United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2007 No. 80

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COSTA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 15, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM COSTA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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 debate. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 25 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate extend beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

TAKING THE FOOD STAMP CHALLENGE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this week, I am joined by three of my esteemed colleagues, Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON from Missouri, Congressman TIM RYAN from Ohio and Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY from Illinois, in taking the Food Stamp Challenge.

The Food Stamp Challenge is an initiative begun by nonprofit and religious community groups. Public officials agree to live on a food stamp budget for 1 week in order to raise awareness of the food stamp program and the inadequacy of the current benefit. Under the Food Stamp Challenge, we will only be allowed to eat food totaling $21 for the week, $3 a day, or $1 per meal, which is the national average food stamp benefit. In other words, no lattes at Starbucks, no organic chicken at home and no wine or shrimp at receptions this week.

Yesterday, Congresswoman EMERSON and I went grocery shopping at the Capitol Hill Safeway for the week. However, she was a more efficient shopper than I was. While she made it through the checkout line in 30 minutes, it took me almost an hour and a half to find food that fit my budget, and that was even with the much-appreciated assistance of Ms. Toinette Wilson, a DC food stamp recipient, who assisted my wife Lisa and me with our shopping.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski successfully took the challenge with his wife a few weeks ago, and Utah Governor John Huntsman, Jr., is currently living on a food stamp budget with his household of eight. In New York City, where over 1 million people depend on food stamps each month, New York City Councilman Eric Gioia is participating in the Food Stamp Challenge.

This diverse group of public leaders who all feel compelled to take on this challenge demonstrates the importance of the food stamp program for all Americans: from California to Massachusetts, Michigan to Texas, Republican and Democrat, urban and rural, the food stamp program represents the moral values of America: compassion, thoughtfulness and community spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I am taking this Food Stamp Challenge as a way of saying that as Americans, we need to do more to eliminate hunger and poverty in this country. One in nine U.S. households, nearly 36 million Americans, does not consistently have enough food to feed themselves or their families according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. There is no excuse for this.

In the wealthiest country on earth, it is not about finding the resources. It is about mustering the political will.

Established in 1939, the food stamp program helps families in need buy food so that they do not have to make difficult choices, such as choosing between paying a utility bill, addressing health care needs or buying food. It truly is the safety net for America's hungry.

Despite what some critics like to say, the food stamp program is not a government handout, but it is a true safety net program that provides access to food for people who cannot afford to choose between rent, medicine, child care and transportation. Gone are the days of the inefficient program ravaged by fraud, waste and abuse. In fact, National Journal recently named the food stamp program as one of the government's top successes. And the GAO has repeatedly reported on the successes of this important program.

Mr. Speaker, let me take a moment to share with you who benefits from the food stamp program. According to USDA, over 26 million people benefited from the food stamp program last year, including 452,000 individuals from my State of Massachusetts. Over 80 percent of food stamp benefits go to families with children. One in five food stamp households has an elderly family member, and one in four has a disabled member. Increasingly, working families must rely on food stamps to supplement their wages in low-paying jobs.

Some may question the motives of elected officials taking this 1-week challenge. These critics, Mr. Speaker, are missing the point. It's time for a much greater public debate to take place around this issue. It is time to end hunger in America, and we can do

Printed on recycled paper.

so starting by focusing on the food stamp program.

The food stamp program is our government's first line of defense against hunger and malnutrition and it should be better equipped to accomplish that task. Merely 60 percent of those who are eligible to receive food stamps currently do, and in Massachusetts that participation rate is only 49 percent. The participation rate is particularly low for immigrants and the elderly.

Last week, Congresswoman EMERSON and I introduced H.R. 2129, the Feeding America's Families Act, which would greatly improve the food stamp program as well as other Federal hunger and nutrition programs scheduled for reauthorization in the farm bill. We encourage each of our colleagues to consider cosponsoring this important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, although some judge the health of our Nation by how the wealthiest are faring, others, including myself, believe we must measure the morality and prosperity of our society by the status and mobility of those at the bottom of the economic ladder. Through this challenge, I hope my constituents, the American people and my colleagues in Washington, DC, will learn more about the vital role the food stamp program plays in the lives of low-income people.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Don Green, Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Sovereign of the nations, who has created the human family with rich diversity and who wills that all peoples be reconciled and live in peace and wholeness with dignity and justice, we call upon You to bestow Your wisdom and compassion upon these representatives of the American people.

Grant them humility and openness to listen to their opponents and adversaries before condemning their positions or denigrating their person. Give them courage to seek reconciliation with our enemies, encouraging negotiation and diplomacy instead of violence as the means to lasting peace in our conflicted world.

Open their eyes to a vision of a more just society where all may enjoy the benefits of wellness and health, adequate shelter, food in abundance, lifelong learning, and security in their communities.

Hear us now, O God, as we pray for the preservation of this legislative institution and the prospering of our Nation, for we trust in You and entrust our whole being to Your providential care. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BILIRAKIS 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 71. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 85th Anniversary of the founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), a leading association for the Nation's 1.3 million American citizens of Greek ancestry, and Philhellenes.

