and Spartan forward Justin Abdelkader rang it off the post and scored with 18.9 seconds to snap a 1–1 tie and bring home the championship for Michigan State.

They scored three goals in the final 10 minutes of the game, and Spartan goalie Jeff Lerg was spectacular, making 29 saves and allowing only one goal.

The Spartans won the hearts of underdogs everywhere. Their win capped an improbable four-game run by the third-seeded Michigan State team, who few considered to be championship contenders. In fact, the Spartans are only the second number three seed to make it to the championship game and the first in history to win it.

Justin Abdelkader was the 2007 Men's Frozen Four MVP, and the championship is Head Coach Rich Comley's second. He also won as head coach of Northern Michigan in 1991. He is one of only three coaches to have won titles with two different teams.

This is the second straight year that Boston College has lost in the championship game, and I did want to take a moment to highlight their achievements.

Last year, they lost in the finals to the Wisconsin Badgers, but prior to this year's championship, they had won 13 consecutive games, piling up a 29–11–2 record. They had multiple All-American candidates and two players who received All New England honors.

I want to extend my congratulations to the Spartan's head coach Rick Comley, Assistant Coaches Tom Newton, Brian Renfrew and Rob Woodward. I also want to recognize Michigan State University Athletic Director Ron Mason, President Lou Anna Simon and, most importantly, the Spartan players for their amazing season.

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

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. ROGERS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume.

I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I also want to thank Bart Stupak from Michigan for working with us on this resolution.

I am proud to represent Michigan State University in the great State of Michigan. It is truly an extraordinary school with a proud history of world-class academics and championship athletics. Known for its quality in faculty, its research, it is certainly one of the finer universities, a proud tradition in

land grant institutions in this great State who is now headed by President Lou Anna Simon, who has done a tremendous job at the university in so many areas.

But last month we got to witness Michigan State's winning tradition once again, this time on the biggest stage in college hockey.

On April 7, the MSU hockey team won the Division I NCAA National Championship. The Spartans defeated Boston College by a score of 3–1, as we all know, and the winning goal came with only 18.9 seconds left in the game. It's no fun unless you make it close. Well, our Spartans certainly got our heart rates up that particular day.

It was a hard-fought game against a top-ranked opponent, but as many of you know, the Spartans' specialty is winning. They came out on top.

The Spartans scored three goals in the third period to spur a dramatic, comeback-from-behind victory. Justin Abdelkader scored the game-winning goal and was named MVP of the NCAA Frozen Four tournament. Chris Mueller put the game out of reach with an empty-net goal with just 1.2 seconds left on the clock. Goalie Jeff Lerg made 29 saves, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania discussed earlier.

Upon their return to East Lansing, showing the school spirit, certainly the community's support, there were over 4,500 fans turned out for a parade and a rally at Munn Ice Arena on the campus of Michigan State University.

Prior to the championship game, the MSU hockey squad burned through the NCAA Frozen Four tournament. The Spartans defeated Boston University, Notre Dame, University of Maine to reach that championship game.

In the tournament, the Spartans played top-notch defense against the Nation's best teams. They were 17 for 18 on penalty kills. Jeff Lerg made 104 saves and allowed only five goals in the tournament.

Let me tell you a little bit more about this historic championship season. The Spartans won the national championship for the third time in school history, the first since 1986 when current Athletic Director Ron Mason coached the team. Michigan State's Rick Comley, in his fifth year as head coach, won his first national title with Michigan State and the second national title as head coach. The Spartans compiled a 23–13–3 record and won the national championship as a number three seed in a field of 16 tournament.

There are many reasons to be proud of this Spartan team, and there are many reasons Michigan State fans are so proud of their hockey team and their university.

Michigan State remains the all-time winningest program in the history of the Central Collegiate Hockey Association. Former Head Coach Ron Mason has 924 victories, making him the all-time winningest coach in NCAA history. Current Head Coach Rick Comley has 714 wins, ranking fifth of all time.

I am proud to be a Spartan and represent that fine Michigan State University, and on behalf of myself, the entire Michigan delegation, BART STUPAK for his special assistance, I would like to congratulate our head coach, Rick Comley; his hardworking staff and assistants; and the best hockey players on the ice, the Michigan State Spartans; and certainly their fans.

Go Green.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I thank the gentleman from Michigan. I know there is no greater Michigan State fan in this body than him and how thrilled he was when they brought home that title. So congratulations to him.

This bill was sponsored by Congressman STUPAK from Michigan, and he apologizes for not being able to be here. We had a change in the schedule due to the budget discussion that we had that went on for an hour or so. He wanted me to point out specifically how happy he was for Head Coach Comley, whom he has known for his years at Northern Michigan where he won his first championship.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 325, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SENIOR GAMES ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 290) honoring the contributions of the Rocky Mountain Senior Games on its 30th anniversary for significantly improving the health and well-being of older Americans.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 290

Whereas in 1978 the Colorado Senior Sports Development Council (CSSDC) began hosting athletic competitions for individuals 50 years of age and older;

Whereas the city of Greeley, Colorado, worked with CSSDC to bring this popular athletic competition and social opportunity to the Rocky Mountain region;

Whereas the Rocky Mountain Senior Games originated as a 1-day event featuring swimming, basketball, and track and field;

Whereas the Rocky Mountain Senior Games now features a variety of sports and recreational activities during the week-long competition, including archery, badminton, basketball, billiards, bowling, cycling, golf, horseshoes, dancing, pickleball, race walking, racquetball, running, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis, tennis, track and field, triathlon, trap and skeet shooting, and weight lifting;

Whereas the Rocky Mountain Senior Games encourages athletes of all abilities to participate in the competition by creating age categories with 5-year increments;

Whereas the competition is also divided into male and female divisions, as well as mixed divisions in several doubles events;

Whereas athletes who qualify at the State level are eligible to compete at the biennial National Senior Games;

Whereas Colorado is always well represented at the National Senior Games by athletes who pay their own expenses to attend and compete, such as the 640 Colorado athletes who have already qualified for the 2007 National Senior Games in Louisville, Kentucky;

Whereas participants in the Rocky Mountain Senior Games experience the friendly fellowship, comraderie, and exhiliration of competition, as well as the enjoyment of associatied social events;

Whereas participants in the Rocky Mountain Senior Games experience highly beneficial effects on both their physical and mental health, leading to the ultimate goal of the Games of promoting ''Fitness as a Lifestyle'';

Whereas volunteers and event coordinators of all ages make the week's events possible; and

Whereas the 30th annual Rocky Mountain Senior Games will be held from June 6–10, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the contributions of the Rocky Mountain Senior Games on its 30th anniversary for significantly improving the health and well-being of older Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

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

Mr. Speaker, for 30 years the Rocky Mountain Senior Games has offered athletic competition and social opportunities to men and women, age 50 and older. Athletes of all abilities are encouraged to participate in over 30 athletic and social events. Competition is divided into male and female divisions, as well as mixed competition and by age groups. The purpose of the Rocky Mountain Senior Games is to motivate women and men over the age of 50 to pursue and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

In 2006, the Rocky Mountain Senior Games hosted 1,035 participants from 17 States across the country. The Rocky Mountain Senior Games offers our Nation's seniors the opportunity to experience the thrill of competition and the joy of camaraderie, while improving their physical fitness.

It is of vital importance that we encourage all adults to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles so that they can maintain a high quality of life as they grow older.

For 30 years, the Rocky Mountain Senior Games have helped improve the health and well-being of older Americans in our Nation. Every year, more and more seniors travel to Greeley, Colorado, to participate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the Rocky Mountain Senior Games.

□ 1730

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

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, my resolution, H. Res. 290, recognizes the goals and the ideals of the 30th annual Rocky Mountain Senior Games, which will be held in the next few weeks in my district in Colorado.

The Colorado Senior Development Council began hosting athletic competition for adults 50 and older in 1978; and today, the City of Greeley, and the Greeley Department of Recreation have partnered with the Colorado Senior Sports Development Council to host this popular event in the Rocky Mountain region.

The games originated in Colorado as a 1-day competition featuring four athletic events, including swimming, track and field, and basketball. Today, the Rocky Mountain games are among the oldest of its kind in the Nation and are among the most popular.

This year's games will be held from June 6–10, and there will be a wide range of events that include basketball, track and field, swimming, billiards, tennis, badminton, cycling, weight lifting, skeet and trap shooting, archery, a 5k and a 10k road race, a triathlon, and many others. The popularity of these events are made most evident by the high number of competitors.

Last year, for instance, there were more than 1,400 individuals who competed in the games, many of whom succeeded in qualifying for the bi-annual national games.

In fact, Colorado will be well represented at this year's national games, which will be held later this summer in Louisville, Kentucky. There are 640 Colorado athletes who have already qualified.

The individuals who participate experience friendly fellowship, camaraderie, and the exhilaration of competition. For a long time, fitness has been synonymous with Colorado. I think that's because of our wonderful sunny climate and our natural treasures that encourage people to get out and enjoy themselves. It's not surprising, then, that so many seniors continue exercising and seek out active competition, even as they begin to get older.

My bill recognizes these competitors and the benefits they are making towards their long-term health. I am pleased my colleagues in Congress, especially those in Colorado, are joining me today to approve this bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I ask that Members be given 5 legislative days to insert material relevant to H. Res. 325 and H. Res. 290 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 290 honoring the contributions of the Rocky Mountain Senior Games on its 30th anniversary for significantly improving the health and well-being of older Americans.

We should recognize the hardworking volunteers and the event coordinators that make this week's events possible. Without their efforts, these games would not be possible. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honoring the Michigan State University Men's Hockey team in winning the Frozen Four, becoming the Men's National Collegiate Hockey Champions.

On Saturday, April 7, 2007, a record crowd of 19,432 witnessed Michigan State defeat Boston College, 3–1, in the championship game of the 2007 NCAA Men's Frozen Four in Scottrade Center in St. Louis.

During the first period, neither team was able to push the puck past the opposing goalie. As the championship game progressed into the final period, most fans thought the game was headed to overtime. MSU then "exploded" with three goals in the final 10 minutes of the game, icing the championship for MSU.

This victory constituted MSU's third national championship, and the first since 1986. Each member of the MSU Hockey organization made essential contributions to the team's success.

Justin Abdelkader, who was named the team's Most Outstanding Player, snapped a 1–1 tie with 18.9 seconds to go, seconds after ringing a shot off the goalie post.

Jeff Lerg made 29 saves, and Chris Mueller added an empty-net goal with 1.2 seconds left to clinch it for the 3–1 Spartan win.

MSU Spartans' Head Coach Rick Comley has become only the third coach in college hockey history to win national titles at two Division I Universities, and has earned over 700 career wins. Coach Comley last won the NCAA Championship with Northern Michigan University in 1991.

The Spartan Hockey Team not only demonstrated untouchable strength and skill, but also perseverance and determination to make Michigan State University and all of the State of Michigan proud.

The unyielding support from thousands of fans, family and friends, dressed in green, lined the streets of East Lansing where they turned out to welcome MSU's national championship hockey team back home.

I am pleased to join with my colleague; Congressman MIKE ROGERS, who represents Michigan State University, and all the Michigan delegation in honoring MSU and its NCAA National Champion Men's hockey team.

I am also very pleased that MSU selected my friend from Northern Michigan Hockey coach, Rick Comley, to lead MSU to its latest hockey title after its legendary hockey coach, Ron Mason, became MSU's athletic director.

Again, I congratulate the MSU Spartan Hockey Team on winning the 2007 NCAA Championship and recognize all the players, coaches, managers, staff, fans, and families who were instrumental in this great achievement.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 290.

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.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS WEEK

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 371) in observance of National Physical Education and Sports Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 371

Whereas May 1 through 7, 2007, is observed as National Physical Education and Sports Week;

Whereas physical inactivity of both youth and adults is a major health risk factor in this country today;

Whereas the percentage of overweight young people has more than tripled since 1980;

Whereas nationally, 1 out of 4 children does not attend any school physical education classes and fewer than 1 in 4 children get 20 minutes of vigorous activity every day;

Whereas physical activity is necessary to support the normal growth in children, and is essential to the continuing health and well-being of youth and adults;

Whereas children and youth with low fitness levels tend to have low fitness levels during adulthood and healthy weight management programs suggest that approximately 300 minutes of exercise are required per week for an adult to maintain his or her weight over the course of a single year;

Whereas low-income high risk communities have the highest obesity rates due to factors including lack of access to healthful foods, a lack of safe, available venues for physical activity, and a lack of education about proper nutrition and the benefits of physical activity;

Whereas minority children are at greatest risk for obesity, especially African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asians/Pacific Islanders living in low-income communities;

Whereas physical activity reduces the risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic low back pain, and certain types of cancers and Type II diabetes can no longer be called "late in life" or "adult

onset'' diabetes because we are seeing Type II diabetes (and other chronic illnesses) in children as young as 10;

Whereas youth who are physically active show less severe symptoms of anxiety;

Whereas participation in sports and physical activity improves self-esteem and body image in children and adults;

Whereas children and youth who partake in physical activity and sports programs have increased motor skills, healthy lifestyles, social skills, a sense of fair play, strong teamwork skills, self-discipline, and avoid risky behaviors;

Whereas the 60 million school-aged children and youth in America have the potential to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values that can lead to a lifetime of physical activity and healthy living;

Whereas the social and environmental factors affecting children are in the control of the adults and the communities in which they live, and therefore this Nation shares a collective responsibility in reversing the childhood obesity trend; and

Whereas Congress strongly supports efforts to increase the physical activity and participation of youth in sports: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes National Physical Education and Sports Week and the central role of physical activity and sports in creating a healthy lifestyle for all children and youth;

(2) calls on communities to work with schools, in concert with key stakeholders of the community, to craft and implement a local wellness plan as required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 that includes goals for physical activity, nutrition education, and other school-based activities to promote physical education and wellness as well as nutrition guidelines for foods sold in schools, implementation plans, and measures to determine effectiveness; and

(3) encourages schools to offer physical education classes to students and work with community partners to provide opportunities and safe spaces for physical activities before and after school and during the summer for all children and youth.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 371 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, this resolution designates May 1–7 as National Physical Education and Sports Week. This is the second year in which Congress has officially observed the first week of May for this purpose.

The benefits of physical activity are well documented. It reduces the risk of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, back pain, and even certain types of cancer. It can increase one's self-esteem and body image and reduce anxiety. In youth, it develops motor skills, leads to healthier lifestyles, improves social awareness, and averts risky behaviors.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends 60 minutes of daily physical activity for children and teenagers, and 30 minutes of daily physical activity for adults. Moderate exercise, such as a brisk walk, when done regularly, has a significant health benefit.

As a Nation, we should be more active. One out of four children do not attend any physical education classes in school; 61 percent of children, ages 9 through 13, do not participate in any physical activity outside of school. Only 25 percent of children get a minimum of 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity per day.

Mr. Speaker, in comparison, 60 percent of adults are not regularly active, and 25 percent are not physically active at all. The lack of physical activity has many negative results. The percentage of overweight young people has more than tripled since 1980. It is 18 percent of that population today.

Children are now being diagnosed with high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type 2 diabetes, all once thought to be age related. Two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese. Obesity-related diseases cost the economy more than $100 billion annually.

I want to recognize some exemplary programs that are currently promoting and encouraging physical activity. Four thousand Boys and Girls Clubs across this country provide more than 4.6 million kids with the opportunity to be physically active. YMCA provides services to over 20 million people, including the Silver Sneakers programs for seniors.

This resolution acknowledges that physical activity and sports play a central role in creating a healthy lifestyle for children and adults. Schools should include physical education classes and other opportunities for physical opportunities as part of the school day, and this resolution says communities should be involved and support schools in the promotion of physical activities, nutrition education and healthy lifestyles.

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

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 371 to recognize National Physical Education and Sports Week, which took place this year from May 1 to May 7, 2007.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: ''The first wealth is health.'' Today, these words could not hold more significance. In an increasingly technologically advanced society dominated by the Internet, cell phones, BlackBerrys, and, yes, electronic video game controls, the evidence is growing and is more convincing than ever. People of all ages who are generally inactive can improve their health and well-being by becoming active at a moderate intensity on a regular basis.

Regular physical activity substantially reduces the risk of a number of preventable diseases such as coronary heart disease, the Nation's leading cause of death; and decreases the risk of stroke, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure. It also helps to control weight, contributes to healthy bones, muscles and joints, reduces falls among elderly adults and is associated with fewer hospitalizations. Moreover, physical activity does not need to be strenuous to be beneficial. People of all ages benefit from participating in regular moderate-intensity physical activity, such as 30 minutes of brisk walking five or more times a week.

These are facts we should impress upon our children to ensure they lead health-conscious lives. Yet according to the Surgeon General's ''Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity,'' only half of adolescents participate in regular physical activity, and one-fourth report no physical activity at all.

In addition, we find that more than a third of young people in grades 9–12 do not regularly engage in physical activity. Additionally, daily participation in high school physical education classes dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to only 33 percent in 2005. Physical activity offers a broad range of benefits, including the prevention of obesity, improves self-confidence and the overall sense of well-being.

Physical education programs within school settings can set the stage for how children view physical fitness, activity levels, and future health. Physical education programs also include general health and safety information, as well as providing opportunities for students to learn how to cooperate with one another in a team setting. Equally important is the fact that physical education programs can teach students that physical activity can be fun.

With a broad range of games and activities, children are exposed to forms of exercise that incorporate teamwork, strategy, skill-building exercises, and other curricula such as math. Indeed, physical education plays an important role in the development of an individual, just as a classroom education does.

I join my colleague, Mr. ALTMIRE, in calling for the communities to work with schools, along with key community stakeholders to craft and implement a local wellness plan as required in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for his leadership on this issue and the other legislation that we talked about today.

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 Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) that the House suspend the

rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 371.

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. ALTMIRE. 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.

NATIONAL CLASSIFIED SCHOOL EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 376) recognizing annually a National Classified School Employee of the Year and honoring the valuable contributions of Classified School Employees in the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 376

Whereas classified school employees provide valuable service to America's public schools and community colleges;

Whereas classified school employees contribute to the establishment and promotion of a positive instructional environment as paraeducators and library aides;

Whereas classified school employees provide other essential educational services such as transportation, facilities maintenance and operations, food and support services, and health care;

Whereas classified school employees play a vital role in providing for the welfare and safety of America's school children and students;

Whereas classified school employees strive for excellence in all areas relative to the education community; and

Whereas in order that classified school employees are acknowledged for their outstanding contribution to quality education across America, the National Classified School Employee of the Year is recognized: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That The House of Representatives—

(1) supports the recognition of the National Classified School Employee of the Year and urges the United States Department of Education, all States, State education agencies, local education agencies, community colleges, and members of the public to join in this observance;

(2) congratulates the National Classified School Employee of the Year; and

(3) congratulates all classified school employees across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education, and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring student achievement, student safety and well-being.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 376, the resolution now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I would consume.

I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and the committee staff for helping move this bill so quickly and the gentleman from Tennessee for being here with me today.

We often recognize teachers for their hard work, for their dedication to our children. In fact, we need to do more of this. Teachers are very important to ensuring that our children are learning.

However, there has been far too little recognition for the school support personnel, those who help schools run smoothly, the classified school employees. Teachers can't teach without support of classified school employees. This includes instructional assistants, clerical staffs, school bus drivers, food services employees, maintenance, security and others who ensure a safe and healthy school day every day for our children.

Imagine a school day without this support: without bus drivers, how would our children get to school? Without janitors, who will ensure their classrooms, cafeteria and bathrooms are clean? Without food service personnel, who will serve their food, who will order their food? Without a school nurse, where will children go if they are not feeling well or they are needing medication? Without maintenance personnel, what would happen if something broke or if the school is too hot or too cold? Without office and clerical staff, who will ensure that the proper person picks up a child? And without security personnel, who will make sure our schools are safe? These responsibilities need to be met in order for our students to be able to do what they come to school to do: learn.

What do our teachers come to school for? To teach. These and many more tasks would not be possible without these important school employees.

□ 1745

That is why I introduced this resolution with Chairman MILLER and Representative HARE, to recognize the many contributions classified school employees make to our children's school day. Without the work of these valuable employees, schools would be unable to function.

Today, we recognize the work of the classified school employee and thank them for their hard work in helping ensure that our schools run smoothly. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the efforts of our classified school employees and thanking them for all they do to make certain our children are able to learn and teachers are able to teach in a safe and healthy environment.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 376, which will recognize annually a National Classified School Employee of the Year and the valuable contributions of classified school employees.

I would like to thank my colleague from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for her leadership on this issue and for introducing the resolution we are considering today.

Like many schools across the country and in my district, the education of our Nation's children is a team effort. Often, when education is discussed, we think of teachers and administrators. However, classified school employees, school bus drivers, food service workers, clerical and administrative staff, para-educators, and facilities and maintenance workers protect and nurture children as well.

Classified school employees are usually the first of the school staff workers the children see when they start their day and the last ones they see when they go home. They are the caretakers of our schools and community colleges. School bus drivers carry the most precious cargo, our children. Parents want the peace of mind that comes from entrusting the person behind the wheel in their children's school bus.

Getting kids to and from schools safely and on schedule makes bus drivers, mechanics, and other transportation personnel an integral part of our schools and of our communities. Classified employees in the office, clerical and administrative staff, maintain attendance records, answer the phones, and interact with parents and school officials. School nurses help children with scrapes and cuts, assist with medications, and help keep accurate records of immunizations and students' medical history. All of these school employees are vital to the success of our schools.

Without skilled facilities and maintenance workers, our children would not have safe and comfortable places to learn. A lot of work is required to maintain a school community and keep it running smoothly. Custodians keep the schools clean. Groundskeepers keep the grounds safe for sports and other recreational activities. And facilities workers foresee and troubleshoot problems in school buildings. These classified workers provide a valuable service to our schools.

Many times the meal students receive at school is the best or only meal they get each day. Food service workers play a significant role in the educational process by providing nutritious meals for children. Research shows that good nutrition enables a student to meet their educational and physical potential.