WELCOMING THE REVEREND DON GREEN

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to introduce Pastor Donald Green as today's Guest Chaplain. I have known Pastor Green for many years through our involvement in the McCandless Rotary Club, which is just one of the many service organizations to which Pastor Green lends his time in western Pennsylvania. He is truly an extraordinary man, and it is an honor to present him to you today.

Pastor Green has led a number of trips abroad to assist in various relief efforts. His travels have taken him to Kenya and Zambia to visit projects funded by the Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran World Federation. In 1997 he visited missions in India, and in 1999 he took a group of volunteers to Puerto Rico to assist in hurricane relief. He also led a group of volunteers to Madagascar to lay the foundation for a youth center, which now bears his name, the Pastor Don Green Youth Center. These are but a few examples of Pastor Green's commitment to his community and commitment to service above self.

Pastor Green now serves as the Executive Director of Christian Associates of Southwestern Pennsylvania. He and Kathy, his wife of 36 years, are the proud parents of three children and one grandson.

On behalf of my colleagues in the House, Pastor Green, welcome and thank you for your many years of service.

TIME FOR A NEW COURSE IN IRAQ

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, it seems that President Bush and many of his allies still don't understand how things have changed on the ground in Iraq.

A few days ago the Republican leader, when asked about the President's new escalation plan, said that if it doesn't work, the President pretty soon is going to have to present to Congress and the American people what plan B is.

Well, there are very few people that don't realize by now that we are not on plan B anymore; we are on plan Z. And we have got to start asking ourselves why plan A and plan B all the way through plan Z still haven't worked. It is because a military plan, without diplomatic and political reinforcements behind it, cannot work on the ground in Iraq. That is what the Democrats in Congress have realized. That is what the Iraq Study Group realized. That is what legions of retired generals have realized.

Madam Speaker, it is time the President and his allies join that hegemony of opinion and join us in setting a new course in Iraq.

NATIONAL SECURITY, DEMOCRAT STYLE

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, later this week the liberal left in the House will take up the Defense Authorization Act, legislation that is supposed to make our Nation more secure and help our troops in winning the war on terror.

But you will have to excuse the American people if they don't understand the leadership's real agenda here, because you actually have to read through 452 pages of the National Defense Authorization Act to find it. Subtitle F, section 951 reveals all you really need to know: a significant diversion of national security resources to indulge the liberal fascination with global climate change.

The language paints an unwelcomed portrait of the liberal left's agenda on

national security: Wax philosophical about the so-called impact of global warming first and, only after that, talk about the real issue of the war on terror. This is the second time in as many weeks that the left plans to force this body to vote on a bill that would fund special interest priorities at the expense of our national security. It is unconscionable. It is unfair. It is not right. It is an abusive use of Federal funds.

Welcome to national security, Democrat style.

URGING SUPPORT FOR RESPONSIBILITY TO IRAQI REFUGEE ACT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, Iraq is the scene of the world's fastest growing humanitarian crisis: 4 million people displaced, half of whom have fled the country altogether, with another 50,000 or more added to the rolls every month.

What are we doing to help, especially the tens of thousands who are in danger because they helped the United States, like serving as interpreters? Last month the United States allowed exactly one Iraqi refugee to enter the United States.

No matter what your position is on the war in Iraq or its future, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 2265, the Responsibility to Iraqi Refugee Act, comprehensive legislation that would put somebody in charge, set modest levels for refugees entitled to come to our country, and authorize programs to help them. It is the least we can do for people whose lives are at risk because they helped Americans.

PAT PEDRAJA AND DRIVING FOR DONORS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a very brave and ambitious young man from my district, Pat Pedraja.

Pat, who is 12 years old, was diagnosed with leukemia in March of 2006. Like many inflicted with this disease, Pat may need a bone marrow transplant to save his life. Unfortunately, there is currently a shortage of donors.

When Pat discovered this shortage, he decided to do something about it. He and his family organized ''Driving for Donors'' to help add 5,000 new donors to the National Marrow Registry Program this year. They began traveling the country last month in a ''Donormobile,'' working to host successful donor drives in over 30 major cities. Tomorrow they will be in Washington.

I encourage my colleagues to take the time out of your busy schedules to help save a life. It only takes a small donation of saliva, taken by a cheek swab, and completion of a donor consent form. Please contact my office for additional details.

THE PRESIDENT'S ENERGY PROPOSAL

(Ms. SCHWARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, last year U.S. foreign oil imports climbed to a record level of 66 percent. American families are paying a record $3.09 a gallon on average for regular gasoline, more than double the cost of gasoline when President Bush took office.

For 6 years now, the President has failed to address these costs or our Nation's energy needs.

Yesterday, under pressure to finally do something, President Bush announced an executive order to develop regulations to lower vehicle emissions before he leaves office in 2009.

This is too little, too late. The administration has had 6 years to act, and they have failed. They failed to address the energy concerns of our Nation while giving big tax breaks to the oil and gas industry.

Fortunately, we have a new Democratic Congress that is going to lead our Nation towards energy independence. We are determined to find ways to be more energy efficient, to bring new, safer, less expensive, homegrown sources of energy to American families and American businesses, and we will start now by bringing a comprehensive energy bill to the House floor in July that will drive down costs and meet our Nation's future energy needs.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM MUST BEGIN WITH AFFIRMATION OF THE RULE OF LAW

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, on immigration reform the halls of Congress are abuzz with rumors of a ''grand compromise'' on the issue of illegal immigration. There is talk of a proposal that would allow millions of illegal immigrants to remain in this country by merely paying a fine.

Let me say emphatically, Madam Speaker, amnesty is no bargain for the American people. Any effort at comprehensive immigration reform must begin by rejecting amnesty, will put border security first, and not implement any type of temporary worker program until border security measures have been undertaken and completed. And once a temporary worker program begins, we must require that every person who has come into this country illegally leave the United States and apply outside of our country for the legal right to live and work here. And if they come under the color of the law, we must require temporary workers to learn the language of the American people.

In addition, serious fines and an electronic verification system must ensure a full partnership between American business and the American government in enforcing our immigration laws.

The real grand bargain for the American people is comprehensive immigration reform that begins with an affirmation of the rule of law.

□ 1015

SUPPORTING COPS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today that the House will vote to reauthorize the successful COPS program, and I commend our leadership for bringing H.R. 1700 to the floor.

The Community Oriented Policing Services program has allowed our law enforcement agencies to hire over 100,000 police officers nationwide. This has led to significantly reduced crime rates between 1995 and 2005. Unfortunately, the hiring component of this grant program has not been funded in recent years and the program overall has taken severe cuts.

Post-9/11, we have asked our State and local law enforcement agencies to protect not only our communities from crime, but to protect our homeland as well. We cannot continue to put unfunded mandates on our local police forces and expect them to also provide protection from terrorism if we are not willing to provide the Federal aid for them to do so. If Congress fails to fund the hiring of additional peace officers, we risk losing the progress we have made in crime reduction. We must keep pressure up on crime.

By helping to hire local police officers, the COPS program helps our State and local law enforcement bust drug-trafficking rings, take down domestic meth labs, and keep our communities safe.

I encourage my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1700, the COPS Reauthorization Act of 2007.

PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I rise to join with millions across this Nation who applaud the Supreme Court's recent decision to uphold the ban on partial-birth abortion.

Partial-birth abortion is unrivaled in its gruesome brutality. There is no question it has caused the vicious destruction of viable human life, babies, whose only crime is inconvenience.

The Court's decision is a victory in the quest to restore basic human dignity and human life. No longer will the

most vulnerable and innocent among us be subject to such cruelty.

It also is a victory for the Constitution, which liberal activist judges have demeaned for far too long. It is encouraging to see the Court's decision move toward our Founders' vision and intent to not only respect opinions and the vision for our country, but also to protect human life.

Let us never forget our responsibility to uphold the basic sanctity of human life granted by our Maker.

DEMOCRATS WORK TO MAKE AMERICAN STREETS SAFER BY PASSING COPS IMPROVEMENT ACT

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

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, our most important job as lawmakers is to ensure the safety of the American people.

Our local law enforcement officers serve communities across this Nation as the first line of defense against crime. The number of police on our streets matters for the security of every city in this Nation, and we have a responsibility to ensure that these officers are in place. That is why Congress worked with President Clinton in the 1990s to create the COPS program.

Through this program, more than 100,000 cops were hired, putting police in every neighborhood in our Nation. But when President Bush came to office, he eliminated the COPS program, with no objections from the old Republican rubber-stamp Congress. As a result, crime substantially increased over the last decade.

Madam Speaker, today this Congress has an opportunity to reverse these troubling trends by passing the COPS Improvement Act. This legislation would allow communities to hire 50,000 police officers over the next 6 years so we can better protect our communities.

DEMOCRATS' ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS WHEN IT COMES TO SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. AKIN. Recently, congressional Democrats cut funding that was planned for modernization of our military. And while we've heard statements that the Democrats are supporting our troops, their actions speak louder than words.

In a strict party-line vote, Democrats slashed the Army modernization program with a 25 percent cut, casting a cloud over the first major modernization program in four decades. Future combat systems are designed to create a real-time battlefield information system. It promises increased safety and efficiency for our troops. This is nothing new. In the 1970s, the Democrats slashed military spending, and our servicemen and -women were forced to apply for food stamps just to survive. Again, in the 1990s, the Democrat Congress caused our Nation's forces to lose their technological edge. From future combat systems to missile defense, Democrats demonstrate a shortsightedness that will cost our sons and daughters the tools they need for a safe mission. My children and our children will pay the price.

SUPPORTING COPS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, today we will vote on H.R. 1700, which calls for putting 50,000 additional police officers on the street over the next 6 years, authorizing $600 million a year for the COPS program, and it also authorizes $350 million a year for the COPS technology grants, and $200 million a year for hiring community prosecutors.

It is fitting today because today is the 26th annual National Peace Officers Memorial Service. Of all the cuts to needed domestic programs the Bush administration has devised over the years, the decimation of funds to our law enforcement personnel has to be among the most ill-considered and reckless. How he could ever stand next to any cop and do what he has done in the last 5 years is reprehensible.

The COPS program is a proven winner, cutting crime and making neighborhoods safer across the Nation. More police on the streets means less violent crimes and greater vigilance. It just makes sense. According to the GAO study, between 1998 and 2000, the COPS grants are responsible for reducing crimes by 225,000.