Para-educators, librarians and other instructional assistants, support and

enhance the work of teachers in all components of the educational process. The increased use of para-professional staff in education across the United States has been well documented, as has the change in their role from largely clerical to instructional duties. These professionals play a key role in ensuring student achievement.

Together, with certified school employees, teachers, and administrators, classified school employees work hard to provide productive, safe and stable environments for our children that are conducive to learning. Classified school employees strive for excellence in all areas relative to the educational community.

For that, I ask that we annually recognize a National Classified School Employee of the Year and honor the invaluable contributions of all classified school employees for their tireless commitment to the academic success, safety and well-being of America's children, and I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 376.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, our schoolchildren couldn't attend school and teachers couldn't teach without the efforts of these valuable school personnel.

Personnel like Al Hart, District Information Services Coordinator for Reed School District in southern Marin County. Mr. Hart was recognized this year as the Marin County classified school employee of the year. His hard work and that of other school employees in the rest of the 6th district of California, and the rest of the country should be recognized.

Classified school employees work with teachers and administrators to ensure that our schools are safe and healthy places. Their contributions are invaluable and can be recognized today and every day.

That's why I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 376 to thank classified school employees for their work and to recognize them for their efforts.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 376.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES WEEK

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 264) supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Correctional Officers and Employees Week'' and honoring the service of correctional officers and employees.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 264

Whereas the operation of correctional facilities represents a crucial component of the criminal justice system of the United States;

Whereas correctional personnel play a vital role in protecting the right of the public to be safeguarded from criminal activity;

Whereas correctional personnel are responsible for the care, custody, and dignity of the human beings charged to their care;

Whereas correctional personnel work under demanding circumstances and face danger in their daily work lives; and

Whereas the first week of May is recognized as National Correctional Officers and Employees Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of ''National Correctional Officers and Employees Week''; and

(2) honors all correctional officers and employees for their service to their communities and States, and to the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H. Res. 264 is a bipartisan resolution designed to honor correctional officers and employees by acknowledging and supporting the goals and ideals of National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. This was introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ELLSWORTH).

The resolution directly honors correctional workers at all levels, local, State and Federal, including psychologists, chaplains, teachers and even kitchen staff.

Correctional officers and employees play a vital role in protecting and promoting public safety. They work in our county jails, our State prisons and our Federal penitentiaries. They have a tough job in a tough environment and at a time that Congress and State legislatures are actually making the job more difficult because we have been eliminating programs for inmates, such as parole, good conduct credits and Pell Grants for college courses, programs that give incentives to prisoners to behave. Now, with the additional reduction in prison inmate jobs on the Federal level, even more pressure will be put on correctional officers to maintain a safe and productive environment for prisoners.

So it is fitting, Mr. Speaker, that we pause at this time to recognize and commend our correctional officers and employees for the very important job that they do for us every day under these very difficult circumstances, and to them we say, ''Thank you.''

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to indicate that I have received a note from the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN), the lead sponsor of the resolution and chair of the Congressional Correctional Officers Caucus. First, he asked that I share his regrets that he was not able to be with us today to speak on this resolution due to a prior commitment in his home district. He also asked that I convey his strong support for the men and women who work in our prisons and correctional facilities on a daily basis. And he also asked me to personally welcome on his behalf the correctional community to Washington, D.C., for their annual day on Capitol Hill, which is scheduled to occur this coming Wednesday.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 264, which recognizes National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, and honors the service of correctional officers and employees.

Few jobs are more dangerous and difficult than serving as a correctional officer. There are over 200,000 correctional officers in the United States who guard us from nearly 2 million criminals and maintain the safety of the Nation's correctional facilities. It is a job with high risk and often little recognition or reward. This resolution recognizes the important role that correctional officers play in maintaining public safety.

Correctional officers carry a heavy burden each day. They are surrounded by dangerous criminals and work in a stressful environment. We hear about but don't often stop to recognize the hundreds of correctional officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Last year in Maryland, two correctional officers were killed. On January 27, 2006, Correctional Officer Jeffrey Alan Wroten II was brutally shot and killed; and on July 25, 2006, Officer David Warren McGuinn was killed. What happened to these two Maryland officers unfortunately has happened to hundreds of other correctional officers in past years. Correctional Officer Jeffrey Alan Wroten left behind a wife and five children, the oldest, age 15, and the youngest, 5 years of age. This makes his loss and the loss of others like him even more heartbreaking.

So, it is appropriate that we take a moment this week to honor the contribution of all correctional officers, pray for their continued safety and dedicate ourselves to helping them carry out their mission.

We thank each and every correctional officer, their families and loved ones, and honor them for their valuable role in protecting the public.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to an original cosponsor of this resolution, the former sheriff in Indiana, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ELLSWORTH).

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the correctional officers and employees from around the country, and to voice my strong support for this bill.

I spent almost 25 years in law enforcement, much of that working in a jail myself. And from my experience, correction officers are some of the hardest-working law enforcement professionals that are working today. House Resolution 264 recognizes them for their important contributions to the safety of our communities.

This week is National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. The bill we are considering today supports the goals and ideas of this important week, and honors all corrections officers and employees for their service to their communities, their States, and also to this Nation. It also recognizes the critical role that the correctional facilities play in the U.S. criminal justice system.

I am proud to be a cosponsor to this legislation with Congressman HOLDEN and Congressman LOBIONDO. I echo Mr. SCOTT's words. Mr. HOLDEN felt strongly enough about this legislation to call me and ask me to make a few comments on his support for this bill. He was unable to attend this meeting as he had prior commitments in his district, but he asked me to express his strong support for the men and women who work in the correctional system on all the levels, who work tirelessly to protect their communities from those incarcerated and breaking the law.

The men and women who work in our prisons and correctional facilities face danger in their everyday lives. I have seen this firsthand. They are outnumbered. They work long hours. They often go without their lunches or eat their lunches while performing their duties. We owe them a lot. And although you are not going to see a lot of documentaries about the correctional officer in the TV shows, they work just as hard as any patrolman on the street. And they are outnumbered and surrounded by their adversaries every day. Their role is critical and yet goes unrecognized often. We can do our part to recognize them this week. Hopefully, this bill will bring some much deserved appreciation for their work, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to a strong supporter of programs to give prisoners incentives to better themselves and a strong supporter of correctional officers, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 264, the Congressional Lawmaking Authority Protection Act of 2007 and the National Correctional Officers and Employees Week.

Correctional officers are the largest part of the workforce in jails and prisons, and they enforce the regulations governing the operation of correctional institutions as both supervisors and counselors.

While they have no law enforcement responsibilities outside the institution where they work, each day they put themselves in harm's way, maintaining security and inmate accountability to prevent disturbances, assaults, and escapes.

By definition, working in a correctional institution can be stressful and hazardous. Between 1990 and 1995, the number of attacks on correctional officers in State and Federal prisons jumped by nearly one-third, from 10,731 to 14,165, at a time when the number of correctional officers increased by only 14 percent. Except for police officers, the number of workplace nonfatal violent incidents is higher per 1,000 employees for correctional officers than any other profession. From 1992 to 1996, there were nearly 218 incidents for every 1,000 correctional officers, for a total of 58,300.

□ 1800

Correctional officers' roles in our society are and continue to be critical. We must continue to recognize the sacrifices they and their families make on a daily basis to ensure the safety and well-being of the prison population.

Mr. Speaker, I spend a fair amount of time in and around correctional institutions. As a matter of fact, I serve as a member of the local school council at the Consuelo York Alternative High School in Chicago, which is located in the Cook County Jail. Therefore, whenever I'm there, when we have our regular meetings, I attend.

I also go to jails sometimes to put up bail for individuals that I know, Representative SCOTT, who have been arrested. Quite frequently, I speak at jails, correctional facilities and prisons.

And so I simply wanted to take this time to thank all of those individuals who not only work in these stressful situations, but the many men and women with whom I come into contact as they facilitate my entree, and as they assist whatever it is that I've been trying to do and that I try to do while I'm there.

So I simply say, thank you to all of those corrections officers with whom I come into contact on an annual basis, and urge passage of this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 264, which puts this House on record in support of the goals and ideals of "National Correctional Officers and Employees Week" and which honors the service of correctional officers and employees.

Correctional facilities form a crucial component of our criminal justce system, and the proper functioning of these facilities is depndent upon the exemplary service performed by correctional peronnel. These men and women work daily in a complex, ever-changing, and often dangerous environment, protecting the rights of the public and safeguarding us, as a Nation, from criminal activity.

Not only are these correctional officers and employees responsible for the custody of inmates, but they are also charged with the care of these individuals, and with maintaining their dignity as human beings. This is a profession that exerts immense physical and emotional demands on a daily basis, and requires constant courage and vigilance.

Mr. Speaker, correctional work has become an increasingly sophisticated profession, and we as a nation should take pride in the caliber of those who work in this field. These men and women face overwhelming obstacles, and operate daily in a high-risk environment, yet they receive little recognition. This week, which we observe as National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, is our opportunity to honor all correctional officers and employees for their service to their communities and our Nation.

I strongly support this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 264, to express support for the goals and ideals of National Correctional Officers and Employees Week—May 6th through 12th. This resolution recognizes the important and under-appreciated dedicated service of the correctional officers and employees who staff prisons across this Nation.

Just this morning, I was at the Fairton Federal Correctional Institution in Fairton, New Jersey, with Warden Paul Schultz, to honor the hard work and highest standards of the men and women serving as correctional officers and employees. I had the great pleasure to present awards to these brave individuals.

As a co-chair of the Correctional Officers Caucus, I was pleased to introduce this resolution with Representative HOLDEN, and I am very proud of the correctional officers that it honors. I urge all Members to support this resolution.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 264.

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 6 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE HONORABLE MARK STEVEN KIRK, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Eric Elk, Chief of Staff, Office of the Honorable MARK STEVEN KIRK, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the Circuit Court for Cook County, Illinois, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

ERIC ELK,
Chief of Staff.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1294, THOMASINA E. JORDAN INDIAN TRIBES OF VIRGINIA FEDERAL RECOGNITION ACT OF 2006

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–130) on the resolution (H. Res. 377) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1294) to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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. 407, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1025, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 371, by the yeas and nays.

The vote on agreeing to House Resolution 370 and on the motion to suspend with regard to H.R. 1595 will be postponed until tomorrow.

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

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 407, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 407, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 294, nays 80, not voting 58, as follows:

[Roll No. 302]

YEAS—294

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fossella
Frelinghuysen
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hayes
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inglis (SC)
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NAYS—80

Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Bonner
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burton (IN)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Conaway
Davis (KY)
Deal (GA)
Drake
Duncan
Everett
Feeney
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hoekstra
Issa
Jindal
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
King (IA)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Lamborn
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Mack
McCarthy (CA)
McHenry
Miller, Gary
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pence
Poe
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Smith (NE)
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Thornberry
Tiberi
Walberg
Wamp
Westmoreland
Wicker
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—58

Akin
Boehner
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Capuano
Carson
Costello
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Davis, Jo Ann
DeGette
Dicks
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Engel
Fattah
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Gilchrest
Goode
Graves
Hinchey
Holden
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Kilpatrick
Lantos
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
McMorris Rodgers
Moran (KS)
Murtha
Neal (MA)
Peterson (PA)
Pitts
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Reichert
Schiff
Shimkus
Shuler
Slaughter
Souder
Tiahrt
Towns
Waters
Weiner

□ 1856

Messrs. SULLIVAN, BURTON of Indiana, MACK, LINDER, LEWIS of California and YOUNG of Alaska changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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.

LOWER REPUBLICAN RIVER BASIN STUDY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1025, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1025.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 370, nays 1, not voting 61, as follows:

[Roll No. 303]

YEAS—370

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Drake
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
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
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)
Manzullo
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—61

Akin
Boehner
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Capuano
Carson
Costello
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Davis, Jo Ann
DeGette
Dicks
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Edwards
Engel
Fattah
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Gilchrest
Goode
Graves
Hinchey
Holden
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Kilpatrick
Lantos
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
Marshall
McMorris Rodgers
Moran (KS)
Murphy (CT)
Murtha
Neal (MA)
Peterson (PA)
Pitts
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Reichert
Schiff
Shimkus
Shuler
Slaughter
Souder
Tiahrt
Towns
Waters
Weiner

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1905

Mr. FLAKE changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 303, had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

NATIONAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 371, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 371.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 373, nays 0, not voting 59, as follows:

[Roll No. 304]

YEAS—373

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Drake
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al

Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
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
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)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—59

Akin
Boehner
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Capuano
Carson
Costello
Crowley
Cubin
Cummings
Davis, Jo Ann
DeGette
Dicks
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Edwards
Engel
Fattah
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Gilchrest
Goode
Graves
Hinchey
Holden
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Kilpatrick
Lantos
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
McCotter
McMorris Rodgers
Moran (KS)
Murtha
Neal (MA)
Peterson (PA)
Pitts
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Reichert
Schiff
Shimkus
Shuler
Slaughter
Souder
Tiahrt
Towns
Waters
Weiner

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1911

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. Mr. Speaker, due to official business in the 13th Congressional District of Michigan, I was unable to be present for three votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 407, the Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area Study Act; "yea" on H.R. 1025, the Lower Republican River Basin Study Act; and "yea" on H. Res 371, In observance of National Physical Education and Sports Week.

HUMPTY DUMPTY

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, as we continue our debate on funding for Iraq escalation, I want to share a new version of a well-known poem entitled Humpty Dumpty:

Bush, Cheney and others had a great call—
Remake Iraq, it will be such a ball.
Now all Bush's troops and all daddy's men
can't put Iraq back together again.
Our soldiers keep dying, day after day.
So why put up with more endless delay?
Let's just acknowledge what everyone knows:
Bush didn't and doesn't have any clothes.
He broke it, can't fix it, doesn't know how;
Mission impossible: out of Iraq now.

□ 1915

CONGRESS NEEDS TO STOP THE PRICE GOUGING NOW

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I paid $3.43 a gallon for gas in Springfield, Oregon. My colleague GREG WALDEN paid $3.99 on the east side of the Cascades. Something a little fishy here because, a year ago today, oil prices were $66.85 a barrel. Today, they are $63 a barrel. The price of crude oil is down, but the price of gasoline at the pump is up, way up.

And what is the cause? They say, oh, well, we forgot, we had to clean and maintain the refineries, and gee, we've had to shut 'em down. Does this remind anybody else of Enron? Enron/Exxon, they're interchangeable.

Enron would shut down plants to drive up the cost of electricity and make wild profits. Exxon and the other big oil companies are doing the same thing. They're using refinery repairs and maintenance as an excuse to price-gouge the American people.

Congress needs to stop the price gouging now.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1642.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERLMUTTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

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.

STATE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, each year, the Department of State issues a report outlining the human rights practices of various Nations, and I object this evening to the inaccuracies in the Armenia section of the 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.

Originally, the State Department issued erroneous language about Armenia being an occupier of Azerbaijani territory and Nagorno-Karabakh, the report was substantively revised with more balanced, although still not fully accurate, wording and then revised again to restore the original inaccurate language.

I am deeply disturbed by the State Department's mischaracterization of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is unprecedented and counterproductive to our government's goal of actively promoting constructive engagement in the peace negotiations of the region. It also sets a troubling example by allowing a foreign State, in this case Azerbaijan, to shape the assessments of our human rights report.

To assert that Nagorno-Karabakh is Azerbaijani territory or that Armenia occupies Nagorno-Karabakh and other territories is simply wrong. This version ignores the reality that the current conflict is about the self-determination of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Like many other ethnic autonomous regions with the status of Oblast under

the Soviet Constitution, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh declared their independence. They then conducted a referendum as set forth in the same Soviet Constitution, and they are now an independent republic and should be recognized as a Nation, just like Azerbaijan, Armenia and any other former Soviet Republic. The situation has absolutely nothing to do with Armenia. The only role Armenia plays in this conflict is that country's part in peace negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that Armenia is being characterized as an abuser of human rights in the region when it is Azerbaijan who continues to maintain a blockade of both Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, and regularly threatens a new wave of violence against Nagorno-Karabakh.

Such misrepresentations will undermine our Nation's credibility as an impartial mediator and jeopardize prospects for successful peace negotiations. It could also have a negative impact on U.S.-Armenia relations.

Our common aim as a country should be to focus on workable diplomacy that brings parties together in the spirit of conflict resolution, not to cause additional tension by introducing new and controversial elements into an already complex negotiating process.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has a long history of supporting Nagorno-Karabakh's democracy and its right to live in freedom and peace. The State Department has never made assertions in previous reports about Armenia being an occupier of Azerbaijani territory and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Last week, I sent a letter to Secretary Rice with my concerns over the State Department report's language, and I urged her to quickly reverse the State Department's mischaracterization.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS A WORLD CRISIS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, France has a new President, Nicolas Sarkozy. While the world waits to see if he will give vigor and energy and leadership to his complex and sometimes difficult French people, his position on illegal immigration is quite clear.

Europe has its influx of illegals, not unlike the United States. Northern Africans are fleeing their native lands for Europe. They go mostly to Spain, where French President-elect Sarkozy accuses Spain of promoting amnesty in that Nation. Of course, once in Spain, it seems these illegals can roam Europe with ease.

Mr. Sarkozy claims Spain wants to give amnesty to now 600,000 illegals in its Nation. Mr. Sarkozy wants to ban European Nations from offering amnesty. He wants to bolster the EU border agency, the group that parols the African coast, with more police forces and use of the military to prevent the illegal landings in Europe.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that Morocco, one of the Nations where people illegally flee to Europe from, wants the illegal flight to stop from its Nation. Almost 40 percent of the Africans that go to Europe by sea die in the process. This is a world crisis. Morocco wants to develop its native lands with European aid to keep people home, change the despair to hope by economic development, quit sending its problem to Europe but solve its problem. African Nations see the answer to solving their economic problems is not sending their populations to the north to Europe.

Mr. Sarkozy wants the European Union to have an EU-wide policy on illegal immigration and deal with this issue head-on instead of ignore the obvious. We shall see if this cooperation with the EU and France and the African countries works to stop the illegal entry, and we wish Mr. Sarkozy well in his presidency of France.

Meanwhile, back at home, here in the United States, our borders seem to be as open as ever because our government does not have the moral will to enforce the rule of law.

And that's just the way it is.

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.)

A HEALTH CHECKUP FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a very disturbing report emerged from Iraq last week. According to press reports, medical students in Iraq will be denied diplomas even though they have completed all of the coursework and passed all of the required testing. This means that they would only be allowed to practice in Iraq, and no other country will accept their medical training or let them practice in the new country, even though they have met all of the requirements.

This harkens back to the Iraq we knew under Saddam Hussein's rule. Saddam refused to grant diplomas to medical students in order to keep them in the country. Who would have thought that the new Iraq government would resort to Saddam Hussein's old tricks? This is an alarming and troubling trend, and it should be reversed immediately.

While dozens of international medical relief organizations have been forced to leave Iraq because of serious security concerns, Iraqis have fewer and fewer medical professionals available to them.

A well-known organization, Doctors Without Borders, related the story of one doctor, Dr. Bassam. He is an Iraqi physician specializing in orthopedic surgery living with his family in Baghdad.

His story says: Now, security issues have top priority for the few existing financial resources, and medical needs are forced to take a back seat. This morning, dozens of people were killed in Fallujah. Yesterday, it was Baghdad. And that's not counting the wounded, who add to the long list of emergency cases packing the hospitals. Every day brings a new batch of dead and wounded. In this context, patients simply cannot receive proper treatment from an increasingly overwhelmed health care system. Some are forced to sell their car, or even their house, to get certain kinds of care in the few hospitals able to provide it.

That is the end of his story.

Mr. Speaker, instead of locking people in against their will, the Iraqi government ought to be working with the international community to make Iraq a safe and prosperous place where people want to raise their families, where they want to stay, where they want to put down roots and contribute to the local communities.

If this is going to happen, the United States must dedicate our energies to bringing our troops home and to working with the Iraqi people to stabilize their infrastructure and social programs, programs that will provide health care, education and jobs. These are the most important needs for the Iraqis.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, to bring our troops home. It is time to provide a future of hope for the Iraqi people.

RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Armed Services Chairman IKE SKELTON for including language in this year's Defense authorization bill to change the name of the Department of the Navy to be the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

I also thank Ranking Member DUNCAN Hunter who in the past has also included this language in the Defense authorization bill. This will be the sixth year that the House will send legislation to the Senate that supports this change. I hope that this year the Senate will agree that this change is long overdue.

Since 1947, Congress has twice affirmed that the Marine Corps is a separate military service within the Department of the Navy. In 1947, the National Security Act stated that we have four separate military services:

the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Marine Corps.

In 1986, the Goldwater-Nichols Act stated that each service's commanding officer serves equally as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That is, the Marine Corps and the Navy are coequal partners. The Marines do not serve beneath the Navy; they are an equal team.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I have again introduced legislation, H.R. 346, to recognize their coequal status by changing the name of the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Not only has this change received the full House Armed Services Committee support, but also from former Navy secretaries and Marine Corps commandants.

In a statement of support for this legislation, the Honorable Wade Sanders, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Reserve Affairs, 1993–1998, stated, and I quote, ''As a combat veteran and former Naval officer, I understand the importance of the team dynamic, and the importance of recognizing the contribution of team components. The Navy and Marine Corps team is just that: a dynamic partnership, and is important to symbolically recognize the balance of that partnership.''

In addition, General Charles Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps stated, and I quote, ''This bill is a perfectly logical evolution in a series of legislative initiatives designed, in part, to clarify and codify the role of the United States Marine Corps. . . .I enthusiastically support both the spirit and intent.''

General Carl Mundy, the 30th commandant of the Marine Corps stated, and I quote, ''I believe the changes you propose will do much to clarify the relationship, responsibilities and functions of the appointed civilian authority over the United States Naval services . . . I believe that any Secretary—present, past or future—will be very proud to bear the title 'Marine,' as well as 'Navy.' ''

The Honorable John Dalton, the 70th Secretary of the Navy stated, and I quote ''One of the things for which I am most proud that I accomplished during my tenure was moving the headquarters of the Marine Corps into the Pentagon. It was a controversial decision, but I am convinced it was the right thing to do. . . . Your legislation would be another vital step to give that distinguished service the recognition it so greatly deserves.''