IS IT TOO COLD OR TOO HOT?

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, there is alarming news from Newsweek magazine. I read the article in part: ''There are ominous signs the Earth's weather patterns have begun to change dramatically and that these changes may cause a drastic decline in food production. The evidence in support of these predictions has now begun to accumulate so fast that meteorologists are hard-pressed to keep up with it . . . The central fact is that after three quarters of a century of extraordinarily mild conditions, the Earth's climate seems to be cooling down . . . If the climate change is as profound as some of the pessimists fear, the resulting famines could be catastrophic . . . The present decline has taken our planet about a sixth of the way toward the Ice Age average.''

Madam Speaker, this article was written in Newsweek in April 1975. Those doomsayers said we were all going to freeze in the dark. Now these are the same people who say we're going to roast because of global warming. Were they correct in 1975 or are they correct today? Before we panic, we need to separate science from junk science and get the facts about global warming.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS WORK TO RESTORE COPS PROGRAM SO THAT WE CAN CUT DOWN ON VIOLENCE

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, in the war to fight crime in this country we need more than just rhetoric. We need results.

During the 1990s, thanks to the initiatives of the Clinton administration and the Democratic Congress, we significantly reduced crime nationwide after enactment of the COPS program. We put 100,000 new cops on our streets, and crime rates fell. But over the past decade, Republicans have cut the program. As a result, crime rates have increased nationwide.

The Police Executive Research Forum recently released a report that found violent crime rates have risen by double-digit percentages over the last 2 years. Among the cities surveyed, 71 percent had an increase in homicides, and 80 percent saw robberies rise.

Today, this House has an opportunity to show it is serious about protecting our neighborhoods by passing the COPS Improvement Act. This legislation will restore the strong anti-crime measures we enacted in the 1990s by providing funding to hire 50,000 new police over the next 6 years.

Madam Speaker, the new Democratic majority isn't just talking about keeping our Nation secure; we are producing real results.

SUPPORTING COPS IMPROVEMENT ACT

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise also in strong suspects of the COPS Improvement Act.

Since the COPS program began in 1994, it has provided for the hiring of 404 police officers in my congressional district. It has directed billions of dollars in grants to law enforcement agencies, including more than $20 million to benefit my constituents on the central coast of California.

COPS deserves much of the credit for the major drop in crime across our country during the 1990s, but the Bush administration has repeatedly targeted the COPS hiring program for elimination. So I'm glad the new Democratic majority in Congress realizes the

importance of putting cops on the beat. The COPS Improvement Act continues the good work we started in the 1990s. It will help law enforcement agencies in my district to hire another 173 police officers. That's 173 men and women to patrol the streets and keep their hardworking neighbors safe.

Madam Speaker, I urge this House to pass this much-needed legislation today.

COPS

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, in 1994 President Clinton, with the help of congressional Democrats, established the COPS program. The COPS program changed the way we fight crime in this country by giving local jurisdictions the support they needed to put over 100,000 new police officers on the street. The results were clear: a nationwide drop in crime and safer streets in our communities.

Having been a police officer for 12 years, I proudly support the continuation of the COPS program. Unfortunately, the President and the Republicans have cut and gut the COPS program.

The COPS program is needed now more than ever. The threat of terrorism has put new burdens on our first responders, and recent news reports show violent crime in our cities is again on the rise. As a result, the Democrats will seek to put $1.5 billion forth in the budget to hire more police officers where they can do the most good, on the streets in our communities.

The COPS program is a proven concept that has the full support of the law enforcement community. The Democrats will make the program even better.

Let us work together to put cops back on the streets and give them the tools they need to keep us and America safe.

COPS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, like my colleagues, I too, rise in support of the full funding for the 100,000 community police officers. It has been a linchpin to a very successful anti-crime strategy.

In the 1990s, we pursued a single strategy of putting more cops on the beat and getting gangs, guns and drugs off the street. It led to the longest and largest decline of violent crime in American history.

After the elimination of the COPS program, community police officers, we saw a steady increase in violent crime. Cops doing community policing, an old strategy, door by door, knowing their neighbors, knowing their community, led to a dramatic drop in violent crime. Reducing those 100,000 extra police on the streets led to an increase in violent crime.

Democrats came here to change Washington, to bring a new direction to our policy. Seeing an increase in violent crime in America, we went back to a basic fundamental strategy that has proven year after year to be successful, adding 100,000 cops, doing community policing, knowing their neighbors, knowing the kids that go to school, knowing where the problems are, hitting the problems before they start, leading to the most successful anti-violent crime strategy in American history.

I am proud that we have brought this change to Washington.

FOLLOW THE LAW FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

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

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, we have had the right to be disappointed in the President's abject refusal to do anything to give us auto efficiency and clean autos for years. And now we still have the right to be disappointed even though he has been ordered to do so by the United States Supreme Court. We sort of heard this sort of semi ''maybe I'll think about it'' approach the other day.

We need some bold action when it comes to new technology, including in our automobile sector; and we know we can get that. We know we can have efficient automobiles, and we know we can deal with global warming.

I've got to tell you, I just cannot understand why some folks here want to embrace ignorance on global warming. They point out that we didn't know about global warming in 1970. We didn't know about the Internet either, but I don't know why you shouldn't use it.

We've learned some things from 1970. We've learned that the planet is warming. We've learned that CO_2 is responsible. We've learned that it's coming from our industries. And we've learned that if we have the Federal law followed, we will have energy efficiency and a clean energy economy in the future of this country.

□ 1030

PASS THE COPS PROGRAM

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues in asking that we pass the COPS Program. I started my career after law school as the attorney for the Memphis Police Department, and I learned then that patrol was the major deterrent to crime.

When I campaigned this year in the City of Memphis and met with the Afro-American Police Association, they came to me and the thing they asked me to do was to get more COPS dollars, saying that community policing was an effective tool in the fight against crime; that it wasn't just arresting, but it was knowing people in the community and encouraging them to find ways to interrelate to the police and have a better attitude.

By working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and Ranking Member SMITH, we came up with an amendment that will be part of the bill that will give Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans priority in the COPS Program so that when we bring our troops home we can have them effectively police our neighborhoods, just as they have been policing the neighborhoods in Baghdad.

We need policemen and cops on the streets in our hometowns, in Memphis, Tennessee, to fight crime. We need them home today in our towns, and not in Baghdad. The COPS Program will help.

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 later today.

AMERICAN VETERANS DISABLED FOR LIFE COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 634) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who become disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 634

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 ''American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The Armed Forces of the United States have answered the call and served with distinction around the world—from hitting the beaches in World War II in the Pacific and Europe, to the cold and difficult terrain in Korea, the steamy jungles of Vietnam, and the desert sands of the Middle East.

(2) All Americans should commemorate those who come home having survived the ordeal of war, and solemnly honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their lives for their country.

(3) All Americans should honor the millions of living disabled veterans who carry

the scars of war every day, and who have made enormous personal sacrifices defending the principles of our democracy.

(4) In 2000, Congress authorized the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

(5) The United States should pay tribute to the Nation's living disabled veterans by minting and issuing a commemorative silver dollar coin.

(6) The surcharge proceeds from the sale of a commemorative coin would raise valuable funding for the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) $1 SILVER COINS.—The Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall mint and issue not more than 350,000 $1 coins in commemoration of disabled American veterans, each of which shall—

(1) weigh 26.73 grams;

(2) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(3) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 4. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The design of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the design selected by the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation for the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

(2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act, there shall be—

(A) a designation of the value of the coin;

(B) an inscription of the year ''2010''; and

(C) inscriptions of the words ''Liberty'', ''In God We Trust'', ''United States of America'', and ''E Pluribus Unum''.

(b) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

(1) selected by the Secretary, after consultation with the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation and the Commission of Fine Arts; and

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) MINT FACILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Only 1 facility of the United States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality of the coins minted under this Act.

(2) USE OF THE UNITED STATES MINT AT WEST POINT, NEW YORK.—It is the sense of the Congress that the coins minted under this Act should be struck at the United States Mint at West Point, New York, to the greatest extent possible.

(c) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins under this Act only during the calendar year beginning on January 1, 2010.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of—

(1) the face value of the coins;

(2) the surcharge provided in section 7 with respect to such coins; and

(3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins issued under this Act shall include a surcharge of $10 per coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be paid to the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation for the purpose of establishing an endowment to support the construction of American Veterans' Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C.

(c) AUDITS.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall have the right to examine such books, records, documents, and other data of the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation as may be related to the expenditures of amounts paid under subsection (b).

(d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert any other material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this legislation that we are considering today is a simple, straightforward bill that would take a small but important step to recognize and honor the more than 3 million American veterans currently living with disabilities as a result of their sacrifice and service in our United States Armed Forces. In fact, of 26 million American veterans today, nearly one in 10 embody the physical cost of their service in permanent disability.

While there are many other steps that Congress should take to improve the lives of disabled veterans, by passing this bipartisan legislation today, which I have introduced with my friend and colleague, Mr. KIRK of Illinois, we hope to honor and show our gratitude for their sacrifice and the toll this has taken on their lives. Specifically, Madam Speaker, this legislation provides for the design, manufacture and sale of special commemorative silver coins and authorizes special surcharges on these coins to be contributed toward the construction of a memorial to disabled veterans.

The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial will occupy an impressive 2-acre site located just southwest of the Rayburn House Office Building adjacent to the National Mall within full view of the United States Capitol. The memorial will embody America's lasting gratitude for the men and women whose lives are forever changed in their service to our country. It will also serve as an important reminder to Members of Congress of the human cost of war and the need to support our veterans. We must never forget the sacrifices these American heroes made and continue to make in order to promote a better world for our fellow citizens.

Building this long overdue memorial is something we need to do and should do as Americans.

Madam Speaker, I include the following letter exchange for the RECORD:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2007.

Hon. BARNEY FRANK,
Chairman, Financial Services Committee, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR BARNEY: I am writing regarding H.R. 634, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act.

As you know, the Committee on Ways and Means maintains jurisdiction over bills that raise revenue. H.R. 634 contains a provision that establishes a surcharge for the sale of commemorative coins that are minted under the bill, and thus falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means.