Before I close, I want to point out to the House that I have beside me the Order of the Silver Star for Marines killed in Iraq. Marine Michael Bitz' family received a Silver Star in his memory. Yet when you look at this poster you will see an exact copy of the article for the Secretary of the Navy, Washington D.C., and the Navy flag.

All this legislation will do, all this legislation will do, is to make the Navy and the Marine Corps an equal partner. You can see if these orders were issued and this bill had become law, it would say the Secretary of the Navy and the Marine Corps with the Navy flag and the Marine flag for this brave marine who gave his life for this country.

I hope this year that the House under the leadership of IKE SKELTON will demand that the Senate agree to the House position and change the name to be the Department of Navy and Marine Corps.

□ 1930

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERLMUTTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the millions of Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage. I would like to thank my good friend, Congressman MIKE HONDA, for leading the special orders tonight on Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and providing us with this opportunity to speak to you tonight.

I represent a heavily, heavily populated Asia Pacific community in southern California, I think the second most populated in the country. The first group that makes up a large proportion is Taiwanese and Chinese. The second group is Filipino. I am very proud to have represented them for so many years.

But I am here tonight to pay tribute to the many of them who provide us with public service in government, science, law and business, athletics and in the arts. These communities that I represent are the cities of Monterey Park, Rosemead, West Covina and the San Gabriel Valley. Well over 120,000 individuals represent that district.

They are Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean and of Cambodian decent. As you know, they work hard, like many immigrants that come to this country. Nearly 30 percent of the minority-owned businesses are owned by Asian Pacific Islanders and African-American women. In recent years, a number of Asian and Pacific Islander women-owned businesses has increased by 69 percent in the district.

According to the Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Americans own at least two-thirds of Monterey Park's more than 5,000 businesses. I have long been a supporter of a program called PACE, Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment, which was founded back in 1976 to address the employment and job training needs of Asian Pacific Islanders. Believe it or not, there are many Asian Pacific Islanders who really do need the support of the Federal Government and our various forms of government to help them succeed in our country.

Today it provides workforce development, housing services, business assistance and early childhood education in Los Angeles county. I would especially like to recognize a good friend of mine, Kerry Doi, with whom I have worked for a number of years, whom I am extremely proud of. Earlier this year, his program, known as PACE, and the Association for Enterprise Opportunity Women and Company, chose 10 prominent small business owners to give $1,000 checks to.

You may think that's not a lot of money, but for first-time business owners of Asian Pacific descent, it meant a lot. I am proud of the work they are doing to help all small business owners, including those of API heritage, to succeed.

I have also worked closely with the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center and the Monterey Park Langley Senior Center, predominantly of Asian descent. I am proud to have these organizations in my district because they are wonderful places where individuals from this community can gather and have social time, artistic time, recreational time and share their culture with each other.

At the senior center, I meet often with them. They take language courses, computer classes and different exercise courses that help them to keep busy in our community. Many of the seniors and their families and others have been touched by the immigration process recently.

In fact, I would say that the second largest case load in my district happened to be individuals of API descent. They, just as much as anyone else, want to become naturalized citizens, and they are stepping up to the plate. I was happy to host a citizenship forum that we held in the City of Irwindale recently, and I would say about 200 or more families of API descent came forward to become naturalized citizens. I am proud that is happening in our community and across the country.

I am here to support, again, the efforts of the API caucus, which MIKE HONDA leads, and to work with my colleagues there on the tri-caucus to help put forward disparities and treatment in health care issues regarding API, the Hispanic community and the African-American community. We are working together to bridge our gaps so that we can provide better services to all Americans in all residents of our country. I am happy and pleased to be able to put this forward tonight in support of the API caucus.

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

(Mr. SHAYS 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 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.)

THE ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITY AND THE IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me take this opportunity, before I address the question our soldiers in Iraq, to thank Mr. HONDA for convening this special order on the Asian Pacific community of this Nation and to thank him for his leadership of the Asian Pacific Caucus, of which I am a member and to acknowledge the Asian Pacific community in Houston, Texas, a thriving community so diverse and so respected.

I am reminded of the unity that was exhibited as Katrina survivors who were Asian Pacific Islanders came into Houston. Both Mr. HONDA and myself worked on the issue of language and representation and resources, and the Asian Pacific community in Houston was so united and so supportive so that these new visitors, these strangers in a different land, would feel welcome.

Let me also acknowledge that I have the privilege of representing not only a very strong Vietnamese business community, but also the original Chinatown in Houston. So my hat goes off and salutes the outstanding leaders in that community, scientists, educators, businesspersons, public servants, and, as well, I thank them for the wonderful service that they give and the opportunity to work together with them. This is an outstanding tribute to be able to honor the Asian Pacific Islander community in the month of May.

Let me also acknowledge that the Vietnamese community will have its first cultural event gala where it honors heroes and public servants from around the Nation.

I would hope that as we look to the greatness of America, we will find it in our hearts to be able to address the question of the tragedy in Iraq. It is a tragedy that continues to grow. Every time you turn the corner, turn the news on or read a newspaper article, it is disintegrating and deteriorating.

Today in the newspaper it says an Army general predicts a rise in casualties. So at the back of the surge the President says will have solved the conflict in Iraq, we will see, tragically in the words of Major General Rick Lynch, who is working with the 3rd Infantry Division, ''Casualties will climb as American troops dig into enemy territory as part of the stepped-up military operation ordered by President Bush in January.''

His sentence does not say how we will resolve the conflict. It doesn't say that it results in any positive end. It doesn't say that we will be victorious in that effort, it says that the lives of Americans will be lost. We, as Americans, believe that when we go to war, the Nation goes to war. Therefore, it is important to have a mission to have a conclusion to that mission.

Compounded to that issue, we show that attacks killed eight U.S. troops. They kill them because they are being killed by IEDs. They kill them because there is no mission, there is no policy, there is no political policy. There is no end, there is no beginning.

So I ask the President to sit down with this Congress and be able to resolve this by, one, leaving in the language that says, we will redeploy the troops by July, 2007, or, at the latest, October, 2007, have a rational policy for exiting from the conflict that is causing the mounting lives that are lost.

In addition, lives are being lost in Afghanistan of a civilian population, lives of the civilian Iraqis are being lost, and there is no response from this administration.

While there they are wining and dining, I would simply ask in addition to that responsibility, let us find a conclusion to the war in Iraq by reconciliation and compromise between the executive and, of course, the Congress. We cannot tolerate any more headlines like this, mothers and fathers, husbands and wives are asking why, when there is no end. The soldiers are our heroes. They have done their job. We have said this over and over.

I commend to this body H.R. 930, my legislation, Military Success in Iraq and Diplomatic Surge for National and Political Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2007. Declare a military victory, our soldiers have been victorious. Let them come home to yellow ribbons and celebrations and their families, have them prepared, stronger, increased, a stronger military, with the right kind of equipment.

Let the generals logistically plan how they will redeploy, possibly to the Kuwait borders and to the other borders, but let them come home. We are not trying to dictate to the generals how to redeploy, what the logistics would be, but we are only saying that the policy is a failed policy, and our soldiers must come home. No more headlines, Army general predicts rise in U.S. casualties, no more headlines eight troops dead and continuing to die with no solution and no end.

I ask my colleagues to review H.R. 930 and ask the President and this Congress to find a way that we can work together.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, this month is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This is a national celebration which continues to highlight and bring awareness to the many contributions of the Asian Pacific Americans who have made this country their home.

I want to thank Mr. HONDA, who will be leading a special order in just a few minutes, with respect to all the accomplishments of the Asian Pacific Americans in the United States.

I am fortunate to represent one of the largest Asian Pacific populations in Orange County, California. It's full of Japanese, Korean, Hmong, Cambodians, Laotians, Chinese, Hawaiian Pacific Islanders and, of course, the largest Vietnamese population outside the world resides in Orange County, California. Representing that community I see firsthand the rich culture and the contributions and all of these communities bring to my hometown of Anaheim and Orange County.

More than 30 years ago, with when the Vietnamese arrived, my district was full of orange groves. They took these orange groves, some of the dilapidated commercial centers, and they made these block-long business districts that generate today, multibillion dollars for our local economy.

While being an integrated part of the American social fabric is important, these communities also bring with them a rich awareness of what is going on around the world, in particular, what happens in their homeland.

I enjoy an open dialogue, for example, with the Vietnamese American community, especially about the continuing situation in Vietnam, where human rights and religious freedoms, remain a distant dream for the peoples of that country.

Now is the time to remember and to celebrate the successes and the contributions that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders bring to the diversity of America.

Although it is important to recognize the achievements made by this community, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month must also provide a forum to focus on the problems that face these communities, such as affordable housing, racial profiling, and language barriers.

In particular, the health care issues that are so important, so many health care issues that happened in this particular community like hepatitis C, diabetes, and some of the other larger issues which affect us all.

One of the problems facing the APAC community is the perception that all the members of their communities are thriving. If you are Asian or Pacific Islander, you must be going to the Berkeleys of the world, you must be doctors, you must be thriving, you must be engineers, you must be great business people. But the reality is that there are large populations, API populations who still have low access to real quality education and they face tremendous language barriers. The API community has come a long way, sacrificing for our country and contributing to our growth and prosperity, and I

look forward to continuing that relationship with the Asian Pacific Islander community to celebrate its contributions and to overcome the ongoing challenges that these communities face.

□ 1945

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, this month marks a special opportunity to pay tribute to the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans. In our community, we have a great opportunity to recognize this dynamic force of creativity in our Nation, and I welcome the opportunity to do so and I thank my colleague MIKE HONDA for hosting this special order tonight.

An estimated 180,000 Asian Pacific Islanders representing a diverse community of backgrounds and cultures and experiences make their homes in Minnesota, with an estimated 32,000 in the Fifth Congressional District alone. Minnesota serves as home to one of the Nation's largest Hmong population, estimated at nearly 80,000. In Minnesota, we boast 2 members of our State legislators who have Hmong American heritage, Senator Mee Moua and Representative Cy Thao. The Hmong American story in Minnesota is quintessentially Minnesotan and we are proud of our Hmong community.

The Hmong story is quintessentially an immigrant story as well, a story coming from their land to a new one to make success here in America, overcoming the many difficulties, struggling, persevering, while retaining love for their land of origin, finding tremendous love and loyalty in their new home as well.

The Asian American and Pacific Islanders make a valuable contribution to every aspect of American life and Minnesota life, from business, education, to arts to military. We will always remember Qixing Lee, a young man who graduated from North High School of Hmong American heritage who lost his life in this conflict in Iraq. Their contributions and unique additions to our life have enhanced the moral fabric and character of our State and our great country.

As we celebrate the many contributions of the Asian American-Pacific Islander community, let us not lose sight of the cornerstone of their contributions and to the very foundation of this country, immigration. Immigration has played a vital role in the entire making of America, whether the immigrants are from Europe, Africa, whether they are from Asia, or Latin and Central America. But immigration no doubt has played a vital role in the creation and success of our country, and must be looked at as a vital American strength as we look forward in this 110th Congress.

As the Democratic-led House leads the way on immigration reform, I believe that we must look at comprehensive reform, not shock radio sound bites. Reform that fully recognizes the contribution of immigrants have made and continue to make to our Nation is as equally important as security on the border. Fair comprehensive immigration policy must work to protect and unite families. Right now, an estimated 1.5 million Asian and Pacific Islanders face an immigration backlog that has forced many families to live separated from their loved one for years. This is a shame and must end.

As we celebrate the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to our Nation, let us use this occasion to take our great country in a new direction and to higher heights, and to meet the challenges facing all Americans, including Asian American and Pacific Islanders. As we have in the first 100 days, let us take further steps to change the way we do business in Washington and defend our country, grow our economy, care for all children and families, protect our planet, and restore accountability. Together, we can make the American dream a reality for all Americans.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend and colleague and neighbor, Congressman Mike Honda, first for his leadership on so many issues, and, secondly, for organizing a special order tonight to celebrate the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans, but also to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

We have the pleasure of representing the California Bay Area together. It is really an honor and a magnificent challenge and an exciting part of my district to bring all of our diverse communities together, to support many, many issues as minority communities. So the Asian Pacific American community is one of those communities that is incredibly diverse in my district and also in our Nation, but also plays an increasingly important role in the development of our Nation. With over 14 million people and 24 ethnic groups, they encompass vast histories and rich cultures.

In many ways, the APA community is seen as a model minority community, but the truth is the very same challenges, like access to health care and education, that other communities face are also obstacles to be overcome by Asian Pacific Americans. For example, nearly 2.4 million Asian American and Pacific Islanders are without health insurance, and about 13 percent of Asian Pacific American children are uninsured. Diseases such as diabetes are on the rise and one of the leading causes of mortality among Asian Pacific Americans.

Congressman HONDA and I also cochair the Congressional Out-of-Poverty Caucus, along with our colleagues Congressman JOE BACA, Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD, and Congressman JOHN CONYERS. We all are working to raise awareness of all of these challenges and are working on a plan to eradicate poverty in our country.

As with many minority communities, education plays a key role in ensuring that the next generation of APAs are able to break free from the cycle of poverty. That is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 629, introduced by a colleague from Oregon, Congressman DAVID WU. This legislation would create institutions of higher education modeled after the historically black colleges and universities and our Hispanic serving institutions. This would establish a university for the Asian Pacific American community.

Back at home in the Ninth Congressional District of California, my constituents and organizations based in my district are really making an impact in many of these fields. An organization that I am very proud to represent is Asian Health Services. This agency has served thousands of people who cannot afford basic services such as health care and mental health services. Our Asian community is so diverse that Asian Health Services has translators that speak nine different languages. When it comes to health care justice, this agency advocates for those with no voice by working with elected officials to create policies that meet the essential mental health and health care needs.

I also want to mention the Asian Pacific Environmental Networks. This agency is a powerful grassroots organization and has done incredible work to provide housing for the waitresses and the security guards and the janitors that keep our community working. They have negotiated with developers to set aside 465 units of housing for low and extremely low income individuals. To further aid this community, the network has negotiated 300 entry-level construction career path placements, allowing constituents to gather the tools that they need for success.

This is truly an important time to reflect upon the accomplishments and the achievements of the APA community. The United States is strong because of its diversity and its immigrants. I am proud to be a member of the Asian Pacific American Caucus and our Tri-Caucus which reflects the beauty and diversity of our country. Let us rededicate ourselves tonight to eradicate the disparities and the discrimination against the Asian Pacific American community and to celebrate the great contributions.

I want to thank Congressman HONDA again for his leadership, and for making sure that justice prevails for the Asian Pacific American community, because his leadership and bringing together the diversity, closing the health care gap with regard to minority communities, all of the issues that he works on makes this House of Representatives a better place.

ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks, and include extraneous material on the subject of my special order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call upon my colleague, Ms. BORDALLO, who hails from Guam.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Asian Pacific Heritage Month and to recognize the contributions of Asian and Pacific Island Americans to our Nation. First, I want to thank my colleague from California, the Honorable Mr. HONDA, the chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, for his distinct leadership and dedication to the needs of our communities.

Every May during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we recognize the contributions Asian and Pacific Island Americans make to the United States economically, culturally, politically, throughout its history. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans continue to make notable and diverse contributions to every aspect of American life. Asian and Pacific Island Americans also serve public interests by serving honorably in the United States Armed Services and ably at every level of government in the United States. I am proud to participate in the effort to honor their contributions to this country and celebrate our heritage with this month's events.

Some people wonder why we continue to celebrate cultural diversity. I respond by saying that doing so helps to remind us that while many of us have no memory of fleeing oppression or desiring to live freely, many Vietnamese Americans can tell you of their desire to live freely and the risks that they took fleeing communism to do so. Or, the experiences of some Korean Americans can help us better understand the importance of family and the hardships and the pain created as a result of being kept apart from loved ones for generations. While many of our lives are relatively stable and certain, some Chinese Americans or Japanese Americans can inspire you with their stories of succeeding here in the United States after arriving with no money and no possessions.

Freedom and economic opportunity are attributes of the United States that have, for generations, inspired hope among the repressed people of the world. Some of us take the United States and the American way of life for granted. The United States and the privilege and the goodness of America's way of life are particularly important for at least two groups among the Asian and Pacific Islander American community. They are Chamorro or Filipino-Americans. And I say that because Chamorro or Filipino-Americans are among the very few Americans who can identify with heart-swelling pride inspired by witnessing the striking and the unique beauty of the Stars and Stripes flying proudly at the top of flagpoles for the first time after enduring and being liberated from a brutal and extended occupation by the foreign power.

To all Americans I say this: To learn of the experiences endured by these Americans during occupation and liberation will provide you invaluable perspective on what it means to be an American. In fact, before the House this week is H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. This bill would help fulfill a moral obligation on the part of our national government to a group of citizens, the people of Guam, most of whom were indigenous Chamorros who bore the burden of a brutal occupation. The people of Guam were brutalized through public executions, beheadings, rape, and severe injury, forced labor, forced march, and internment in concentration camps.

□ 2000

H.R. 1595 is called the Loyalty Recognition Act because the loyalty of the people of Guam to the United States during this 32-month enemy occupation should be honored.

It is a tragic injustice of history that, following liberation, Congress did not provide for war claims for the people of Guam in the same manner and with the same opportunities that were afforded to other Americans. The people who carried a disproportionate burden of the war were given less than other Americans when it came time to make our Nation whole. Those who gave more in blood got less in recognition. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month would be especially noteworthy if this legislation were to be agreed to by the House of Representatives.

Asians and Pacific Islanders have a powerful story to tell, and they have a love for this Nation that many take for granted. Our contribution to America is not just the great food and the intriguing cultures that we have introduced to this land; it is also the stories of our incredible journeys to freedom.

Our heritage is our gift to this Nation. Our unique cultures have survived and continue to thrive because America has come to know and appreciate how our contributions enrich our Nation.

I am very, very proud of the Chamorro culture on Guam and take every opportunity to share our culture and our traditions.

Today it is worth reflecting on who we are as a Nation and what values we stand for. We are a Nation of immigrants whose parents and grandparents have come to these shores seeking individual liberty, prosperity and human dignity. The Nation we call our own is one of compassion and of justice. And when it comes to our heritage, we may be Chamorros, Hawaiian, Japanese, Samoan, Chinese, Filipino, Palauan, Chuukese, Korean or any of the various proud cultures of Asia and the Pacific, but we all share a common love for this country.

So as we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, let us honor the contributions of all Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, and let us appreciate the cultural diversity, the patriotism and the communities that make our country, that make America so great.

Dangkulo na Si Yu'os Ma'ase.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call upon our good friend, colleague from Texas, Representative AL GREEN.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to be here tonight to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. And I want to especially thank Chairman HONDA for the outstanding job that he has done, not only with this event, but also what he does year round, year in and year out with our caucus, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. I thank you for what you have done.

Mr. Speaker, I represent the Ninth Congressional District in Houston, Texas. The Ninth Congressional District is one of the most diverse districts in the country. It is 36 percent African American, 31 percent Hispanic, 21 percent Anglo and 12 percent Asian. And I am proud to say that this district, the Ninth Congressional District, has the ballot printed in three languages, English, Spanish and Vietnamese, soon to have it in a fourth language, Chinese.

I'm also proud to say that we have elected a Vietnamese to the State House in the State of Texas. The honorable Hubert Vo is a State Representative from a district that is within my Ninth Congressional District.

I am so honored that we have selected the theme ''Meeting the Challenges for Asian Pacific Americans.'' This is most appropriate. Why? Because in spite of discrimination and degradation, Asian Americans have met the challenges for America. They were there when America needed a national rail connectivity. In spite of discrimination and humiliation, they

helped to construct the first transcontinental railroad.

When the greatest generation went to war in World War II, they were there, not only for America, but for the entire world. Notwithstanding dehumanization and incarceration, Americans of Japanese ancestry were some of America's most decorated soldiers.

They were also there from the Philippines. During World War II, over 200,000 Filipinos fought in defense of the United States of America. More than half died. They answered President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's clarion call for help. They met the challenges of America, and it's time for America to meet the challenges of the Filipino veterans, who were promised, I might add, the same benefits as other veterans and who have not received them to this day.

It is time for Congress to pass the Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007. It is time to treat all who sacrificed during World War II the same.

Asian Americans have been there for us. It is time for us to be there for them.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call upon our good friend from California, Congressman XAVIER BECERRA.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, more than anything else I'd like to thank Chairman MIKE HONDA from California for organizing tonight's special order to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month because it's important for us to not only say it today, but have it recorded in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for all time that we appreciate what members of American society have done for us, especially members, this month we want to celebrate of Asian Pacific American heritage, who are Americans, patriotic, hardworking, and in every respect trying to live the American dream.

And so I stand here with a great deal of pride as a Member of Congress who represents a portion of the city of Los Angeles, a very diverse district with a substantial Asian Pacific American population. I stand here as a very proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus' Executive Committee.

And I also stand here very proud to say that on many occasions I've had the opportunity to author legislation very important to the Asian and Pacific American community here in this country, whether it has been the issue of reuniting families of Korean descent who have not seen family members in North Korea for many, many years, or whether it's been legislation to try to help obtain justice for Asians of Latino descent who were deprived of their rights back during World War II and never, never received the recognition they deserved to get their rights and their property back. I had that opportunity.

But rather than talk about the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act which began the whole process of discrimination and racism towards Asian and Pacific Americans in this country, or rather than dwell much longer on the history of the internment of Japanese Americans, some 120,000 back during World War II for no reason, without due process, when, in fact, we found out that Japanese Americans served this country proudly and patriotically. In fact, they were among the most decorated of American soldiers during World War II.

And rather than talk about, as I just mentioned, the plight of Filipino soldiers during World War II, who as Filipino veterans, served under the American flag, yet, by an act of Congress in 1946, were deprived of the rights to veterans benefits in this country, let me talk about something else, and not in general terms.

Let me talk to you a little bit about America's leaders today and tomorrow. Just yesterday I had the opportunity to award the winner of my Congressional Arts Competition, which we do every year, so the one winner in my district in high school who has an opportunity to present his or her piece of art work in the Capitol of the United States is introduced on that day of the selection. And that was yesterday.