However, as part of our ongoing understanding regarding commemorative coin bills and in order to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 634, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the RECORD.

Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2007.

Hon. CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHARLIE: I am writing in response to your letter regarding H.R. 634, the ''American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act,'' which was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Financial Services on January 23, 2007. It is my

expectation that this bill will be scheduled for floor consideration in the near future.

I wish to confirm our mutual understanding on this bill. As you know, section 7 of the bill establishes a surcharge for the sale of commemorative coins that are minted under the bill. I acknowledge your committee's jurisdictional interest in such surcharges as revenue matters. However, I appreciate your willingness to forego committee action on H.R. 634 in order to allow the bill to come to the floor expeditiously. I agree that your decision to forego further action on this bill will not prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation. I would support your request for conferees on those provisions within your jurisdiction should this bill be the subject of a House-Senate conference.

I will include this exchange of letters in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when this bill is considered by the House. Thank you again for your assistance.

BARNEY FRANK,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 634, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act introduced by Mr. MOORE and by my colleague from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Madam Speaker, occasionally we disagree on the floor of this great Chamber, and we heard some of those disagreements aired a couple of minutes ago, but now there can be no disagreement about the goals of this legislation, honoring the heroes who have been grievously injured in the defense of this country, in defense of liberty, in defense of democracy.

There are plenty of monuments, as well there ought to be, for those who gave their lives for those causes, but I know of no monument to those who lived, but whose lives were drastically altered, whose bodies were broken, but whose spirits are still strong. But now they will have their own monument, and it is only right, Madam Speaker.

This memorial will be for the World War II vet who came back without a hand, the Korean War vet who uses a wheelchair, the Vietnam vet who uses the white cane of the blind, and for the veterans of the conflicts in the gulf, who came back to us forever changed.

In 2000, Congress approved the building of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. It will be a $65 million privately funded memorial just west of the Rayburn Building, across from the Botanic Garden and in full view of the Capitol. The Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission approved the conceptual design in 2004 and reaffirmed it in 2006.

The memorial will express our Nation's gratitude to those who paid the terrible cost of defending freedom. It represents the values of duty, of courage and of sacrifice that are the lifeblood of American democracy.

I urge Members, staff and the rest of the country to look at the Web site of the memorial at avdlm.org.

About half of the money for construction already has been raised, and this legislation, through surcharges on the sale of silver one-dollar coins to be issued by the U.S. Mint in 2010, could raise another $3.5 million to be used for construction or to maintain the dramatic memorial.

Madam Speaker, I am glad to be one of more than 300 Members of Congress who have cosponsored this bill, which is supported by the VFW, the American Legion, the DAV, and thousands of veterans and veteran organizations across the Nation who have contributed to the memorial's creation.

Madam Speaker, I ask for the immediate passage of H.R. 634 and urge all Members to support it.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. KIRK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, there are over 50 million Americans who have worn our country's uniform, and over 20 million are alive today. Among them there are 3 million Americans who are disabled from wounds in battle. Thanks to advances in military medicine, soldiers who once died of their wounds are now surviving and they return from battle with broken bodies, but not broken spirits. It is that spirit of men and women that we honor today. This Moore-Kirk bill will help raise funds for a memorial to disabled American veterans.

I want to particularly thank my bipartisan partner in this effort, Representative DENNIS MOORE of Kansas. We formed a bond and a partnership to pass this bill first authored by Representative Sue Kelly of New York. Mr. MOORE and I worked many weeks to get over 290 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, to make sure this bill could come to the floor.

In 2000, Congress authorized the construction of the Americans Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial just south of the Rayburn Building within sight of the U.S. Capitol. Last December, President Bush signed into law a bill transferring control of the land for the memorial from the District of Columbia to the National Park Service. Now, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation needs to raise approximately $65 million to cover the cost of construction.

Our bill today will authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative silver dollars to be sold with a surcharge that will help the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation to raise the money it needs for this memorial. Not only will these coins be collectors' items, but they will benefit this worthy cause.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of meeting with an extraordinary young man, Sergeant Bryan Anderson of Rolling Meadows, Illinois. Bryan's story is, unfortunately, all too common for our soldiers in Iraq, but his spirit is uncommon, and his attitude sets him apart from the average person.

You see, Bryan lost both legs and an arm to a roadside bomb in Iraq. He jokes that he would have lost both arms if he hadn't been smoking when the bomb detonated. His sense of humor and determination are clearly apparent in the interview that he gave to Esquire Magazine in January. In it he said, ''This wound does not define me. It may be how I look on the outside, but it is not who I am. I guess you could remember me easily as being a triple amputee, but that's not who I am. It has nothing to do with who I am. I have always been the same person.''

Bryan is a self-described ''adrenalin junkie'' who hopes one day to become a Hollywood stuntman. Since his appearances on the cover of Esquire, he has had numerous opportunities to use his story for the gain of this legislation, often being baited to say if he has any political affiliation or asked what he thinks about the war. Each time he refuses to take the bait. He says he doesn't want to talk about politics. But he is always willing and excited to talk about the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

Washington has legions of professional advocates who make a living convincing people to see issues from their point of view, but none of them compare to Bryan Anderson. With Bryan, what you see is what you get, an American veteran with an inspirational story that has dedicated a good portion of his life to seeing that this memorial be built, not just for himself, but for 3 million disabled American veterans, and for everyone to remember the sacrifices that they have made.