My winner, for the 31st Congressional District, was Julie Lee, a high school student in my congressional district who did a phenomenal piece of art work. She will be a leader tomorrow. We know it not just because of her artistic talents, but because she came forward to participate in this process.

I could name the various military academy nominees that I've sent off to, whether it's West Point or the Air Force Academy of Japanese, Chinese or Korean American descent that I've had the pleasure and honor to send on to become leaders of this country.

Or I could simply talk about someone by the name of Christine Oh, who happens to be a legislative assistant in my Congressional office here, or Henry Truong, who happens to be my executive assistant here in my Washington, D.C. office, who many would consider my gatekeeper because he decides what my schedule looks like; or perhaps Melvin Tabilas in my district office in Los Angeles, who is one of my field representatives who helps me manage an area that has some 650,000 people there to try to make sure we give the people in my district the coverage they need.

Or perhaps I could mention the names of people like Stuart Kwoh, who has been a champion for civil rights and simply the rights of Americans, especially those of Asian Pacific American descent in Los Angeles through his work with the Asian Pacific American Legal Center.

Or I could speak to you about Grace Shimizu, who has been a champion to have restored to those Japanese Latin Americans the rights they lost during World War II through the organization Campaign For Justice, which she is a part of and leads.

Or I could mention Hyepin Im, who is the leader of the Korean Churches for Community Development in the Los Angeles area, now a national organization, which tries to help, through the Korean churches throughout this country, to bring Korean Americans forward and to receive the benefits of what this society offers to Americans.

Or perhaps I could mention Joel Jacinto, who is the Director of the Search to involve Filipino Americans, SIPA, an organization which truly goes out into the community, especially in the Filipino American community in Los Angeles to make sure that whether it's on education, housing, health care issues, SIPA is there to offer Filipino Americans those services.

Mr. Speaker, to Mr. HONDA we say, thank you for letting us have this opportunity to talk about the achievements, the accomplishments of people of Asian Pacific and American descent. Clearly, these are Americans who have persevered and excelled in this country.

We could talk about the difficulties of discrimination and racism, the violence that has been experienced by many. But rather than that, I think it's better, most fitting to talk about today's leaders, and tomorrow's leaders in this country.

So to one of today's leaders, Congressman MIKE HONDA, I say thank you for letting us talk today about tomorrow's leaders in this country as well. And with that, with great pride in helping to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HONDA. Just to comment about both Congressmen AL GREEN and XAVIER BECERRA, they too are also members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Hispanic Caucus, and so they serve dual roles in their leadership. And I think CAPAC, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, enjoys the leadership, experience and the insights of these two gentlemen, and it makes our caucus stronger and partners with the other caucuses.

And it's no wonder that they come to Congress on behalf of the community because the communities there trust these two men and they trust their leadership and their insights and their conscience. So to both I say, thank you.

I'd like to call upon a Congresswoman who hails from the Aloha State who, I think, is probably the re-incarnation of the spirit of Patsy Mink, MAZIE HIRONO.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my fellow Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, CAPAC members, and my other colleagues in celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

I'd like to, of course, thank Congressman HONDA for organizing this special order tonight, and for his leadership shown throughout the year in his service as chairman of CAPAC.

The heritage month theme is ''Meeting the Challenges for Asian Pacific Americans.'' The APA community has

come a long way since the days when laws excluded us from coming to this country, barred us from many places, public places, and worse, interned us in camps solely because of our ethnic heritage.

□ 2015

Nationwide, we are now 14 million strong, and in the next 30 years the APA population is expected to double to about 8 percent of the entire U.S. population.

Because of our history of labor immigration and our indigenous island population, Hawaii has had a head start in terms of political representation. Our APA communities have lived and worked in our islands since the mid-1800s, when the first Chinese laborers were imported to work in the sugarcane fields. Since 2000, three of our communities, the Okinawans, Koreans, and the Filipinos, have celebrated their centennial anniversaries of arrival to the United States and to Hawaii.

Hawaii produced the first Governors in the Nation of Japanese and Filipino ancestry, George Ariyoshi and Ben Cayetano; the first Native Hawaiian Governor, John Waihee; the first Asian American Senators, Hiram Fong and Daniel Inouye; the first Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry, Daniel Akaka; the first Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Member of Congress, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole; and the first woman of color to serve in Congress, Patsy Takemoto Mink. And I am privileged to have served as Hawaii's Lieutenant Governor, becoming the first immigrant woman of Asian ancestry elected to statewide office and to be able to continue my service here as the first immigrant born in Japan serving in Congress.

Asian and Pacific Islander Members of Congress currently number only nine, including ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, our delegate from American Samoa. Also with me in the House are Congress Members MIKE HONDA and DORIS MATSUI, Oregon's DAVID WU, Virginia's ROBERT SCOTT, and Louisiana's BOBBY JINDALS. In the Senate we have Hawaii's two senior statesmen, Senators DANIEL INOUYE and DANIEL AKAKA.

Although the successes of our APA community over the years have been many, there is another side to our story that is not often discussed. While more Asians have college degrees than any other group in the country, we also have more people who have not graduated from high school compared with other ethnic groups. And while APAs have higher incomes, the U.S. Census counts 1.3 million Asian and Pacific Islanders living in poverty. There are still many wrongs to be righted. Some of them are decades old.

On March 1, 2007, I reintroduced the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, H.R. 1287, a companion bill to S. 671, introduced by Senator AKAKA. It will accelerate the immigration process for the sons and daughters of the Filipino veterans who fought with our American troops in World War II. I am also a cosponsor of the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, H.R. 760, to fulfill our promise of full veterans' benefits to those Filipino soldiers.

I know that questions have been raised about the cost of carrying out our obligation to the Filipino World War II veterans. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the cost of enacting H.R. 760 will be $1 billion over a 10-year period. While this is a large sum, it is worth noting that the United States spends approximately $9 billion each month in the war in Iraq.

Challenges are also facing our Native Hawaiian population. The desire for self-determination by the indigenous people of my home State has been ignored for far too long by the Federal Government. Native Hawaiians remain the only indigenous group in our country still awaiting Federal recognition similar to the recognition Congress has granted to American Indians and Alaska Natives. H.R. 505, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, would set up a process for Native Hawaiians to organize a government entity.

By continuing to work together, I am hopeful that we will be able to meet these challenges as we have overcome others in the past. This month Washington, D.C. is hosting the Eighth Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders, PICL. The triennial PICL brings together the heads of government and senior officials from the Pacific, including Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Territories. This is the first time that the group has met in Washington, D.C., and it is quite an opportunity for all of us here to find common ground on issues facing the Pacific region and our world.

In closing, I would again like to thank Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus Chairman HONDA for allowing us this opportunity to reflect upon how far our APA community has come and yet, of course, remember how much further our community has to go.

Mahalo and aloha.

Mr. HONDA. Mahalo. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Asian American Pacific Islander community and to commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, commonly known as CAPAC, I feel privileged to be here tonight to speak of the Asian and Pacific Islander American history and accomplishments.

And before I continue, I would also like to recognize you, Mr. Speaker, for presiding over this Special Order and also knowing that you too have worked with other Asian American leaders in your home State, specifically Senator Stan Matsunaga. For that we are grateful.

Additionally, I will be highlighting those isues affecting our community and the priorities for CAPAC.

The history of APA Heritage Month: In celebrating APA Heritage Month, I want to give thanks to the late Representative Frank Horton from New York and my good friend Secretary Norman Mineta, along with Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Masayuki Matsunaga, that May is now designated as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

The first 10 days of May coincide with two important anniversaries: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants on May 7, 1843, to the U.S. and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869.

In 1992 Congress passed public law No. 102–450, the law that officially designated May of each year as ''Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.'' The first AAPI settlement in this country dates back to 1763, when Filipinos escaped imprisonment aboard Spanish galleons and established a community near New Orleans.

The AAPI community quickly expanding. Currently, there are approximately 14.6 million AAPIs living in the United States, comprising just over 5 percent of the total U.S. population. By the year 2050, there will be an estimated 33.4 million individuals living in the United States who identify as Asian alone, representing a 213 percent increase from 2000, comprising 8 percent of the total U.S. population. My home State of California has both the largest AAPI population, 4.9 million, and the largest numerical increase of AAPIs since 2000.

There are some needs. Mr. Speaker, this year's theme for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, ''Meeting the Challenges for Asian Pacific Americans,'' reflects hardships overcome by the AAPI community while highlighting the hope we maintain as we contribute to the prosperity of this great Nation. As our community expands, we must also continue to educate our fellow citizens about the uniqueness of our experiences.

The AAPI community is often misperceived as monolithic. Our community is extremely diverse in our languages, ethnicities, culture, and challenges. Aggregating such a large and diverse group makes it difficult to understand the unique problems faced by the individual ethnicities and subgroups, such as the Southeast Asian Americans, who are refugees that fled their home countries during the late 1970s and the early 1980s. As a country, we need to better address the needs of the AAPI community when we discuss comprehensive immigration reform, education, health issues, and veterans' affairs.

Comprehensive immigration reform: Mr. Speaker, our Nation was founded by immigrants who valued freedom and liberty, who sought to be free from persecution and from tyranny. Families fled their home countries to seek refuge in this great Nation because they too believed in ''liberty, justice, and freedom for all.'' It is in this spirit that

CAPAC supports immigration legislation that shifts the debate from an exclusionary, anti-immigrant, enforcement-only approach to one that confronts the social and economic realities behind immigration; honors the dignity of all families and communities; and recognizes the economic, social, and cultural contributions of immigrants to our great country.

Today, AAPIs constitute a growing and vibrant piece of the American fabric. In 2005 close to 9 million of this Nation's foreign born were born in Asia, constituting approximately one quarter of the foreign-born population and over one half of the total AAPI population. Even with a relatively high naturalization rate, there are approximately 1.5 million Asian undocumented immigrants living, working, or studying in the U.S., representing 14 percent of the undocumented immigrants in the United States. These include victims of immigration fraud, who have become undocumented due to no fault of their own. Many work and study hard, pay taxes, and yet live in fear with no hope of gaining a path to legal permanent resident status. Let's give these workers and these students an opportunity.

In addition to an earned pathway to citizenship, family reunification is a high priority in the AAPI community. Immigration reform must espouse the family values that are so fundamental to our national ideals. Family members provide care for the sick, for their children, and for their elderly. Family members are crucial for small businesses and educational opportunities. Close to 2 million AAPIs wait years, sometimes even decades, in order to reunite with their families in the United States. AAPI families who seek to be reunited with their family members overseas have not seen their dreams come true because of our dysfunctional immigration system. We need comprehensive immigration reform to address these backlogs.

And education: In addition to immigration reform, expanding educational access for all Americans is also a high priority for CAPAC. Mr. Speaker, as Americans, we need to ensure that our children receive a quality education by providing adequate teacher training, funds for after-school and extra-curricular activities, and ensuring that college is affordable for every student who desires to receive a higher education.

According to the U.S. Census, 41 percent of Asians age 25 and over have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. However, when the data is disaggregated for AAPI subgroups, we find that the ''model minority'' stereotype is, in fact, a myth. According to the 2000 Census, only 9.1 percent of Cambodian Americans, 7.4 percent of Hmong Americans, 7.6 percent of Lao Americans, 19.5 percent of Vietnamese Americans, and 16.5 percent of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who are 25 years and older have a bachelor's degree or higher degrees.

These numbers show that we must do a better job of disaggregating the data and information about our communities to assess the needs of those hard-working Americans who still falter behind.

To address the disparities between subgroups of the larger AAPI community, we need Congress to pass the Asian American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions bill, which my colleague from Oregon, Representative DAVID WU, has introduced in January. This legislation will provide Federal grants to colleges and universities that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent AAPI and at least 50 percent of its degree-seeking students receive financial assistance.

As a caucus, we will work to increase the availability of loan assistance, scholarships, and programs to allow AAPI students to attend a higher education institution; to ensure full funding for teachers and bilingual education programs under the No Child Left Behind law to support English language learners; and to support full funding of minority outreach programs for access to higher education such as the TRIO programs to expand services to serve AAPI students.

In health, Mr. Speaker, a common misperception of AAPIs is that as a group, we face fewer health problems than other racial and ethnic groups. But, in fact, AAPI as a group, and specific populations within this group, do experience disparities in health and health care. For example, AAPIs have the highest hepatitis B rates of any racial group in the United States.

□ 2030

This week, health advocates from around the country will be participating in a National Awareness Campaign to bring attention to and educate their communities about prevention of hepatitis B through testing and vaccination. In the United States, 12 million people have been infected at some time in their lives with the hepatitis B virus, and more than 5,000 Americans die from hepatitis B related liver complications each year.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders account for more than half of the chronic hepatitis B cases and half of the deaths resulting from chronic hepatitis B infections in the United States. In order to break the silence surrounding this deadly disease and bring awareness to the American people, Congressman EDOLPHUS TOWNS, Congressman CHARLIE DENT and I have introduced H.R. 366, which supports the goals and ideals of National Hepatitis B Awareness Week. I hope my colleagues will join me in educating our communities about the dangers of this disease.

AAPIs are also five times more likely to develop cervical and liver cancer than any other ethnic and racial group. Furthermore, according to the Census Bureau, 18 percent of AAPIs went without insurance for the entire year in 2000. This means that the uninsured are not only more likely to go without health care for serious medical conditions, they are also more likely to go without routine care, less likely to have a regular source of care, less likely to use preventive services, and have viewer visits per year.

At the same time, without appropriate language translation services or properly translated materials, limited English proficient immigrants cannot receive adequate care as well as State and Federal benefits for which they may be eligible. In the AAPI community, 76 percent of Hmong Americans, 61 percent of Vietnamese Americans, 62 percent of Korean Americans and 39 percent of Tongans speak limited English. Therefore, eliminating health care disparities in the AAPI community must include data collection, linguistically appropriate and culturally competent services and access to health insurance.

CAPAC has been working with both the Congressional Hispanic and Black Caucuses on the Health Care Equity and Accountability Act to eliminate ethnic and racial health disparities for all of our communities. The act would expand the health care safety net, diversify the health care workforce, combat diseases that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities, emphasize prevention and behavioral health, and promote the collection and dissemination of data and enhance medical research.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the patriotic men and women serving our country in the military, including the 62,378 AAPIs who are on active duty in the military, and the 7,904 AAPIs who are currently deployed in the global war on terrorism. I also commend and thank the 446,000 AAPI veterans who have fought for our country.

I would like to highlight and honor the Filipino veterans who have not been compensated or recognized for their service, which I believe is a national disservice to these brave veterans. As a country, it is our duty to ensure these veterans have equal access to all of the benefits and treatment that other veterans receive. We believe that our troops should be taken care of when we send them into battle and that they should be given the respect when they return home. Therefore, CAPAC endorses H.R. 760, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act introduced by Representative BOB FILNER, who chairs the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. CAPAC thanks Representaive FILNER for his leadership on this issue.

H.R. 760 would do justice by providing the full benefits promised to all Filipino veterans who fought in World War II under the command of the U.S. military. The Filipino Veterans Equity Act would eliminate the disparities and

benefits between some Filipino veterans and restore the honor and dignity they so deserve. With Congressman FILNER as the Chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, we have a great chance to get this bill to the floor.

There are many firsts among the AAPIs. I am proud of our community's accomplishments, and I would like to recognize many of the AAPIs first in areas of art, film, sports, science, academia and politics, but also emphasize that they should not be the last.

In 1847, Yung Wing, a Chinese American, graduated from Yale University and became the first AAPI to graduate from an American university.

In 1863, William Ah Hang, a Chinese American, became the first AAPI to enlist in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.

In 1922, Anna May Wong, in her lead role in ''The Toll of the Sea,'' at the age of 17 became the first AAPI female to become a movie star, achieving stardom at a time when prejudice against the Chinese in the United States was rampant.

In 1944, An Wang, a Chinese American who invented the magnetic core memory, revolutionized computing and served as a standard method for memory retrieval and storage. And today we have iPods that are smaller than a deck of cards that can hold up to four gigabytes of information, all coming from this 1944 invention by An Wang.

During World War II, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team of the United States Army, comprised mostly of Japanese Americans, became the most highly decorated unit of its size in the history of the U.S. Army, including 22 Medal of Honor recipients, Senator DANIEL INOUYE being one of them.

In 1946, Wing F. Ong, a Chinese American of Arizona, became the first AAPI to be elected to State office.

In 1947, Wataru ''Wat'' Misaka became the first ethnic minority and the first AAPI to play in the National Basketball Association for the New York Knicks. How about that?

In 1948, two Californian divers, Dr. Samuel Lee, a Korean American, and Victoria Manalo Draves, a Filipina American, became the first AAPIs to win Olympic gold medals for the U.S.

In 1956, Dalip Singh Saud, an Indian American, became the very fist AAPI to be elected to the U.S. Congress.

In 1959, Hiram Leong Fong, a Chinese American, became the first AAPI to be elected as a United States Senator and is the only AAPI to actively seek the Presidential nomination of a major party.

In 1965, Patsy Takemoto Mink, a Japanese American, becames the first AAPI woman and woman of color elected to the United States Congress.

In 1971, Judge Herbert Choy, late Ninth Circuit Court judge, became the first AAPI to sit on the Federal bench.

In 1985, Haing Ngor, a Cambodian American survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime, became the first AAPI to win an Academy Award for his role in ''The Killing Fields'' movie.

In 1985, Ellison Onizuka, grandson of a Japanese immigrant, became the first AAPI astronaut to reach outer space, and in 1986 died in the space shuttle explosion of the Challenger.

In 2000, Secretary Norman Mineta was confirmed as Secretary of Commerce under President Clinton and became the very first AAPI to hold a cabinet post; then continued his service to America as Secretary of Transportation under President Bush.

In 2001, Secretary Elaine Chao was confirmed as Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush, becoming the first AAPI female to hold a cabinet position.

Mr. Speaker, the Asian and Pacific Islander American community continues to fight for our civil rights as Americans. Even after the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, we as a community did not grow embittered or cowed by discrimination; instead, we progressed and moved forward.

I am a proud member of the AAPI community, and I am proud to be one because we continue to serve as positive contributors to our many communities by investing in education, business and cultural opportunities for all Americans.

In closing, this Asian Pacific American Heritage Month we take pride in our history, accomplishments and the promise of our future as we continue to pave the way for a better tomorrow and a better America.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

I am proud to represent the city of San Francisco, where we are blessed in our community to have a thriving Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) population. It is home to our Nation's oldest Japantown, one of the largest Chinatowns, and countless other ethnic communities.

As one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in our country, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders contribute to our economic prosperity, cultural diversity, and political process. Representing 11 different ethnicities, they have a unique voice, which plays a role in the work that we do in Congress to improve the lives of Americans every day.

While the debate about comprehensive immigration reform intensifies across the country, it is recognized by many of my colleagues as a hurdle that particularly affects Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Whether it is a Chinese student waiting for a visa, or the South Asian worker waiting to be reunited with his family, comprehensive immigration reform is a challenge that must be met. Their experiences reflect that of the first immigrants to our country, who dreamt of a better life for themselves. Within the AAPI community, there is a beautiful diversity that reflects the ideals of family values, hard work, and a wonderful optimism that our nation was founded upon.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders also face the tragic challenge of combating hate crimes. Last week, the House of Representatives passed legislation that strengthened the ability of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to solve a wide range of violent hate crimes based on religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, national origin, or disability. Although a hate crime may affect the life of one victim, its impact reaches deep into the community. All Americans have a right to feel safe in their community. Sadly, we remember Song Sun Lee, Stephen Kam Yan Li, and Robert Stanford, all recent victims of hate, whose lives were unjustly cut short.

As we work on legislation to improve lives for the future, we must remember the challenges from the past. World War II set the stage for courageous acts of heroism, but at the same time generated acts of grave injustice and discrimination. I salute the Filipino Veterans who fought bravely during World War II and join them in their fight for full veterans' benefits. I recognize the courage of the remaining comfort women and will work to ensure that their rights are protected.

I am pleased to stand here with my colleagues who also recognize the efforts and accomplishments of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in this country. I thank Chairman MIKE HONDA and the rest of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus for their continuous efforts to ensure that the millions of voices of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are heard.

As we celebrate, let us continue well past Asian Pacific Heritage Month to value and appreciate the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in the United States.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and pleasure that I join my fellow members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This May marks the 29th time that America has recognized and celebrated the many contributions and achievements of Asian Pacific Americans.

America has reached greatness in part by the accumulation of ideas from those with varied heritage and backgrounds. In particular, Asian Pacific Americans have made profound contributions to the arts, education, science, technology, politics and athletics. Asian Pacific Americans have played an active and crucial role in the development of the United States, from linking the coasts of the nation with the transcontinental railroad to bringing the world closer through development of the latest Internet technology.

This year, Congress will be debating and voting to reauthorize No Child Left Behind and the Higher Education Act. As a member of the Education and Labor Committee as well as the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am working hard to ensure that the Asian Pacific American community not only has a seat at the table of these debates, but also a strong voice to shape the national conversation.

The Asian Pacific American community remains and always will be an integral and vibrant part of American society. As we take part in the celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I urge everyone to participate more deeply in the civic life of our nation. Asian Pacific American civic engagement will help to define our collective future and ensure that we move forward with determination and unity. Let us work together to build bridges and strengthen our great nation's diverse communities.

I encourage Congress and the American people to spend the month of May absorbing the legacy, culture and achievements of the Asian Pacific American community.

AMERICA FACES LARGEST TAX INCREASE IN HISTORY

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, coming to the House floor as I have for the past 4 months to talk about the great concern that I have and to draw attention to what is going to happen in the United States Congress if the new Democratic majority does not act, in just 1,335 days, the American people are going to see the largest tax increase in American history. I also believe, although I haven't been able to verify this, it is probably the largest tax increase in the history of the world. And the Democratic majority doesn't have to even vote on it, all they have to do is run out the clock and allow the tax reductions, the tax cuts that occurred in 2001 and 2003 to expire. And only in Washington, and I have heard this said, that the majority party is not going to raise taxes because they won't vote on raising taxes, but because they are going to expire and people's taxes are going to go up, that is not really a tax increase. Well, if you are sitting out there in middle America and you are making $40,000 a year and you have two children, your taxes will go up approximately $2,000. That is a tax increase. Everybody in America knows that. And everybody that knows how to add and subtract knows that if your taxes go up $2,000 or if anything goes up $2,000, that is an increase. And as I said, the majority, the Democratic majority will not have to vote on it, they can just, as I have said, run out the clock.

In 2001 and 2003 and every year in the Republican majority, we cut taxes; we cut some tax over the 12 years in majority. And the new Democratic majority, it took them about a week, maybe less than 10 days to have their first tax increase. They passed it back in January. And fortunately it hasn't become law because they haven't been able to pass anything of substance that passed the House and the Senate and gone to the President. So, as I said, we haven't seen that first tax increase, although the Democratic majority did in fact vote on a tax increase and it passed here in the House.

I hope my friends on the other side will take a lesson from history and look back to the 1960s to President John F. Kennedy and what he did in his term as President. One of the first things he did was to cut taxes. And what happened in the 1960s? The economy grew, revenues to the Federal Government grew because of those tax cuts. And then look back just into the 1980s when President Ronald Reagan came to Washington, and with the help of a Democratic majority, he cut taxes. And what happened? The economy grew, the revenues to the Federal Government grew, and that was a positive thing.

The same thing occurred in 2001 and 2003 and continues. We cut taxes, allowing the American people to keep more of their hard-earned dollars, and the economy is growing. Revenues to the Federal Government are at record levels coming into the Federal Government. And the facts are there. Since 2003, 7.5 million jobs have been created. That is more jobs that the European Union and Japan combined have created. Our economy has now added jobs for 43 straight months.

Just last month, in April, 88,000 new jobs were created in the United States. Folks that had been unemployed or happen to find themselves unemployed are finding much shorter duration of unemployment than they had in the past. The national unemployment rate remains at 4.5 percent, which is well below the 5.1 percent rate which was in 2005, and below the average of each of the past four decades.

□ 2045

The U.S. has grown faster than any G–7 industrialized nation over the past 4 quarters. Wages have increased, and tax relief has helped spur economic growth by keeping over $1.1 trillion in the pockets of Americans. As I said, if the Democratic majority doesn't act by January 1, 2011, all those tax cuts, tax reductions we put in place for small businesses, for families, for individuals, will expire.

In my State of Pennsylvania alone, the average worker, the average taxpayer, will see about a $3,000 increase in his taxes. My good friend from Florida, RIC KELLER, informs me that the average taxpayer in Florida will see an increase of $3,000, if we don't act and extend those tax cuts.

Once again, that is what we are going to do tonight, is talk about this countdown. We call ourselves the Countdown Crew, because in 1,335 days, if the Democratic majority doesn't act, the average American and average small business in this country, the individual in this country is going to see their taxes increase.

That money will come out of their pockets, will come to Washington, and they will not have an opportunity to spend it as they see fit. They won't have an opportunity to save it for their retirement, or their children's college education or future education. So it is important that we draw attention to what is going to happen here in Congress.

The Democrats won a majority in the election and they said first of all that they were going to have ''6 for 06.'' They have passed all six of those in the House, but nothing of what they passed, none of those six have made it into law. As I said earlier, very few things we have passed here on the floor have made it into law. We have named a couple of post offices and Federal buildings, but nothing substantial has been able to pass this Congress and become law.

As I said, I think it is extremely important that the American people are aware that just by running out the clock, the taxes for every American, every small business, every business in America, will go up, without action in this House.

With that, I am joined here tonight by my good friend from Kentucky, a former business owner and a father of several children, I can't keep count, five or six.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Six

Mr. SHUSTER. Six. I would like to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I just want to say I appreciate the leadership you have shown since the beginning of this Congress on being the lead sponsor of the Countdown Crew.

Both BILL SHUSTER from Pennsylvania and I were small business owners. We have lived out in the real world. We are not attorneys. We come from an environment of working and manufacturing and distribution and logistics with real people. We know the burdens on making sure our employees are covered with health insurance. We know the impact of tax increases and tax cuts.

For those of you joining us right now, we would love to hear your stories, the impact on being able to keep more of your own money, what it has meant to you and the ability to invest in your children's future, to build a future for yourself, to build a nest egg, to start a small business, to expand the small business that you have.

BILL and I have heard literally hundreds of stories since the first of the year. We would like to hear yours. You can communicate with us directly at Countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. That is Countdowncrew@mail.house.gov.

At the end of the day, I believe that the key principle that we have shared over and over and over again is that our focus and the focus of the government is that the government cannot create value or wealth for people. What the government can do, done rightly, is create a playing field and a framework to unleash the creativity in the American people, to give them the opportunity to pursue their dreams, to pursue a future, to build a future for themselves, and ultimately we start that process by making sure that people can keep more of what they earn.

When you have control over your money, you are going to invest it in such a way that it makes a difference for you, your family, ultimately for your community and the country. That is why we say we want to create taxpayers, not raise taxes.

It has been a few weeks since we were able to get together here on the floor

as we have been counting the days since our first session the second week of January when we began sharing what was ahead. We predicted at that time that there would be tax increases coming.

Much of the change in the election was not driven by fiscal policy. It was driven by anger or resentment or emotion related to the national security situation. But as people are waking up, I am traveling in different parts of my district, many folks upset about that said, ''I didn't realize I was voting for a tax increase.'' In fact, what was voted on in the House last month with was the largest tax increase in American history.

My friends, that is not a solution to the country's challenges. By raising taxes, we limit opportunity. By raising taxes, money comes out of our communities, it comes out of working families' pockets, it comes to bureaucrats in Washington.

When some of my colleagues on the other side made comments about wanting to reduce the deficit and spending, they didn't want to reduce spending. What in fact they wanted to do was reduce defense spending, but not reduce spending on other programs. Indeed, that spending has increased under this budget. What we are looking at over 5 years is an estimated $900 billion tax increase. That is going to be devastating to the economy.

In Kentucky alone, I come from a district that is very diverse with agriculture, manufacturing, distribution, logistics. We have river industries. We have the largest inland port in North America with the Port of Ashland-Huntington, where much of our Nation's energy supply transits. Our average working family in Kentucky is going to see a tax increase of $2,563, right off the bottom line. When I think what we could do with that, I have got my second child going into college now, I think of what we could do with $2,500 is immense.

We look at the counterpoint, I look to the gentleman's point earlier regarding what happened when taxes were cut by President Kennedy, what happened when taxes were cut by President Reagan, what happened when taxes were cut by President Bush and the Republican Congress at that time, at a very difficult period in this Nation's history as we entered into war, just prior to the 9/11 attacks. There was a recession in 2001 that was inherited from the prior administration.

What we have seen is record revenues to the Federal Government by reducing taxes. By raising the ceiling, in fact pushing the burden upward on taxes and reducing the burden on working class families, taking millions of people off the tax rolls, by creating a 10 percent tax bracket, has resulted in the creation of 7.5 million jobs, record revenues to the Federal Government, and that done in a time of war. What that tells me is that these principles work; that Republican, conservative fiscal principles work by allowing people to keep more of their own money.

My question in fact to folks is if you had to write that $2,500 check, what do you want to get in return for that? At the end of the day, we want to get something that is going to make a difference for our family, our community and our country, and not fuel empty rhetoric, particularly spending on programs that aren't necessarily going to add any value.

180,000 jobs were created in March alone. As we travel throughout our districts, I hear stories in a wide variety of industries, many of them I have shared here on various evenings as we have come back to Washington, D.C., the successes that people have had by being allowed to keep more of their own money and build a future in their hometown, in the heartland, and not send it to bureaucrats far away.

I would like to invite my colleagues from Texas, Congressman CONAWAY and Mr. SHUSTER, to continue the dialogue with some of these examples. But if you just joined us again, we are the Countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. We would like to hear your stories. We would like to hear your testimonials, how it has made a difference for you in creating jobs and small businesses in our local communities where 88 percent of all new jobs created in this country come from.

It is not going to come from giant corporations. It is certainly not going to be created from liberal policies of the folks on the other side of the aisle. It comes by you producing your future, chasing your vision and investing your dollars to build that.

With that, I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman talking about this tonight. I think it is important that you point out that it is not the government that creates jobs, it is small businesses. We do want to hear your stories. We want to hear what you have been able to do with that tax cut that you received, either in your business or your family, and those stories, we would like you to e-mail them to us at Countdowncrew@mail.house.gov.

If you don't want to send them to us, send them to your Member of Congress. Let your Member of Congress know how important it is that this Congress acts to extend those tax cuts before they expire. They are going to expire anywhere from the end of this year in 2007 to the end of 2010, and if we don't act, run out the clock, we are going to see this huge tax increase and you are not going to have that money in your pocket. It is going to be spent to Washington and the bureaucrats and politicians are going to spend it.

It is a great privilege to have with us here tonight a colleague of ours from Texas, who more importantly than that is a CPA. He understands the Tax Code better than most of us, although I don't know that anybody understands the Tax Code, as large and complex as it is. But we appreciate his coming down and being able to walk us through some of what is happening in the Tax Code and the burdens it is placing on businesses and families.

With that, I yield to a good friend from Texas, Mr. CONAWAY.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Pennsylvania and good friend from Kentucky for coming down here tonight to talk about what the Countdown Crew has been talking about, and that is the pending tax increase that is looming large on the horizon.

Part of the problem as I toured District 11 during the Easter break was that because the actual tax law change is still years away, many people in the district are not paying as much attention to it as I think they should. It is kind of like the fellow who fell off the 10 story building. As he passed the 5th floor, he was heard to say, ''so far, so good. So far, so good.''

We have fallen off the building. January 2, when the Democrats took over the House, we fell off the edge. It took them 14 days to raise taxes on the oil business, the first tax increase, and we are much like that gentleman who was in midair headed to an abrupt halt when he hit the ground, and that is the misguided idea that so far, so good; so far, so good.

Back in March, these chambers heard an incredible amount of rhetoric about the budget and if you had just tuned in, you didn't really know which side was which. Basically what you heard was a schoolyard squabble in which our side said yes, you are, and their side said no, you're not, and yes, you are; no, you're not. We went back and forth, and I don't know that any of us really adequately explained to the people listening, Mr. Speaker, why both sides claimed the exact same set of facts with two totally different interpretations. Let me try to be a little instructive on that tonight, as best I can.

The current tax law says that in 2011 most of the tax breaks as we refer to those that were enacted in 2001 and 2003 will expire on their own. Back in 2001 and 2003, the Senate, the Democrats particularly in the Senate, invoked the Byrd amendment or the Byrd rule, I guess, which restricts tax law thinking to a 10-year window. In other words, we handcuff ourselves with respect to tax policy in some artificial time frames that may or may not make sense.

It is unfortunate that we do it that way, but that is kind of the ground rules we have. We could spend nights and nights talking about how we could reset the ground rules and have a much better way of developing tax policy in this House that would make much more sense.

But, nevertheless, that 10-year window restricted the elimination of the death tax, the tax rate decreases, the marriage penalty, the earned income credits, that we wanted to make permanent that left this House. The bill that left the House would make all of

those things permanent. But the compromise in the Senate, in order to get it out and passed the obstructionist Senators, Democrat Senators at that time, we were limited to 10 years.

We are now coming on to the end of that time frame and existing law says that on January 1, 2011, tax rates, as an example, the top rate, which is now 33 percent of earned income, will rise to 39.6 percent, a 20-plus percent increase. The bottom rate, which is currently 10 percent, goes to 15 percent, a 50 percent tax increase on the folks who make the least amount of money in our society. So what is happening is that the Democrats are hiding behind the operation of law as it currently exists to say that they are not raising taxes.

But the proof is in the pudding, because in their 5-year budget window that they have presented and passed through the House and that we will appoint conferees on tomorrow, spends the money that gets raised in the budget window of 2011 and 2012. So the Democrats actually let it work as it is supposed to, as it is going to, without intervention by the Republicans, and the Federal tax collection scheme will collect an extra $400 billion in 2011 and 2012.

Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle say they are not intending to allow the tax increases on those 10 percent brackets, et cetera, et cetera, to actually happen. That we need to trust them. That their intent is to not allow that to happen before this 2011 timeframe.

But the problem is, they spent the money that is raised. So in order to offset under their definition of PAYGO, that they invoke from time to time, and they change this definition, by the way, from time to time.

□ 2100

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. You might want to share about the idea of PAYGO which means something to us as Americans and means something very different in this Congress. It is not how you balance your checkbook at home.

Mr. CONAWAY. Yes. We recently passed the D.C. Voting Rights bill which is a separate conversation. It had a modest amount of money in terms of D.C. modesty. In terms of District 11, there aren't very many people out there who have a deposit slip big enough to deposit the $14 million that it is going to cost. It will cost $14 million to add two additional Members of Congress.

The bill that was passed violated PAYGO on its face. They had a convoluted rule that said even though that bill has passed the House, if we don't pass the fix, the PAYGO fix, then neither bill will actually pass. So they winked at themselves on the first bill, saying we are going to fix the $14 million hole.

Then the next bill that came forward to fix their PAYGO issue did not raise taxes on anyone to pay for it. They did not cut spending anywhere, and it didn't raise the taxes necessary to do that.

The manager of the time that afternoon actually said from the microphone right over there in the middle, we are not raising taxes on any American. What they are doing, though, is basically taking an advance on next month's salary. What they did was said taxpayers who have an adjusted gross income of more than $5 million, which is a relatively small group of people and not a crowd that draws much sympathy among folks, we are going to insist that they advance their tax payments a little quicker than they would have otherwise. The overall tax that they are going to owe is not going to change, but we want them to pay in an amount a little quicker.

However the CBO scored that cash flow, they scored it as a positive which allowed them to wink and say yes, we now have conformed with our own PAYGO rules.

So the Blue Dogs have to explain to us how their new version or definition of PAYGO works where they can simply advance moneys out of next month's salary, in effect, and that somehow meets the PAYGO standard.

Tomorrow we will debate this issue that the tax rates happen on their own. We intend to not let it happen. But in order to do that, they have to raise taxes somewhere else. So they have to take that 39.6 new rate in 2011 and raise it even higher in order to make up for reducing taxes on the folks at the bottom of the deal.

Republicans have said that this is a tax increase. You allow it to happen. You have the choice to not allow it to happen. You allow it to happen and you spent the money. So both sides have got arguments that have some substance of truth, some version of truth in them, and you have to look at the total package.

But at the end of day, at the end of their 5-year budget window that we will be debating tomorrow, good Americans will pay in another $400 billion in taxes. And guess what, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle found a place to spend it. They didn't reduce the deficit. They didn't reduce the national debt or put it into a rainy day fund, or save it. They spent it. Their rhetoric to the contrary that they are not raising taxes is hollow at best given the action that their budget will actually do.

I want to talk a little bit about overall tax policy in this country, if I can. I pose this idea. We tax capital gains, dividends and interest at rates that are less than the rate we tax earned income. So what we are saying is as a policy of this government, we think that hardworking people who sweat should pay higher taxes than our money does when it is working for us in the capital markets. Now that is an interesting philosophy and one that has been accepted around these halls for a long, long time, and we can have a debate whether or not that makes sense.

But what is the correct tax rate on capital gains? I know what the Tax Code says, but what should that rate be? What should we tax earnings from capital gains and interest and dividends? What should the tax rate be? What is magic about the current number? Should it be twice that, half that?

It is not like math classes where you went to the back of the book and the even or odd-numbered questions had the answers. There is no back of the book. I will pose the same question about earned income. A person working for Parker Drilling Company in West Texas or UTI Patterson Drilling Company, folks who work hard and understand what work is, what you and I do here, we call it work but it is not work in the tradition that I understand hard work is. What should we tax that guy or that woman for their earned income, their work? What should we tax accountants and doctors and lawyers for the work that they do day in and day out, providing the services and goods we want? What is the correct rate?

We have rates in the code. We think the rates that have been in place for the last 7 years may or may not be right, but they have helped produce an economy that has boomed and is continuing to grow.

Now Ronald Reagan said the stuff you don't like, you ought to tax it. If we don't like people working, we raise taxes.

As we have this debate night after night and year in and year out, let us talk about the idea what should the correct rate be. Regardless of the Byrd rule and regardless of the 10-year plan and regardless of the budget act nonsense that we have to tie our hands with, what ought to be the rate? Is there a better tax collection scheme than the one we currently have? Should we go to a national sales tax or flat tax? Let's begin to have those discussions.

I have spent 30-plus years helping clients comply with this incredibly difficult Tax Code. No, I am not an expert in it. I have some background and some depth, but this thing is incredible. We have narrow experts in the accounting world who take on various segments of it who don't know the full deal. It is incredibly complex. Let's begin to discuss how should we collect money? How should we collect the minimum amount of money needed to fund this Federal Government in ways that are fair, simple, straightforward, easy to comply with, and don't cost the estimated $260 billion a year that Americans spend complying with this incredibly complex code.

This code has all sorts of winners and losers. As we begin to talk about PAYGO, and you look at the tax increases that the Democrats will propose, every one of those have winners and losers. Every one of those pit some segment of society against the other, some level of wealth against another, and I don't think that makes for a good way to do things, to create this constant tension between taxpayers. We

are in this all together. We all want the Federal Government to work as efficiently as we can.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I go back to Yogi Berra's old saying about deja vu all over again. You talk about what the right tax rate is and how do we explain it to the American people. I think it would be helpful if the Democrats would simply tell the truth.

The reason I lay this out, as a former small business owner, I remember in 1992 being told stories by then-candidate Bill Clinton how he was not going to raise taxes. President Bush at the time made the statement that Clinton ran saying he wouldn't raise taxes, and then turned around and made a deal that raised taxes, damaged his credibility and hurt the economy at the time.

I was getting ready to step out into the entrepreneurial world and leave the software industry to start my own business. I had manufacturing clients that wanted me and eventually some of the folks that I hired to work with me and assist them in improving their competitiveness nationally. We started that business in late spring of 1992, getting it up off the ground. We managed to feed our families that first 6 months and do all right in that time, but our real opportunity was going to come in 1993.

All of a sudden after Mr. Clinton became President, he came before the American people and he didn't say I am going to keep my promise and cut those taxes because we know that allowing people to keep more of their own money creates a future for them. He offered me a new alternative as a new small business owner with employees, with health plans to pay for, with taxes to pay for, with regulatory fees to pay for, dealing with workmen's compensation and disability and costs that I had never known in the large corporate world, and he invited me to invest in the United States Government.

I looked at this as a small business owner and a former military officer. I thought my investment in the United States Government should be first in providing for the national defense, how was I going to promote the general welfare as the Constitution would ask us to do, I would hope in infrastructure, in projects that were going to be seed money to create more jobs and to stimulate the economy in our area. But what did we get, the largest tax increase in American history at that time, actually a fraction of the one that was passed in this recent liberal Democratic budget.

We reduced the size of our military and we weakened national defense by taking several divisions out of the standing Army, reducing the size of the Marine Corps, reducing the size of the Navy, reducing the airlift capability in the Air Force.

We increased spending in social programs. We increased the mandatory spending rate in social programs to nearly twice the rate of inflation while shorting our men and women in uniform in the mid-1990s as an administration priority.

Then radical Islamic extremism intruded itself upon the United States on 9/11. We had been dealing with it before then, but like the old saying of the Purlator man commercial, ''you pay me now or you pay me later.''

Now we are in a big catch-up situation from a national security standpoint of things that could have been handled 10 years ago.

I think back as a small business owner, what were the costs that were taken away when I invested in the government? Well, the additional tax money, we saw no benefit of that. I saw my clients hurt. I saw manufacturing companies hurt, and I saw other machine tool companies hurt by increased environmental compliance and the increased cost of regulation. And the attempts to manage health care from a national perspective actually drove costs up. In Kentucky, by doing a plan that was called Hillary-lite, something that was a lesser plan of the Democrat health care proposals of that same year of 1993, we drove 45 of 47 insurance carriers out of the State, quadrupled the cost of health care for small business owners in a relatively short period of time. To me that was the opposite of the original intent.

If I invest in something, I would like to see a return. If we spend money in our community, we would like to see a benefit accrue for our community and it certainly didn't happen there.

Just on the taxes that we paid, and we don't know where they went to support all of these programs with this increased investment, we could have hired probably three more consultants or nearly a third larger workforce which would have created more taxpayers and which would have been helping more businesses to compete and would have been putting more dollars into the Federal treasury.

But on the other hand, now we found ourselves at the end of the Clinton administration needing to come out of a recession. We have reduced taxes and we have moved to simplify regulation. But because of the actions last November, I believe that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle sincerely but incorrectly have interpreted that election as another opportunity to affirm their desire to have small business owners invest.

And the truth of the matter is that if 88 percent of our jobs are created by small businesses owners, the last thing we want to do is tax those who are going to be starting those companies and starting those family enterprises.

Again, in 1,335 days from now the average family in my State will have a $2,563 tax increase. You mentioned the 50 percent increase that is coming for those in the 10 percent tax bracket. That benefited 1.2 million people in my State, but let's look at senior citizens.

My mom lives on a fixed income right now. She draws Social Security and her retirement. Fortunately, she has a supplemental Medicare insurance plan to help offset some of the additional cost.

But if you take an elderly couple with a $40,000 income, their tax bill is going to rise 156 percent in 2011 from $583 to $1,489. So we have helped them reduce the average cost of their prescription medication by $1,200, but we will increase their taxes by $1,400 by what the Democratic Congress intends to do by simply not doing anything.

They are going to allow these cuts which have had so much positive impact on the communities and the country expire.

Mr. SHUSTER. I think it is extremely important to point out that only in Washington, D.C. and the accounting we use here, and I know that the Democratic majority when they were the minority would say that we were cutting spending on programs when we were in the majority when actually it would go up by 2 or 3 percent instead of the 4 or 5 percent that they wanted it to, and they would say that is a cut when it is not a cut.

□ 2115

Now, they are saying that it is not going to be a tax increase because we did not vote on it, but all of us know that those of us balancing checkbooks at home and people who run small businesses, people that are trying to save money, know if the Federal Government takes an average $2,000 more out of your paycheck a year, that is a tax increase.