Bryan is a genuine man that you may one day meet. I hope passage of this legislation brings us closer to a day when Bryan returns to Capitol Hill to see the memorial that he helped to build.

With more than 3 million disabled American veterans in the United States, it is fitting that we construct a memorial in Washington, D.C., within sight of this Capitol. It is my hope that my colleagues will answer Bryan Anderson's call to action and support this legislation to make this memorial a reality.

With that, I just want to once again thank my colleague from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) for an outstanding partnership and a great bipartisan victory today.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I want to again thank my colleague from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) for the wonderful display of bipartisanship here. I wish we could set an example and hope we set an example for all of our colleagues here to work on other matters together.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK).

Mr. STUPAK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, let me compliment the sponsors of this bill, Mr. MOORE from Kansas and Mr. KIRK from Illinois. I am down here on another bill, but I felt compelled to say a few words, if I may, on this piece of legislation, which really honors American disabled veterans with this commemorative coin. This will help us raise the money to build this monument, which is long overdue.

Whether you are talking about my father-in-law, Ken Olsen, up in Escanaba, who was disabled in World War II, or the recent disabled members of our Armed Forces coming back from Afghanistan and Iraq, I think we can all personally relate to different stories.

Today, Derek Gagne, who spent quite a bit of time at Walter Reed Army Hospital, is coming back to the upper peninsula of Michigan, where family and friends will be waiting to greet him home. Unfortunately, as Derek has left his bed at Walter Reed for an amputation he had to have because of injuries sustained in Iraq, unfortunately, that bed is being taken by another member from my district who also was wounded in Iraq.

We talk about our disabled veterans and we honor them throughout our time, especially in the summer months through the Memorial Day and 4th of July and all the holidays we celebrate in parades and ceremonies like that, but it is time that we have the memorial here in Washington, so those of us who make decisions on war understand that it is more than just sending an army here or there, but that there is consequences of it.

□ 1045

Whether the injury is an amputation or a closed-head injury, which we are seeing so much of in the war in Iraq, each and every injury serves to remind us of the horrors of war but also that these men and women and their families and their spouses deserve our utmost respect.

So I am very pleased to see this memorial start to take on more and more life, to become a reality. And the work of Mr. MOORE and Mr. KIRK will certainly help bring forth this memorial. I am very honored to not only cosponsor H.R. 634, but also to support the American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 634, 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. MOORE of Kansas. Madam 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.

ARMY SPECIALIST JOSEPH P. MICKS FEDERAL FLAG CODE AMENDMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 692) to amend title 4, United States Code, to authorize the Governor of a State, territory, or possession of the United States to order that the National flag be flown at half-staff in that State, territory, or possession in the event of the death of a member of the Armed Forces from that State, territory, or possession who dies while serving on active duty, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 692

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 ''Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Federal Flag Code Amendment Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. FINDING.

Congress finds that members of the Armed Forces of the United States defend the freedom and security of the United States.

SEC. 3. PROCEDURE FOR NATIONAL FLAG TO BE FLOWN AT HALF-STAFF IN THE EVENT OF THE DEATH OF A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) ISSUANCE OF PROCLAMATION.—Subsection (m) of section 7 of title 4, United States Code, is amended in the sixth sentence—

(1) by inserting ''or the death of a member of the Armed Forces from any State, territory, or possession who dies while serving on active duty'' after ''present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States''; and

(2) by inserting before the period the following: '', and the same authority is provided to the Mayor of the District of Columbia with respect to present or former officials of the District of Columbia and members of the Armed Forces from the District of Columbia''.

(b) FEDERAL FACILITY CONSISTENCY WITH PROCLAMATION.—Such subsection is further amended by inserting after the sixth sentence the following new sentence: ''When the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia, issues a proclamation under the preceding sentence that the National flag be flown at half-staff in that State, territory, or possession or in the District of Columbia because of the death of a member of the Armed Forces, the National flag flown at any Federal installation or facility in the area covered by that proclamation shall be flown at half-staff consistent with that proclamation.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

As author of H.R. 692, the Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Federal Flag Code Amendment Act of 2007, I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Madam Speaker, those who make the ultimate sacrifice for our country deserve our country's utmost respect. H.R. 692 will ensure that our fallen troops and their families are provided the appropriate respect due.

The Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Federal Flag Code Amendment Act of 2007 would require all Federal Government agencies in a State to comply with a Governor's proclamation to fly the national flag at half-staff in honor of those who lose their lives serving our country.

H.R. 692 is named after Joseph P. Micks, a soldier from Rapid River, Michigan, who was killed in Iraq last July at the age of 22. Specialist Micks was an all-American soldier and citizen. He was an altar server at church, an Eagle Scout from Troop 466 in Gladstone, Michigan, loved to collect sports memorabilia, and fixed the computers of his neighbors. He joined the Army to help others, to make a difference.

His death was not only mourned by his family and friends, but also by the citizens of the rural communities which make up and comprise Delta County, Michigan. As his funeral procession progressed through several rural communities in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, citizens were upset to note that some Federal agencies had not lowered their flags based on the Governor's proclamation in honor of Specialist Micks.