As I pointed out earlier, in my State of Pennsylvania, the average taxpayer will pay $3,000 more in taxes, and that is a tax increase. Whether the United States Congress votes on it or does not vote on it, if you pay $3,000 more in taxes, that is a tax increase.

This PAYGO rule, which I always thought PAYGO meant that if you are going to increase spending, you have got to find a way to fund it, and that is increase taxes or offset it by cutting spending elsewhere. Quite frankly, I do not know what PAYGO means under the Democratic majority anymore because they find loopholes and exceptions and make changes to it. So, once again, this funny accounting in Washington, DC continues to proliferate under the Democratic majority.

I think it is important that, as my friend from Kentucky talked about his experiences with small business, that we get Americans to e-mail us at the countdowncrew@mail.house.gov. E-mail us what you have been able to do over the past couple of years with those tax cuts, whether you are putting it back in your business and increasing your workforce or making it more efficient, selling more products by expanding markets; or if you have a family and you are able to save $2,000 or $3,000 because of the elimination of the marriage penalty or the doubling of the child tax credit, how were you able to take those dollars and employ them in

your household and your business to make your lives better.

I think that is extremely important that we hear those kinds of stories. Once again, I want to point out if you are unable to or do not want to e-mail them to the countdowncrew@mail.house.gov, send them to your Member of Congress; let them know what you were able to do with those funds.

Again, I know all across America we hear those stories. My good friend from Florida and I were talking, RIC KELLER, and talked about what the seniors in Florida, how they have been able to improve their housing, invest that money in a nicer house, a bigger house, a different house because of those tax cuts.

So I know that, once again, we are joined by our colleague, the CPA, from Texas, and it is always educational to hear him talk about some of these tax issues. I think he wants to talk a little about the ATM.

I went to my accountant a month or so ago. He was talking to me about how it is catching people in this web. He said in Pennsylvania, a household where there is two teachers, they are now approaching and some of them have surpassed that level where two teachers, modest income, are getting caught up in the ATM, paying more taxes.

So, with that, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague from Pennsylvania. It is actually the A-M-T. ATM is a money machine. It is an ATM for the Federal Government.

Mr. SHUSTER. It is confusing to me because you put the card in and you get money out.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. One point of order here to point out. The ATM right now is going to be the American people for the Democrat tax program. They are going to have the largest tax increase in history.

Mr. CONAWAY. There is plenty of truth in the ATM issue, but the alternative minimum tax is AMT.

Mr. SHUSTER. I apologize. Like I said, it is confusing to me because they just keep on take, take, take just like the cash machine at the banks.

Mr. CONAWAY. That is exactly right. I thank my colleague.

The Internal Revenue Code, 1986, as amended, is incredibly complicated, as we have already talked about. If you look at most of the provisions in there, many of the provisions in there, they have a history. They have a reason for being. We are trying to manipulate our economy. We are trying to manipulate conduct. We are trying to do something, manage something. If you look at the alternative minimum tax, there is actually a story there. There is a history there.

Back in the late 1960s, Congress discovered that there were 155, no commas, 155 taxpayers who made more than $200,000 in 1966, but they did not pay any taxes. So, in an attempt to get at those deadbeats making all that money, and now in all likelihood those folks hired folks who will say this argument, I have talked about that, but nevertheless in an attempt to get at 155 taxpayers, Congress created what is now known as the alternative minimum tax. In other words, Congress was offended that you could have people so structure their compliance with the tax code in existence at that point in time that they did not owe any tax. So they set in place an alternative minimum tax which started with your taxable income and then it added back certain preferences that folks, quote, unquote, took advantage of so that everybody paid some taxes. There is some value in that.

In 1969 that went into effect. Thirty-eight years later, millions, literally millions, of taxpayers are now caught up in what is known as the alternative minimum tax. Now, today's alternative minimum tax is not your daddy's alternative minimum tax. This is a separate computation. So most taxpayers who are in this wreck have to keep a regular tax set of computations and an alternative minimum tax set of computations. You have got different basis on your assets. You have got different basis in your stock if you bought a set of stock options, all kinds of things that you have to do separate under alternative minimum tax. You have got an alternative minimum tax net operating loss that is different from your net operating loss on your regular tax. So two schemes trying to get at how much money you owe the Federal Government.

Mr. SHUSTER. If I can interrupt the gentleman for a minute, if I am going to my CPA or the person who does my taxes, because she has to calculate two different sets, it costs more money to calculate your taxes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Oh, absolutely. When you turn on a television program that is going to have some adult content in it, most of them say, viewers, give you a warning that this next program may not be suitable for young children. Well, I am going to give a warning that what I am about to go through may not be suitable for young children.

This is Form 6251. Form 6251 is a 2-page form that every taxpayer who is caught up in the alternative minimum tax has to complete. Internal Revenue Service agents, when they audit you, if you have not put this form in your tax return, they will fill one out for you, thinking that maybe you screwed up and did not fill it out. It is in the instructions on how you audit taxpayers.

It is a 2-page form. There are 10 pages of instructions to Form 6251, and it is relatively mind numbing to go through these instructions. I want to just kind of walk you through the first 28 lines quickly on this form. So hang on for dear life.

It starts off: Line 1, ''If filing Schedule A (Form 1040), enter the amount from Form 1040, line 41 (minus any amount on Form 8914, line 6), and go to line 2. Otherwise, enter the amount from Form 1040, line 38 (minus any amount on Form 8914, line 6), and go to line 7.''

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Our tax dollars pay for somebody to actually write this, too.

Mr. CONAWAY. ''If less than zero, enter as a negative amount.'' That is line one.

Line 2, ''Medical and dental. Enter the smaller of Schedule A (Form 1040), line 4, or 2½ percent of Form 1040, line 38.''

Line 3, ''Taxes from Schedule A (Form 1040), line 9.''

Line 4, ''Enter the home mortgage interest adjustment, if any, from line 6 of the worksheet on page 2 of the instructions.''

Line 5, ''Miscellaneous deductions from Schedule A (Form 1040), line 26.''

Line 6, ''If Form 1040, line 38, is over $150,500 (over $75,250 if married filing separately), enter the amount from line 11 of the Itemized Deductions Worksheet from page A–7 of the instructions for Schedule A (Form 1040).''

Line 7, ''Tax refund from Form 1040, line 10 or line 21.''

Line 8, ''Investment interest expense (difference between regular tax and AMT).'' Here is where we get that two scheme thing going.

Line 9, ''Depletion (difference between regular tax and AMT).''

Line 10, ''Net operating loss deduction from Form 1040, line 21. Enter as a positive amount.''

Line 11, ''Interest from specified private activity bonds exempt from the regular tax.''

Line 12, ''Qualified small business stock (7 percent of gain excluded under section 1202).''

Line 13, ''Exercise of incentive stock options (excess of AMT income over regular tax income).''

Line 14, ''Estates and trusts (amount from Schedule K–1 (Form 1041), box 12, code A).''

Line 15, ''Electing large partnerships (amount from Schedule K–1 (Form 1065–B), box 6).''

Line 16, we are halfway there, folks. ''Disposition of property (difference between AMT and regular tax gain or loss).'' Again, two separate computations.

Line 17, ''Depreciation on assets placed in service after 1986 (difference between regular tax and AMT).''

And line 18, ''Passive activities (difference between AMT and regular tax income or loss).''

Line 19, ''Loss limitations (difference between AMT and regular income tax or loss).''

Line 20, ''Circulation costs,'' that is not physical circulation. I think that is newspapers. ''(Difference between regular tax and AMT).'' Here they reverse the order. Previously it was alternative minimum tax versus regular tax.

Mr. SHUSTER. They claiming a circulation off of my brain.

Mr. CONAWAY. Line 21, ''Long-term contracts (difference between AMT and regular tax income).''

Line 22, ''Mining costs (difference between regular tax and AMT).'' They keep switching back and forth.

Line 23, ''Research and experimental costs (difference between regular tax and AMT).''

Line 24, ''Income from certain installment sales before January 1, 1987.'' Glad you are keeping up with that.

Line 25, ''Intangible drilling costs preference.''

Line 26, ''Other adjustments,'' you have always got to have other, ''including income-based related adjustments.''

Line 27, ''Alternative tax net operating loss deduction.''

And finally, line 28, you get to ''Alternative minimum taxable income.'' And there are some instructions, though. ''Combine lines 1 through 27. (If married filing and line 28 is more than $200,100, see page 7 of the instructions).''

That is just Part I. We will save Part II and III for a future date to work you through that.

Mr. SHUSTER. I do not know if I can take it. You have just made the case on why we need to scrap this tax code and start with something new. I do not know.

Mr. CONAWAY. This is the alternative. The regular tax code is much simpler. It is straightforward.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I think the one thing that gets lost in all this, too, I remember when I was young and I did a little work on the side when I was first in the aerospace industry and I thought it was so great to make a little bit of extra money basically to pay for Christmas, and when I went in to do my taxes the following spring, I found out that at the very low-income level I was at, because it was independent contractor work, that heralded the alternative minimum tax and almost made it not worthwhile to have expended the many hours that I did on the project.

I think what gets lost, what Mike was reading here, I still am marvelling that our tax dollars paid to create such a behemoth, that we were investing in something like that, which gave me a headache just listening to it. Although I could see the goose bumps there.

But other than being a job creation program for accountants, most of whom do not like the complexity of many of these rules because of what it does to their clients, I think we need to look at a more human side of the impact that regressive taxes have. By reducing taxes, by allowing people to keep more of their own money, it created jobs, over 7 million jobs. It has kept our money local.

I think that one of the things I would like to point to for folks here who are watching the Countdown Crew, and you can contact us at countdowncrew@mail.house.gov, we want to create taxpayers, not raise taxes. By creating taxpayers, there will be more revenues that go for all of our communities.

But at the local level, oftentimes the question comes up and I hear it from children a lot in the schools who go around talking with my own kids, Daddy, where do the police come from, where do the school teachers come from, where does the library come from. Ultimately, that comes from our local communities, from taxes. It is property taxes in the vast majority of our taxes that pay for our schools.

My oldest daughter is about to graduate from college soon, and she is going to become a schoolteacher and getting ready to move out into the economy and very excited on the one hand, but also concerned about the tax structure that is going to be facing her and the incentives to advance her education, the burdens that are going to be placed upon her just from what she has seen in the workforce. The quality of our schools is largely funded by local jobs in our communities that pay those property taxes, people who can buy homes, and if you do not have a job, it becomes very difficult to make that investment in a home.

If we do not have small business owners creating jobs, we are not going to have those local taxes to be able to make the investments that are necessary in public safety, in public works, that keeps the water running in our house, that keeps the electricity moving, that keeps our roads paved and being able to expand and ultimately to be able to invest in quality of life in our communities.

□ 2130

This is one of the reasons we have this 1,335-day countdown to the largest tax increase in history, that the American people need to know that when they can keep more of their own money, there are results. I don't want to see the average Kentucky family have an unnecessary tax increase of $2,563. We will find the benefit, not in complex tax documents like that, but simply by allowing people to keep their money to invest in the future to follow their vision and ultimately to build that nest egg for their children.

Mr. SHUSTER. I am getting ready to close. The gentleman from Texas seemed pretty worked up about getting something out. Do you have something else you want to get out here?

Mr. CONAWAY. The IRS on some of the forms gives an estimate of how much time they think it takes taxpayers to comply with a particular form. I was looking through the instructions real quickly to see if they had this made that estimate.

Mr. SHUSTER. I have the time estimate, if you are filling out your own taxes it's anywhere from 8 hours to 27 hours, if you did it yourself, which is a considerable amount of time for an individual.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I think it was 6.4 billion hours were taken this year.

Mr. SHUSTER. Right, $265 billion.

In closing, I just wanted to point out, as the gentleman mentioned, the importance of keeping your own money, being able to invest it, being able to save it. I think a lot of times Americans feel helpless, hopeless over this tax situation.

You get that paycheck, and as my 18-year-old daughter just got a paycheck, came home, showed it to me and said, why did they take so much out? I said, well the good news for you is they are going to give you most of most of it back, because you're not going to make the minimum.

But as I said, Americans feel helpless or hopeless in a tax situation, but they're not. Americans really have to pay attention to what's going on here in Washington. As we said tonight send us your stories at CountdownCrew@mail.house.gov or send them to your Member of Congress and tell them what you have been able to accomplish with those dollars that you get to keep in your pocket because they are not coming to Washington.

Make sure you are talking to your Member of Congress, communicating with him, telling them that you don't want to see taxes go up. You don't want to see the largest tax increase in American history. You want them to keep their tax rates low. Although many Americans are looking at those tax rates today, think they are high, they are lower than they were 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 years ago.

This Congress has to act. This Congress has to act before all those tax cuts expire by December 31, 2010, and the gentleman is signaling me. We want to make sure that the American people are communicating to their Members of Congress that they want us to stop this tax increase that's going to occur, a tax increase that the Democratic majority is saying, they are not going to increase taxes because they are not going to vote on it, which is just hogwash. The taxes are going to go up for individuals across this country, businesses across this country, if this Congress fails to act in just 1,335 days.

HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. BURGESS. My colleagues filled the last hour with discussion of what is sublimely intuitive to the most casual of observers of the American scene, the IRS code.

Now we are going to go to something a little more complex and that's health care in the United States.

The question I get asked a lot of times, because I spent my precongressional career as a physician, how did we get into this situation? How did we get the health care system that we have today? More importantly, where are we going within our current system?

We currently have a system that is based upon both the aspects of the public-provided system, the government-

provided system and the private system. We have a system that does have a significant number of individuals who lack coverage. They may not always lack medical care, but they do lack coverage for that care. Some of the things we are going to be, of necessity, focusing on this in Congress is the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. We will also be talking about reauthorizing the Federally qualified Federal health center program.

Health savings accounts have actually been around now for 10 years. It's appropriate to look back on where we have been with, first, medical savings accounts and then the expansion that occurred with the Medicare modernization act in 2003 with health savings accounts. Association health plans are not getting as much attention this year as they have in past years, but they are important, and we do need to think about those in the overall picture of where we are going with America's health care.

Medical liability reform, probably one of the more contentious things that we have tackled in Congress since I came here in 2002 he 2003. We still, as far as a Nation, do not have an answer for that question, but several States have done things, including my home State of Texas, and also that is one of the things that I want to touch on tonight.

One thing that does concern me greatly is the physician workforce today and the physician workforce of the future. I will be spending considerable time talking about things that we might do, the things that are within our grasp to do to help ensure that the doctors of today continue to deliver care for our patients, whether they be in the government sector, or the private sector, and ensure that we encourage the best and brightest among our young people to go into, to look at health care as a profession, whether it be as a physician, as a nurse, and one of the ancillary health services, but it is important that we attract our best and our brightest into those professions and perhaps a look at some of the things that are being tried in some of the States.

The States, of course, are the great laboratories in our democracy. There are some interesting occurrences that are going on in some States that are trying to grapple with the problem of coverage for individuals who lack it; and then, finally, some ancillary issues. We recently passed a trauma bill on this House. Last weekend, the President signed that bill into law.

Transparency, how do we make the expenditures in health care. How do we make information about cost, price and quality, how do we make that information available in an understandable format to the average consumer of health care in this country, whether they be in the private or the public sector.

One of the things that we don't really talk about that often, but is going to be a significant issue, as more and more people my age get successively older and older, is how do we deal with the problem of long-term care facing this country? Well, let's go on a journey. Let's talk about the American health care system.

For the purposes of this discussion, we don't have time to go all the way back to the beginning when our country was founded, though it is important to always note that while the forebearers of today's legal profession were drafting documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the forebearers of my profession, Dr. Benjamin Rush, was treating people with leeches. We have come a great distance since that time.

But if you look at just the modern era, the time since the end of the Second World War, when truly some of the big differences that developed between European countries and America, some of those differences, in fact, have their roots in the Second World War. In America, of course, in order to prevent problems with an inflationary spiral that threatened to go out of control, President Roosevelt put price controls on wages and said people could only earn so much.

Well, employers wanted to keep employees working, they wanted to keep employees happy. They asked a question, could we provide benefits to our employees. Can we provide, perhaps, health insurance or health care benefits for our employees and not have that as part of the Federal price controls that were in effect, or Federal wage controls that were in effect at that time?

The Supreme Court looked at it and said, that's reasonable. You can do that. You can provide the health care benefit for your employee, and you will not be violating the provisions of the wage control provisions that were enacted in the Second World War.

Well, the system was working, and the war ended, and the system continued. Because, in fact, it was working well, and people liked getting their insurance that way.

It continued for a number of years. If you look at a country in the European theater, the Second World War, whether they were winners or losers at the end of the war, they faced a humanitarian crisis of almost unbelievable proportion. So it is no surprise that even a country that was victorious, like Great Britain, went down the road of national health insurance, because it needed to provide a great deal of care in a very short period of time, and they didn't have the bedrock of the employer-derived health insurance that was available in this country as a result of wage controls that were put on during the war.

We are often compared with Europe and why our health care system looks different from theirs, when both, after all, are modern western nations. Part of the reason does go back to this discrepancy that occurred during the war, and then, of course, the situation, the economic situation, in some cases, a very dire economic situation that occurred on the ground in Europe as the war ended.

It's not the purpose of this discussion tonight to actually provide a compare and contrast with the European system, though that might be interesting to do, but take where we were at the end of the Second World War, the beginning of the great economic expansion that characterized the post-war years in this country, insurance being provided by employers, employees very happy with that, employees having good coverage, doctors being happy with that, because that coverage meant that hospitals and doctors were reimbursed, and the situation was going along, some problems, of course, and some people in this body, 20 years later, said, we need to do better than what we are doing, because after people are no longer employed, and they, perhaps, lose that health insurance, what are we going to do then?

Twenty years after the end of the Second World War, in 1965, we had the rise of a new system, took probably 4 to 5 years for it to actually work its way through Congress. It was, just like today, a situation like this, was by no means easy. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Medicare bill that primarily focused on hospital care for the elderly in addition to the hospital care. In addition to the part A of Medicare, there was also developed a part B of Medicare that was a reimbursement for physician-necessitated services. But we had the parts A and B of Medicare that came into being in the mid-1960s, another 40 years before Congress made a significant change to the Medicare system by passing the Medicare prescription drug act.

Now, my father was a physician back in 1965, and I used to tease him that in 1965, when the Medicare system was first enacted, there were, after all, only two medicines, penicillin and Cortizone, and they were used interchangeably. I know, he didn't think it was funny either, but the fact is, we didn't have nearly the tools at hand from a pharmaceutical perspective in 1965. Then fast forward to 2005, 2006 and 2007, ones that are just part of our everyday parlance, our everyday armamentarium in medical practice.

We saw this with the trustees' report that was just released last week or the week before, where it was described that 680,000 hospital beds in 2005 were not filled in Medicare, primarily because of the things we are doing better in Medicare, treating that cholesterol at an early stage with a statin and not treating it at the end stage when cardiac surgery or, in fact, sudden death may be the outcome of undiagnosed or untreated heart disease. So we are doing a better job of treating things early at the same time. It does cost more money in the provision of the Medicare prescription drug act.

There was a great deal of discussion during the time that we passed that

prescription plan, but it kind of sets the stage for the debate that we are going to now have, and going to continue today. Is it better to treat things in the preclinical stage, is it better to treat things in the nonacute stage, or is it better to wait and target your therapy toward the end process of a disease, which, characteristically, is how we handled things in Medicare previously.

But the impetus is, of course, to be more preventive and proactive in taking care of patients. That is the direction in which medicine is going, that is the direction in which science is leading, and that is the direction in which Medicare itself should go.

So I don't think there is any question about which is better, the, the acute-care model, or the long-term model. Furthermore, we will have additional discussion, should this expand the government share of the program, or is there perhaps some room for the private sector, and can they deliver value within the Medicare system as far as providing care for patients?

□ 2145

When I talk about the public and private, let's break it down a little bit. Currently just in rough numbers the government pays about 50 cents out of every health care dollar that is spent in this country. Our gross domestic product is approximately $11 trillion; we spend $1.4 trillion on health care. The Health and Human Service budget alone for Medicare and Medicaid is over $600 billion. Add to that the money that is spent in the Federal prison systems, the VA health system, the Indian health system, all of the other areas where the Federal Government is involved in health care, and it is not difficult to see that you are very close to that number which encompasses 50 percent.

The other 50 percent is certainly not all just simply commercial insurance, though commercial insurance makes up a large portion of that. There is certainly that portion which is self-funded by patients. Believe it or not, there are patients who just simply prefer to pay their bills in cash and continue to do so, and there is a significant number of dollars that are just contributed to the system by doctors and hospitals and nurses and ancillary health care providers because the individuals whom they are taking care of have no health coverage.

In the debate of how to best expand and give people more coverage, you certainly can make the argument for expanding the government system. My personal opinion is that might not be the best way to go about doing things. On the other hand, there are many people within this body who, Mr. Speaker, will be talking at great length, I suspect, over the 18 months leading up to the next election, a great many people in this body who will be talking about just that, expanding the government's role. Again, remember, we are already doing about 50 percent, and they will be looking to expand that.

One of the critical questions we have to ask ourselves in expanding that 50 percent is, are we doing a good job from the government's perspective with the 50 percent that we have now? Are we doing such a superlative job that in fact it is a good thing to push out or crowd out the private sector? Or, are there some areas where the government system perhaps could improve, and some areas that perhaps it is just innately difficult for a large governmental system to improve and where the private sector can in fact do a better job?

One of the things that is frequently asked, and I know I got this the years I was in private practice was, why don't we just do what they did in Canada where they have a national health insurance in Canada and everybody is happy, the doctors are paid and the patients are taken care of? Well, it was probably 2004, 2005 that the Canadian Supreme Court came out with a ruling that access to a waiting list did not equal the same thing as access to care. And I know I will get some criticism about this, Mr. Speaker, but one of the secrets of the Canadian system is the fact that they have on their southern border the United States of America with a significant amount of excess capacity in our health care system; and patients in Canada who can afford to pay, who do not want to wait, simply offload their burden from the Canadian system and come south of the border to have their problems taken care of in a more timely fashion.

In the British National Health Service, of course they have developed within their country a two-tiered system. Some of the most expensive medical care that you can buy today is in the country of Great Britain where they very famously have free care. The reason you can buy private care more expensively is because, again, people want to buy their way out of a waiting list or buy their way out of the public system so that they can get taken care of in a more timely fashion.

One of the problems with a very long waiting list for things like an artificial hip or even coronary angiography for someone who is being worked up for chest pain is you reach a certain point in life, perhaps a person in their 70s or 80s where that 6-month wait, 12-month wait, 14-month wait or longer becomes very detrimental to their overall health because they just simply do not have that many years left from an actuarial perspective.

Well, what about the private sector, and what about Congress' interface with the private sector? Are we doing things that are generally helpful or hurtful to the private sector? And what can we do to promote policies that do keep the private sector engaged in providing health care in this country?

I already alluded to medical savings accounts. Medical savings accounts started with the Kennedy/Castlebaum bill in 1996. The year 1997 was the first year that a medical savings account was available in this country. I know that because I purchased one myself. I was concerned when I heard about the medical savings accounts becoming available because Congress had restricted medical savings accounts such that no more than 750,000 would be sold, no more than 750,000 would be available during those early years of medical savings accounts, and I was very concerned that I would be even able to get one. I thought that they would be so popular that that 750,000 limit would be very quickly subscribed and I might be left out of the process. It turns out I didn't need to worry, because there were so many restrictions placed on those old medical savings accounts that if you didn't have that M.D. degree, perhaps you weren't going to be capable of dealing with all of the things that you would have to deal with. In my home State of Texas, the restrictions were such that there were only two insurers that provided the medical savings account products. Still, I found it to be a very useful type insurance.

First and foremost, it left me completely in charge of any medical decisions to be made for myself and my family. I didn't have to talk to an HMO director, I didn't have to dial 1–800–California and get permission for a particular treatment. I could spend my own money and reimburse myself out of that medical savings account.

The downside was you couldn't put very much money away each year in the medical savings account and the deductibles were significant, and that was seen to be a significant barrier to a lot of people with getting a medical savings account.

In 2003, the compromise that ended up being the Medicare Modernization Act did significantly expand what are now called health savings accounts. The amount of money that can be put away for a family greatly increased from, I believe, $3,200 to up to $5,000 for family coverage. The deductible itself was essentially maintained, though there were several tiered products made available so that that deductible didn't have to be as high as the highest number. You could in fact purchase an HSA product with a deductible that wasn't at the maximum.

One of the most significant things, and the reason I know this is having tried to purchase a health care policy for an adult child back before even medical savings accounts came along in 1994 and 1995, there was almost no one out there willing to sell in the individual market an individual insurance policy. Whether it be a high deductible or a nominal deductible, it just wasn't available for any price.

Fast forward to the time after the health savings account legislation passed in 2003. Come to 2004, 2005, 10 years later, and a young person who needs health insurance just out of college, say, wants to go into business for

themselves, doesn't want to have to work for a big corporation to get that employer-sponsored health insurance but wants to carry their own insurance, they can go to Google or the search engine of their choice, type in ''health savings accounts,'' and with a few clicks and a quick search they can find high deductible PPO policies sold by reputable names that we would all recognize. And of course I won't mention any of those names, but they are sold by reputable companies that we would all recognize as longstanding established insurers in this country, and the premium would be in the range of $60 to $65 a month for a high deductible policy, imminently within reach of that 25-year-old nonsmoking male just out of college in my home State of Texas. Again, that type of policy was absolutely unavailable in 1994 for any price, and now it is available at a price that arguably would be affordable by a lot of people who are just getting out of college and have their earnings at the beginning of their earning cycle.

And why is this important? Yes, it is a high deductible policy. That means, if you need a flu shot, you are probably not going to be able to show your insurance card and get a flu shot; you are going to go down to the place that gives flu shots and pay the $20 or $25, whatever is required to get the flu shot. If you have money accumulated in your health savings account, yes, you can make a draw on that money to reimburse yourself for that flu shot. But if you are even to the point where you haven't gotten enough of a savings into that account yet to go and tap into that money, you are going to have to pay that money out of pocket, the important thing is, is that after your flu shot you get on your motorcycle and ride home and have an accident and spend a day in the emergency room and 3 or 4 days in the intensive care unit and face a bill that may be as much as $10,000 or $15,000 or $20,000, you do have coverage for those catastrophic amounts. And, let's face it, for young people today, trauma or accidents are going to be one of the principle causes of hospitalization.

Association health plans, again, a concept that we have dealt with in this Congress the last two Congresses. It has not come up this year and the reality is it may not. But this gives small businesses the ability to band together to get that purchasing power of a large corporation. One of the hard things is you go out to buy group coverage for your small business, and they say, you know what, you have got so few employees that it is really not worth our time and the cost for that coverage is, consequently, going to be astronomical. But if you are able to combine with, say, your chamber of commerce and you can combine with a chamber of commerce across in the next county, you can combine with a couple more chambers of commerce in other cities and perhaps even across State lines, suddenly you are accumulating enough covered lives to really get that insurance company's attention and perhaps drive a better bargain, perhaps get a better deal.

Right now, we won't let that happen. But the fact is that Congress should get out of the way and allow those things to occur, because it is not so much that association health plans are going to bring down the number of the uninsured, but it sure will help the rate of rise of the uninsured we see in this country, because that rate of rise is in a large part fueled by the cost of purchasing health care by that small business person; and anything we can do to keep that cost of coverage down is going to ultimately increase the amount of coverage that is available.

Transparency, I mentioned before, is critically important if we are going to have so-called consumer directed health care in this country. We have got to put that information in the consumer's hands so that they can make decisions about cost price and quality in the health care system. And I understand that there is an inherent danger in transparency. Opacity is there for a reason, and that reason is generally it is financially rewarding for whoever is providing the opacity. They don't want everybody to know what goes on behind the curtain.

Again, I will reference my home State of Texas. The very beginning of a transparency project has now gone up on line. Mr. Speaker, if anyone at home were interested, it is tx.pricepoint.org, and someone can go to that, Mr. Speaker, on their Web site and look at that and get information about hospital charges in their area and how they compare with the rest of the State. Granted, there is going to need to be more information available, but it is a good start, and I certainly support the folks at the State level who provided that degree of price transparency for the citizens of Texas.

In talking about the uninsured, one of the things that will come up, and I think we heard the President mention it here in this House during the State of the Union address, is what about the concept of that private ownership of insurance that is paid for with after-tax dollars? The President talked about giving people a tax deduction if they purchased their own insurance, not through their employer, but just went out and purchased it themselves. Certainly a valid argument that can be made about that is, well, there are a lot of people out there who don't pay income tax. So what about the concept of providing a tax credit? Some people would call it a voucher; I prefer the term premium support. If someone is working and their employer is providing the option for having the insurance but they say, you know with what, I still can't afford the $200, $300, or $400 a month I would have to pay individually in order to get that insurance; what if we provided them some help with that premium? And might that not be a better way to approach or to tackle some of the problems of the uninsured rather than just simply ever expanding the Medicaid system or some of the other systems that are out there to cover the uninsured? If someone is earning a living but does not have health insurance available at their place of employment, even providing them that premium support so that they can go out and purchase insurance in the private market. If we would help create and sustain that market, I believe that the private insurers would look at 42 million, 45 million people as a segment of market share that they would compete for, and we ought to give them the tools to do that.

Now, currently the United States Census Bureau says there are 46.6 million uninsured.

□ 2200

I think it's important to stress, once again, that uninsured does not always mean no access to health care. It may mean that the access to health care does not occur at the point where the health care can be rendered for a lower total dollar figure, or you may not receive the best health care outcome because care has been delayed. But having access to coverage will increase access to care.

One of the things that this Congress did 10 years ago, long before I got here, was a program called the State Children's Health Insurance Program. It's 10 years old. It's going to be required to be reauthorized this year. But this did provide States some flexibility and some options for providing coverage for uninsured children that resided within their State.

This was primarily to be directed to children who were not eligible for Medicaid, whose parents earned a little bit too much money to have them covered under the Medicaid system and therefore couldn't, but they, themselves, did not earn enough money to truly afford health insurance. So this was a good thing.

Coverage of children is relatively cheap coverage. You pay $0.60 for what would be $1 of health care for an adult. You can pay $0.60, buy $0.60 worth of health insurance for a child and get the equivalent of $1 worth of insurance for an adult because children, as a general rule, are young and healthy. They tend to recover from their illnesses quicker than do adults, and money invested in the children's program is, indeed, money well spent and money wisely invested.

Some of the things that I think we ought to keep in mind as we reauthorize this bill this year, and we will be doing that through my committee, Health Subcommittee on Energy and Commerce, but some of the things I think we ought to keep in mind is that it is primarily a children's health insurance program.

The decision was made to cover pregnant adults, and I think that that was a good thing, and that should be continued. But covering non pregnant

adults in the Children's Health Insurance Program is perhaps not the best use of those dollars.

If there needs to be a program for providing additional coverage to those adults, then let's look at doing so, but let's not divert those dollars that should be going into coverage for health care for children; let's not divert those to some other purpose. And unfortunately, we have the situation in this country today where four States actually cover more adults than they do children.

Again, we need to get back to the original principle that this program was enacted, and make sure, once we're covering all the children, once we're covering all the uninsured children in this country, then perhaps we can talk about expanding it to include adults. But until that time, we do need to focus and make certain that we are covering the uninsured children.

You know, a letter to the editor back home in Dallas this weekend I was reading made the comment that, of course, SCHIP, and they were talking about it primarily at the State level. And the State, my State Legislature is in session right now, and they are grappling with the questions of funding for SCHIP.

But the comment was made in the letter that the SCHIP program was there for some parents who cannot afford insurance; and sure enough, that's what it's there for.

And the second line went on to say that also there are some parents who are working and covered under their parents' insurance, but they can't afford that additional premium for the dependent coverage on their insurance.

This is some of the cheapest coverage out there that we should take advantage of. And certainly, it is available within the SCHIP program currently for some degree of premium support. But I certainly think we need to expand that, certainly, make states aware that this is available for them to use, that they can leverage those children's health insurance dollars to buy more health insurance.

And the other thing that we do that's extremely important, if the Federal Government simply takes over the function of providing all of the insurance for all of the children, the private sector is completely crowded out. And is that fundamentally a good thing or a bad thing?

I would argue that it is not in the best interest of our country to let that happen, that the private sector does belong in the children's health insurance market. And we should, while we may not be required to do anything to particularly subsidize that, we certainly should not do anything that makes that an untenable business model because, ultimately, I think we are going to be less satisfied with the result.

Federally qualified health centers. We are going to have to, we didn't finish the work on reauthorization of the federally qualified health center statute last session of Congress. It is going to be important to try to do that again. Once again, that's an issue that will come through my committee on Energy and Commerce. We had some very good hearings on that last year, leading up to the introduction of the bill by Mr. BILIRAKIS, who is no longer with us. And that bill will come up again this year.

I think that when you look at the federally qualified health center, one of the things that is really encouraging to me is that a Congress, and I grant you it was 35 or 40 years ago, sat down and agreed amongst themselves, the Members on both sides of the aisle, agreed what procedures, what items would be covered under that federally qualified health center statute.

And to me, that's a beacon of hope, that perhaps we can work, this body can work together and decide on what are the things that should be covered; if we wanted to have an insurance policy, for example, that was generally available for individuals who were currently uninsured.

What are the parameters that should be covered? What should we encourage?

If we are going to go talk to the private sector about insurance policies that may be affordable by the Nation's working poor, what should those things cover, and can we ever come to an agreement that will allow those types of policies to be sold in one State or another, and what could we do about getting those policies up and on the Internet to take advantage of the competitive influences that are present on the Internet?

You know, one of the things, again, I reference Texas a lot because I spend a lot of time there. But one of the Nation's largest automobile insurers has really made a big push in the Texas market. They're famous because they have a little green lizard who's kind of their spokesman, the little green lizard with an English accent, in fact, who's kind of their spokesman.

But the message is that if you can go online and spend 15 minutes with them, they can save you some money. Wouldn't it be great to provide that same tool, that same device in the health insurance market as well and get the advantage of that, that very strong competitive market out there that has been provided by the new technology of the information superhighway?

It's certainly had a very significant beneficial effect on bringing down the costs of term life insurance. And we saw this back in the late 1990s, the early part of this century. Why not take that same competitive power and unleash it for health insurance and allow more people to be covered?

I referenced health savings accounts before. Again, you can go on the Internet and buy a health savings account now that's available because some of the state-by-state restrictions do not apply because of the way that legislation was written. And this is an extremely powerful tool to put into people's hands.

One of the disadvantages, one of the ways we disadvantage our citizens when it comes to purchasing a policy like a health savings account is that it is paid for with after tax dollars. You don't get that pre-tax expenditure.

We could, in fact, further leverage the health insurance, how far a health insurance dollar could go in a family's budget by tapping into that concept of a pre-tax expense.

But some of the things we have done with health savings accounts, and again, I would stress that since we passed the Medicare Modernization Act a scant 4 years ago, between 4 and 7 million people have now purchased health savings accounts.

I referenced early on that first off, back in the early 1990s or, I'm sorry, the middle 1990s, it was going to be capped at 750,000 total policies. That cap was removed with the Medicare Modernization Act, and as a consequence now, at least 4 million people have purchased health savings accounts. Forty percent of those people were previously uninsured. That means that number of the uninsured would be higher by a factor of a million or a million and a half had we not passed that legislation that expanded health savings accounts.

Making those premiums tax deductible, that is something that, an idea whose time has come, has long since come. We weren't able to do it during the last Congress. I know there are a number of competing influences out there, and we heard references to things like PAYGO before, so it is going to be a tough battle. But I do believe that we need to do that.

The low income tax credit, or the premium support for an HSA like product for someone whose low income, again, an idea, certainly whose time has come.

Maybe we should allow employers to make larger contributions to an HSA for a chronically ill employee, an employee who has diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis or any of other of a number of chronic diseases where, yeah, their health expenditures are going to be higher because they were unlucky enough to have this chronic disease, so their health insurance may cost a little bit more. But let's allow the employer the flexibility of perhaps contributing a little bit more to that plan.

What about allowing the flexibility for health savings accounts to coordinate with other type of things that employers do to make the health care insurance burden for their employees easier to bear?

□ 2210

Things like flexible spending accounts. A flexible spending account where an employer contributes a certain amount of money each year so that their employee can go out and have some of the first dollar coverage that they otherwise might not have,

because even if they don't have a health savings account, just the regular deductible on regular commercial insurance, anyone who works and has employer-derived insurance will tell you that number has increased over the past 5 or 10 years. So flexible spending accounts are moneys that the employer puts away for the employee to help to use to offset some of these expenses that may be incurred.

If we allowed someone with a health savings account to participate in a flexible spending account and even went further; for a flexible spending account, at the end of the calendar year, it is a use it or lose it phenomenon. If the employer has contributed that money or the employee has said, I want to put away a tax-deferred amount of money into this account so that I can spend it for health care needs and try to capture a little bit of that pretax leveragability there, they lose that money at the end of the year if they haven't spent it on their health care.

Why don't we let that roll over into their health savings account and let that health care nest egg accumulate at a little bit faster rate so that those citizens who do wish to utilize the power of a health savings account can perhaps make it work even more to their advantage?

And what if someone wants to retire early and they have got that health care nest egg built up in their health savings account but now they are going into early retirement, and doggone it, that insurance premium is going to be an additional burden to bear? What about allowing them to draw on the health savings account to pay their premium to continue their health savings account in those years from their early retirement prior to the time that they are covered by Medicare? It is an interesting concept and one I think this Congress would do well to spend some time thinking about doing.

I will come back again to the pretax treatment of health care expenditures incurred under an HSA. Again, we can leverage a citizen's dollars so much more by allowing that type of treatment of those dollars.

Again, association health plans for employers who want to provide their employees insurance but find they are being increasingly priced out of the market. Give them the flexibility to go out there and group together and say, We are a group of realtors and we want to be able to go out and buy health insurance in the market like we had a whole bunch of employees rather than an office that employs five or six people because we are not getting a good deal when we just go out and try to buy insurance in the market to cover five or six employees at a time.

All of these things are critical for us to think about. All of these things are ways that we can improve the system that we have before us today. But we do have to ask ourselves if we are perhaps putting the cart before the horse.

Alan Greenspan, the gentleman's name who is not unknown in this town, the prior Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, about 1½ years ago came and talked to a group of us one morning, talking about just things in general, and the question inevitably came up about Medicare: How in the world are we ever going to pay for Medicare? How in the world are we ever going to tackle this unfunded obligation that we have?

And Chairman Greenspan felt confident that at some point some Congress would be able to deal with this problem in a satisfactory way. And he paused and he got quite reflective, and he said, You know, what concerns me more is, is there going to be anyone there to provide the services when you need them? Of course he was talking about our physicians. Of course he was talking about our nurses.

Those are words that certainly I have taken to heart. And I think we do need to spend considerable effort on thinking about this problem and considerable effort towards rectifying some of the difficulties that are out there so that we do, indeed, preserve the health care workforce that is present today and the health care workforce that we are going to want for the future.

Last year, in order to deal with this problem, I introduced a bill, H.R. 5866, the Medicare Physician Payment Reform and Quality Improvement Act of 2006. I introduced that bill in July. Of course, with the August recess and then the recess before the election, there wasn't a lot of time left in the year to work on it. The reason it was so important is because the system we have developed in our Medicare system, parts A, B, C, and D are not paid for equally. The fact is that part B, the part that is handled by physicians, is dealt with in a different fashion. Part A, the hospital; part C, the HMO; part D, the prescription drug benefit, all of those each year receive essentially a cost-of-living adjustment, an update, because the cost of inputs is going to go up.

The physician payment, this is an important concept. I realize it may sound arcane, but the physician payment is handled differently. There Congress, in its wisdom many, many years ago, said if we can control the volume and intensity of these payments, we are going to be able to save money over the long term. So a system was put in place called the Sustainable Growth Rate formula. You will hear it referred to as the SGR. The problem with the SGR is that every year physicians, instead of getting a cost-of-living update based on the fact that their electricity costs more, it costs more to put gas in their car to drive to work, it costs more to pay their help, all of those things go up, but the physician reimbursements go down. An estimated 5 percent a year, and this is projected to go up for years in the future so that the accumulative effect will be a 30 to 35 percent reduction in physician reimbursement in the Medicare system. And anyone just looking at this understands that that is untenable. You can't keep doing that. Every year Congress has to come in at the last minute and do something to keep that from happening for that year. Sometimes we get it done; sometimes we don't. But the problem is every year that we put that fix in place, we increase the price tag for eventually getting out of that system.

A case in point: I first came to Congress in 2003. In fact, the Congress before my first term here had not passed any appropriations bills. So the first thing we were faced with was a huge omnibus bill, spending hundreds of billions of dollars. That omnibus bill contained within it a fix for the doctors. And I remember the then chairman of the Ways and Means Committee coming to our conference and saying, I have put a fix in there so that the doctors won't see that pay cut that they got last year, and it is going to cost $52 billion to do that. At that time the cost of buying our way out of the SGR formula and switching over to a cost-of-living formula, a cost-of-living adjustment formula, known as the Medicare economic index, was pegged at about $118 billion, a significant sum of money. But $52 billion as a down payment on a $118 billion problem, that seemed reasonable. It seemed like we were going in the right direction.

But fast forward 4 years, and every year, of course, we have done something similar, never quite as much as the $52 billion that was passed that first month that I was in Congress, but every year that at the end of the year where we have had to add that money to keep physicians from seeing a pay reduction, we have increased the cost of eventually repealing the SGR so that it now totals $280 billion.

But wait. There is more. If you do not protect seniors, because by law in part B of Medicare, seniors pay 25 percent of the cost of the part B program, which 75 percent is borne by the Federal Treasury; 25 percent is recovered in premiums, and every time we increase that amount, the premiums necessarily increase. No one likes to do that because those premium increases by law hit in the month of October and that is very close to an every 2-year election that occurs in the month of November. So everyone wants to deal with that problem of the premiums going up every year. If you were to deal with the entire problem, the SGR and premium protection for senior citizens, the costs suddenly goes up to $340 billion. It is clear to see in a PAYGO environment that that is almost an impossible hill to climb.

Last year in the Physician Payment Reform and Quality Improvement Act of 2006, in attempting to deal with that, I looked for help within the health care community, people to find places where there could be efficiencies to help offset that SGR price tag that at that time was $218 billion.

□ 2220

Suffice it to say that those cost savings were never identified. People were reluctant to come forth with areas in their particular part of Medicare where they might save money. And as a consequence, the pay-fors did not materialize, and the bill was something we didn't take up.

This year, it's not even just about fixing that part of the formula. It is important to do that because one of the pernicious effects of that formula is you have doctors who are looking toward their retirement and perhaps thinking about accelerating it for a few years. So we have physicians in the workforce who may be leaving early because they look down the road and say, 5 percent reduction in the rate of Medicare reimbursement every year for the next 10 years for a cumulative total of 30 or 35 percent, I don't think so. Maybe I do need to get on with my retirement plans. And then on the other end of the spectrum you have the young physician who is just getting out of medical school, who is meeting the residency in those primary care high need specialties, they may need some additional help. And finally, the student who's finishing college and looking to go to medical school; how am I going to deal with those significant loans I'm going to face when I get out of school?

All three areas are going to require this Congress to think very carefully and work very hard on trying to craft solutions. And I would just stress that it is important not to craft a solution that is only going to fix the short term. We've really had this kicking-the-can phenomenon or postponing-the-pain phenomenon has worked only up to a point. And you have to believe that this type of trajectory does have a shelf life, and ultimately we're going to reach a point where we are in fact no longer able to afford even those relatively modest, and I use the term modest advisedly because we are talking about a Washington expenditure here, will be unable to afford even those modest payments that are required to offset the reductions that happen year over year.

And you might say, well, that's not so bad, it's just the Medicare system. That's just half of health care, how could that be that big a problem? The unstated aspect of this is that every private health insurance company out there who writes insurance policies, I shouldn't say every, but a lot, will peg their reimbursement rates to what Medicare pays. They pay 80 percent of Medicare, they pay 120 percent of Medicare, but they pay some percentage of what Medicare pays. And when we as a Congress say to the physicians of America, guess what? You get a 5.4 reduction this year. Those companies that peg their reimbursement rates to the Medicare 2007 reimbursement schedule are in fact also given a bit of a break. And they were never intended to be the recipients of the largess of the Federal Government, but that's what happens when you have Federal price controls on a system like health care.

Well, improvements in the bill from last year I think are in progress. And the fact that the entire concept is split into three parts to deal with the overall affordability of educating and providing the incentives for people to go into medicine in the first place, providing the tools for their educational process, providing some flexibility with loan forgiveness, tax credits for the young physician, and then finally, providing some stability for the physician who is mature and in practice, that they are going to face a stable pricing environment going forward, not a continuously shrinking price environment going forward.

It is going to be difficult. There again, I will reference the Medicare Trustees Report. Again, 680,000 hospital beds that were not filled in 2005 because of improvements in the practice of medicine. We've come a long way from the days of Benjamin Rush, when they used leeches to treat their patients. Those 680,000 hospital beds that weren't filled in the Medicare system, that is money that is saved in the part A part of Medicare, but the savings actually occur because of the work being done in the part B part of Medicare. And there has got to be somewhere, some way within the Federal statutes that the savings that occur in part A or part C or part D because of continued work and vigilance by the folks who are practicing in part B, there has got to be a way that those savings will accrue to part B, and use those savings as the offset for lowering that total price tag on the SGR formula.

Further, there are some places, unfortunately, where people do attempt to abuse the system and take money that perhaps they are not entirely entitled to. The Inspector General's Office at HHS and the Department of Justice held a lengthy hearing with our Energy and Commerce Subcommittee a few weeks ago; it was a terribly enlightening process. But the money that's recovered in those audits is not money that should go to the Department of Justice, though don't tell them I said that, but it's money that should go back to the part B of Medicare to offset the eventual repeal and replacement of the SGR formula with the Medicare Economic Index. And I quite simply don't know any other way how to say that.

If we are not able to get that done this year or next year or the year after, we do need to put some programs in place that will protect physicians from those cuts that are programmed to occur in 2008 and 2009. And again, that is part of the legislation that I will be working on to not only capture those monies that rightfully belong to part B to offset the eventual cost of repealing the SGR, but additional things in place to protect the earnings of the physicians who care for our Medicare patients during those years before the SGR can be repealed.

Well, I mentioned earlier that some of the States have done some things within their health plans that have been innovative and really quite exciting; Massachusetts is probably the leader in that regard. It's significant because the Governor of Massachusetts is offering himself as a Presidential candidate and is certainly one of the individuals who can say ''check the box, I've done that.'' And working with a legislature and a State senate who was of the opposite party and not always aligned with his vision of where things were and where they ought to be, was able to craft a plan. Just like so many things, we can always say it's God's plans, but the devil is in the details, and sure enough in this situation the devil is in the details. The months starting in July of this year will tell the tale as to whether or not that plan will actually work. But some very clever ideas were incorporated.

Now I will be the first to admit that as a Texan there are a lot of things that you can apply to Massachusetts that you could never apply in Texas. But one of the concepts that I thought was, you have heard me reference several occasions that wouldn't it be great to get the leverage of getting a pretax expense for someone who wanted to buy their health insurance? Well, they found a way to do that in Massachusetts, it's called the Massachusetts Connecter. And indeed, even back in my home State of Texas I know they are looking at this concept. There is apparently a chapter in the IRS code, we heard the last speaker say how complicated the IRS code can be, but buried within the IRS code is section 125, which will allow for Federal tax deductibility of insurance premiums where the State acts not so much as the broker, but the middle man, if the State acts as the person who is going to bring the buyer and seller in the insurance market together, there is apparently a way in the IRS code where there is a tax deductible treatment then of that expenditure. And think about that for persons who are in the 20 or 25 percent tax bracket. If they can buy their health insurance premiums with 80 cent dollars, suddenly we've gone a long way towards allowing them some additional flexibility within the plan.

The thing I like the best about the Massachusetts plan is it does stress the concept of personal responsibility. That is to say that if you are a resident in the State of Massachusetts and you can afford health insurance, then you've got no good reason not to have health insurance and we are going to require you to have it. Again, a concept that may not work in other States. And Governor Schwarzenegger is looking at doing something in California. I know in my home State of Texas, Governor Perry is looking at some options. Governor Jeb Bush in Florida and now Governor Crist, who

replaced him, all have the ability to look at the State programs because of flexibility that was put in the system when the Deficit Reduction Act passed in December of 2005. Again, the much maligned Deficit Reduction Act gave the tools to these State leaders so that they can look at doing these innovative plans in their States to provide coverage for their populations who are uninsured. And after all, again, one of the great things about the United States is the States can serve as laboratories. We don't necessarily have to change everything for the whole country, we can see how it works in a given State, and to the extent that it is helpful, we can expand the program.

□ 2230

If we find it wasn't helpful, we won't expand the program. But it is one of those great things that our Founding Fathers envisioned, that the States would be great laboratories for needed social change to occur in this country.

One of the other things that I didn't cover earlier because I wasn't sure if time would permit it, I do obviously need to say a word about the medical liability system in this country.

My home State of Texas, again, did tackle this issue in 2003 and did pass a State law that capped non-economic damages, much along the lines of the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act of 1975 that was passed in California. Our State of Texas picked up that concept, modernized it for the 21st century, and those caps on non-economic damages, instead of just being one realm of non-economic damages, the cap is trifurcated, $250,000 thousand cap on the doctor, $250,000 thousand cap on the hospital, $250,000 thousand cap on the on a nursing home or second hospital, if one is involved.

The critical thing about this is it has brought insurance costs for medical liability insurance down by 20 percent in my home State of Texas, and, remember, medical liability costs were going up by 25 to 30 percent a year prior to the passage of that law.

So it has had an immediate and beneficial effect on physicians in Texas. And one of the unintended beneficiaries was the mid-sized, community-based, not-for-profit hospital who self-insured. Those hospitals have seen a significant reduction in the amount of moneys that they had to put toward medical liability, and, as a consequence, those are dollars that they are investing in capital improvements, nurses' salaries, the very things you would want your medium-sized, not-for-profit community hospital to do if they had the flexibility to do so.

I have legislation that I have drafted that bases off the Texas plan. I think it is reasonable legislation. In our budget resolution that the Republicans had, the savings, and this was scored by CBO as a savings, at a time we are looking for ways to save money in the healthcare system to pay for other things, it is almost unconscionable to walk away from that $8 to $10 billion in savings that CBO scored this particular legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I see that the hour, it goes so quickly when you get down here to talk about these things. I will wrap up.

I do want to point out that Americans, for all of the criticism that we have, there was an article in The New York Times published October 2006, Tyler Cowan, who writes, ''When it comes to medical innovation, the United States is the world leader. In the past 10 years, 12 Nobel Prizes in medicine have gone to American-born scientists working in the United States, three to foreign-born scientists working in the United States, and just seven have gone to researchers outside of the country.''

That is what we need to preserve, protect and defend. That is why these issues are so important for us to face in this Congress.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CUMMINGS (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. ISRAEL (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. KILPATRICK (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of inspecting tornado damage.

Mr. TIAHRT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and May 8 and 9 on account of inspecting tornado damage.

Mr. HULSHOF (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and May 8 on account of personal 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. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, 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. SHAYS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, May 14.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, May 8.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and May 8, 9, 10, and 11.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 34 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 8, 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:

1511. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 04-12, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; to the Committee on Appropriations.

1512. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 06-01, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; to the Committee on Appropriations.

1513. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisitions, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a review of the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) program, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1514. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Dell L. Dailey, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1515. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General William G. Boykin, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1516. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Bryan D. Brown, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1517. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement Vice Admiral Stanley R. Szemborski, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1518. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of the enclosed list of officers to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1519. A letter from the Director of Defense Research and Engineering, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the management and adequacy of biometrics programs pursuant to Conference Report 109-702, that accompanies the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1520. A letter from the EEO Programs Director, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the third annual report pursuant to Section 203(a) of the No Fear Act, Pub. L. 107-174, for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1521. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2006; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1522. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1523. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1524. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's annual report for FY 2006, summarizing data and analysis of complaints filed for the past five fiscal years and how the Department is working to fulfill the requirements of the Act; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1525. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Annual No Fear Report to Congress for FY 2006, pursuant to Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2003, Pub. L. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1526. A letter from the Chairman of the Board, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's first Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retalitiation Act of 2002 annual report covering fiscal years 2002 through 2006; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1527. A letter from the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity, National Endowment for the Humanities, transmitting the Endowment's report on incidences of discrimination, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, section 201; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1528. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the Commission's Fiscal Year 2006 annual report prepared in accorance with Section 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1529. A letter from the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''Letter Report: Sufficiency Review of the Water and Sewer Authority's Fiscal Year 2007 Revenue Estimate in Support of the Issuance of $300,000,000 in Public Utility Subordinated Lien Revenue Bonds (Series 2007)''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1530. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting the Authority's Annual Performance Report for FY 2006, in accordance with the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1531. A letter from the Assistant Secretary — Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Outer Continental Shelf Regulations-Technical Corrections (RIN: 1010-AD42) received May 3, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1532. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Ohio Regulatory Program [OH-251-FOR] received May 4, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1533. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest in Alaska; Harvest Regulations for Migratory Birds in Alaska During the 2007 Season (RIN: 1018-AU59) received April 12, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1534. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Missouri Regulatory Program [Docket No. MO-039-FOR] received April 13, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1535. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Geothermal Royalty Payments, Direct Use Fees, and Royalty Valuation (RIN: 1010-AD32) received April 26, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1536. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery; Modification of the Yellowtail Flounder Landing Limit for the U.S./Canada Management Area [Docket No. 04011-2010-4114-02; I.D. 040407D] received April 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1537. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Albacore Tuna Fisheries; Vessel List to Establish Eligibility to Fish for Albacore Tuna in Canadian Waters Under the U.S. Canada Albacore Tuna Treaty [Docket No. 070119012-7077-02; I.D. 031307B] (RIN: 0648-AU78) received April 30, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1538. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plan [Docket No. 061229343-7050-02; I.D. 121406A] (RIN: 0648-AV03) received April 30, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1539. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; 2007-2009 Specifications [Docket No. 061228342-7068-02; I.D. 122206A] (RIN: 0648-AT66) received April 20, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1540. A letter from the Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, and ''Other Flatfish'' by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No. 070213033-7033-01; I.D. 040607E] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1541. A letter from the Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No. 070213032-7032-01; I.D. 031507E] received April 16, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1542. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments [Docket No. 070404078-7078-01; I.D. 082806B] (RIN: 0648-AV52) received April 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1543. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No. 070213033-7033-01; I.D. 040907D] received April 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1544. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries in the Western Pacific; Optional Use of Electronic Logbook Forms [Docket No. 070207026-7079-02; I.D. 012207A] (RIN: 0648-AS29) received April 27, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1545. A letter from the Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Carribean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Closure [Docket No. 001005281-0369-02; I.D. 040407C] received April 26, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1546. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Detroit River (Trenton Channel), Grosse Ile, MI [CGD09-07-004] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 29, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1547. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Youngs Bay and Lewis and Clark River, OR. [CGD13-06-048] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 29, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1548. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Fireworks Displays within the Fifth Coast [CGD05-06-091] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received March 29, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1549. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events; St. Mary's River, St. Mary's City, MD [CGD05-07-004] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received March 29, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1550. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Advance Electronic Presentation of Cargo Information for Truck Carriers Required to be Transmitted Through ACE Truck Manifest at Ports in the States of Idaho and Montana [CBP Dec. 07-25] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Homeland Security.

REPORTS ON 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:

[Filed on May 4, 2007]

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi: Committee on Homeland Security, H.R. 1684. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110–122). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Filed on May 7, 2007]

Mr. OBERSTAR: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. House Concurrent Resolution 124. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service (Rept. 110–123). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1294. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe; with an amendment (Rept. 110–124). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1140. A bill to authorize the Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Juan Capistrano, California, to participate in the design, planning, and construction of an advanced water treatment plant facility and recycled water system, and for other purposes. (Rept. 110–125). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1114. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey, to conduct a study on groundwater resources in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–126). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1080. A bill to modify the boundaries of Grand Teton National Park to include certain land within the GT Park Subdivision, and for other purposes (Rept 110–127). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 487. A bill to amend the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Equitable Compensation Act to provide compensation to members of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe for damage resulting from the Oahe Dam and Reservoir Project, and for other purposes (Rept. 120–128). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1595. A bill to implement the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, with an amendment (Rept. 110–129). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 377. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1294) to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe (Rept. 110–130). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. REYES: Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. H.R. 2082. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110–131). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and 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. BOREN (for himself and Mr. KELLER):

H.R. 2183. A bill to prevent legislative and regulatory functions from being usurped by civil liability actions brought or continued against food manufacturers, marketers, distributors, advertisers, sellers, and trade associations for claims of injury relating to a person's weight gain, obesity, or any health condition associated with weight gain or obesity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mrs. EMERSON):

H.R. 2184. A bill to amend the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 to expand comparative effectiveness research and to increase funding for such research to improve the value of health care; 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. KIRK (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. ROYCE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. SOUDER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 2185. A bill to amend the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 to provide debt relief to developing countries that take action to protect forests and coral reefs and associated coastal marine ecosystems, to reauthorize such Act through fiscal year 2010, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

H.R. 2186. A bill to provide for the conveyance of National Forest System land in the State of Louisiana; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

H.R. 2187. A bill to make emergency supplemental appropriations for Katrina recovery for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois):

H.R. 2188. A bill to establish kinship navigator programs, to establish kinship guardianship assistance payments for children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. PASTOR, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. CASTOR, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. STARK, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. CARSON, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio):

H.R. 2189. A bill to require pre- and post-deployment mental health screenings for members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, 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. DONNELLY:

H.R. 2190. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish the Advisory Committee on Rural Veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. DRAKE (for herself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. HAYES, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 2191. A bill to provide liability protection to nonprofit volunteer pilot organizations flying for public benefit and to the pilots and staff of such organizations; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HODES:

H.R. 2192. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an Ombudsman within the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

H.R. 2193. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to increase the penalties for violations of such Act, to prohibit the use of animals for marketing medical devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 2194. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize an allowance for civilian clothing for members of the Armed Forces traveling in connection with medical evacuation; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota):

H.R. 2195. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand the education loan

repayment program for members of the Selected Reserve; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. REYES (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 2196. A bill to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to provide for disclosure to consumers of the fuels and sources of electric energy purchased from electric utilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SPACE:

H.R. 2197. A bill to modify the boundary of the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park in the State of Ohio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. SUTTON:

H.R. 2198. A bill to require an annual report on contract oversight by Federal departments and agencies; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. SUTTON (for herself, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. TURNER, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. HOBSON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KUCINICH, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. LATOURETTE, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. REGULA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. SPACE):

H. Con. Res. 143. Concurrent resolution honoring the 50th anniversary of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. WOOLSEY (for herself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. HARE):

H. Res. 376. A resolution recognizing annually a National Classified School Employee of the Year and honoring the valuable contributions of Classified School Employees in the United States; to the Committee on Education and Labor. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FORTUÑO (for himself and Mr. LANTOS):

H. Res. 378. A resolution honoring World Red Cross Red Crescent Day; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. POE:

H. Res. 379. A resolution congratulating Nicolas Sarkozy on his election to the presidency of France; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SALI (for himself and Mr. SIMPSON):

H. Res. 380. A resolution resolution commending Idaho on winning the bid to host the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. CARSON introduced a resolution (H. Res. 381) referring the bill (H.R. 2124), entitled ''A bill for the relief of Adela and Darryl Bailor'', to the chief judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a report thereon; 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. 11: Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 23: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 25: Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 67: Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. HARE, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. COHEN, and Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 73: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 135: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 140: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 176: Ms. WATERS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. JEFFERSON.
H.R. 180: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 260: Mr. PUTNAM.
H.R. 410: Mr. KAGEN.
H.R. 443: Mr. PAUL.
H.R. 445: Mr. PAUL.
H.R. 454: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 503: Mr. PAYNE, Ms. WATERS, and Ms. GIFFORDS.
H.R. 507: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. OBERSTAR, and Mr. OLVER.
H.R. 539: Mr. RAMSTAD.
H.R. 563: Mr. KELLER.
H.R. 593: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 618: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 620: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 695: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.
H.R. 718: Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. COBLE, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.
H.R. 722: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 731: Mr. ELLSWORTH.
H.R. 743: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. WALDEN of Oregon.
H.R. 758: Mr. EDWARDS.
H.R. 823: Mr. MARKEY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. HODES, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 869: Mr. PORTER.
H.R. 882: Mr. WU, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. RENZI, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 897: Mr. ELLSWORTH.
H.R. 916: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 938: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 943: Mr. PAUL and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 980: Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida.
H.R. 989: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. BUYER.
H.R. 1017: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 1023: Mr. WU, Mr. SHULER, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 1038: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 1076: Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 1093: Mr. BOREN, Mr. WAMP, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 1108: Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 1125: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PLATTS, and Mr. BLUNT.
H.R. 1147: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1157: Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. KAGEN, MR. WOLF, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PORTER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. SESTAK, and Mr. MEEK of Florida.
H.R. 1188: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 1192: Mr. ETHERIDGE and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1229: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 1237: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. PAUL.
H.R. 1239: Ms. BALDWIN.
H.R. 1293: Mr. ALTMIRE and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 1294, Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1320: Mr. KIRK and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 1343: Mr. CARTER, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. REYES, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. ISSA, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, MR. HALL of Texas, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. EDWARDS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. RUSH, Mr. WYNN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. WELCH OF VERMONT, AND MR. RAHALL.
H.R. 1344: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 1346: Mr. BOUCHER and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 1391, Ms. WATERS, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 1413: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1420: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 1459: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WEINER, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 1461: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 1491: Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 1498: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. RENZI.
H.R. 1528: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1532: Mr. RUSH and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1535: Mr. HARE, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. LAMPSON.
H.R. 1554: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 1561: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1567: Mr. LANTOS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. EDWARDS, and Mr. MATHESON.
H.R. 1582: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. CARDOZA.
H.R. 1586: Mr. BRADY of Texas.
H.R. 1589: Mr. WEXLER and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 1590: Mr. SHULER.
H.R. 1593: Mr. MELANCON.
H.R. 1595: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. GINGREY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. WATSON, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. MATSUI, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 1628: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 1647: Ms. SUTTON, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Mr. PORTER.
H.R. 1649: Mr. MCHUGH and Mr. KAGEN.
H.R. 1653: Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
H.R. 1673: Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 1687: Mr. HARE, Mr. RAHALL, and Mrs. MUSGRAVE.
H.R. 1700: Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. MURTHA.
H.R. 1705: Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. OLVER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. PLATTS, and Mr. WEINER.

H.R. 1707: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. WEINER, and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 1709: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 1713: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 1756: Mr. ELLSWORTH and Mr. GILLMOR.
H.R. 1760: Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 1771: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1772: Mr. GORDON, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1781: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. FARR, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 1783: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. SPACE, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and Mr. DONNELLY.
H.R. 1791: Mr. CARTER.
H.R. 1806: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. KUCINICH.
H.R. 1813: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida and Mr. TOWNS.
H.R. 1823: Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. FORTUÑO, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 1845: Mr. EDWARDS and Mr. OLVER.
H.R. 1866: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. REYES, and Mr. RENZI.
H.R. 1884: Mr. BARROW, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 1889: Mr. GONZALEZ.
H.R. 1892: Mr. WILSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1907: Mr. DINGELL.
H.R. 1927: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1937: Mr. HERGER, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. BARTON of Texas.
H.R. 1945: Mr. INSLEE and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1947: Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 1952: Mr. JINDAL and Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 1983: Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. BOUCHER, Mrs. EMERSON, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
H.R. 1992: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2019: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
H.R. 2060: Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. AKIN, Mr. OLVER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2063: Mr. LOBIONDO and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 2079: Mr. GILCHREST.
H.R. 2108: Mr. STARK and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2111: Mr. CHANDLER.
H.R. 2116: Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 2127: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. FALLIN.
H.R. 2135: Mr. KAGEN and Mr. POMEROY.
H.R. 2138: Mr. HOLDEN and Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 2147: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. PAYNE, and Ms. CARSON.
H.R. 2161: Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. WYNN, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. FILNER.
H. Con. Res. 21: Mr. FERGUSON and Mr. KAGEN.
H. Con. Res. 48: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. CONAWAY.
H. Con. Res. 70: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H. Con. Res. 80: Mrs. CAPPS and Ms. WATERS.
H. Con. Res. 87: Mr. ARCURI, Mr. BAKER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. CARSON, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. OLVER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SHAYS, and Mr. TOWNS.
H. Con. Res. 102: Mr. FARR.
H. Con. Res. 104: Mr. HONDA, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. FARR.
H. Con. Res. 120: Mr. BLUNT, Mr. HOLT, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H. Con. Res. 130: Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. HINCHEY, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. RAMSTAD.
H. Con. Res. 133: Mr. RAMSTAD.
H. Con. Res. 138: Mr. MARSHALL.
H. Con. Res. 142: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H. Res. 68: Mr. SERRANO.
H. Res. 97: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Res. 101: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H. Res. 121: Mr. CLAY, Ms. WATERS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BACA, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H. Res. 221: Mr. HONDA.
H. Res. 227: Mr. FILNER.
H. Res. 231: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H. Res. 282: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SOLIS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. COSTA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.
H. Res. 291: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. HARE, and Mr. COSTELLO.
H. Res. 296: Mr. CAMP of Michigan, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. MITCHELL, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H. Res. 313: Mr. HUNTER.
H. Res. 322: Mr. MARSHALL.
H. Res. 351: Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. GINGREY, and Mr. HUNTER.
H. Res. 352: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H. Res. 353: Mr. MARSHALL.
H. Res. 354: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H. Res. 369: Ms. LEE and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H. Res. 371: Mr. KIND, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. SUTTON, and Ms. BORDALLO.