There have been several other instances in my district, unfortunately, when a Federal agency has not lowered its flag in accordance with Governor Granholm's proclamation.

When I have learned of Federal agencies, offices and buildings that have not lowered their American flags, I have contacted the agencies. I have been told that the directive to lower the flag has not come from the district office or the regional office or from Washington headquarters. It is regrettable that this legislation is even necessary. Last year I wrote the President asking him to issue an executive order to have the flags lowered. He has not responded. However, as there have been not one but multiple instances where Federal agencies have ignored the Governor's request to lower flags, it is important that Congress address this issue.

In a recent example, when Navy SEAL Joe Schwedler was killed recently in Iraq, it was the Veterans Affairs hospital that refused to lower its flag. Veterans presented officials with the article from the local newspaper, the Daily News from Iron Mountain. It says: ''Flags Lowered for Crystal Falls Hero,'' and still the Veterans Administration refused to lower the flag.

I include this article for the RECORD.

[From the Daily News, April 12, 2007]

FLAGS LOWERED FOR CRYSTAL FALLS HERO HALF-STAFF ON FRIDAY

Lansing.—Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm has ordered United States flags throughout Michigan and on Michigan waters lowered for one day on Friday, April 13, in honor of Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph C. Schwedler of Crystal Falls who died April 6 while on active duty in Iraq.

Flags should return to full staff on Saturday, April 14.

Schwedler, 27, died from enemy action while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. He was assigned to the East Coast Navy SEAL Team.

When flown at half-staff or half-mast, the United States flag should be hoisted first to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff or half-mast position. The flag should again be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.

A military funeral will be conducted at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 14, at the Forest Park High School gymnasium in Crystal Falls.

A scholarship fund will be established with the Crystal Falls Area Community Fund, Post Office Box 269, Crystal Falls, Michigan 49920.

The Jacobs-Plowe Funeral Home, Crystal Falls is in charge of arrangements.

The inconsistent patchwork display of respect is particularly hurtful to rural communities where the funeral processions of fallen troops often travel by several Federal facilities, some with flags lowered, others without.

Rural Americans disproportionately fill the ranks of our armed services and have disproportionately paid the ultimate sacrifice. Almost half of U.S. military casualties have hailed from towns fewer than 25,000 people; one in five from towns smaller than 5,000 people. It is important that when one of our own perishes serving our Nation they receive the proper respect.

I am joined today in support of this legislation by the Military Order of the Purple Heart and Society of Military Widows. In endorsing the legislation, the Society of Military Widows stated: ''We strongly feel that Federal agencies within the State should comply with this order to honor fallen native sons and daughters. As military widows, we can especially appreciate this visible show of respect.''

I would like to thank my colleagues who have cosponsored this legislation and those who have helped champion its passage, including Chairman CONYERS, Chairman NADLER, Ranking Member FRANKS, as well as Congressman PASTOR, Congressman VISCLOSKY, and Congressman LAMBORN.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

H.R. 692 authorizes State Governors to fly the American flag at half-staff upon the death of a member of the Armed Forces who dies while serving on active duty.

We all honor the service of the brave men and women who defend our Nation. When they make the ultimate sacrifice, Governors of the State should be allowed to recognize and pay tribute to them by lowering the flag.

I am also pleased the majority included a Republican proposal to add a simple congressional finding to this legislation that states the following: ''Congress finds that members of the Armed Forces of the United States defend the freedom and security of our Nation.'' It is fitting to include this finding to recognize not just the loss of a member of our Armed Forces, but also to honor the reasons they serve.

Madam Speaker, members of our Armed Forces deserve our deepest respect. They put their lives between us and hostile enemies around the world; they sacrifice stability with their own families so ours may sleep easier. They persevere in the most extreme conditions so we can lead ordinary lives.

The flag code is designed to honor public service. When we lower the flag to half-staff, we remind ourselves that the United States is not merely preserved by lofty ideals, but by the service and sacrifice of a great many men and women.

I support this legislation and encourage all of my colleagues to do so as well.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Michigan, BART STUPAK, for all that he has done with our committee, and with the Republicans on the subcommittee on the Judiciary Committee who worked so well on this.

I rise of course in support of H.R. 692 to honor fallen men and women who gave their lives to our Nation while on duty in the armed services.

As a veteran myself, I can appreciate this bill as much as anyone in the House. This 22-year-old soldier for whom the bill was named came from BART STUPAK's district, and gave his life on July 8, 2006. He was killed by an improvised explosive device that detonated near his vehicle during combat operations in Iraq.

This measure before us simply amends current law to add heroes like Specialist Micks to the list of persons in whose honor the flag may be flown at half-staff. It specifies that a Governor's proclamation ordering the flag to be flown at half-staff, consistent with this measure, would apply to all Federal installations and facilities in the State.

Over the last 4 years, at least 10 soldiers from Mr. STUPAK's district have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, and yet the national flags on some Federal buildings were not lowered in their honor, to the dismay of the family members and friends of these brave soldiers.

So the measure ensures that our Nation's fallen military heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our Nation are appropriately honored and acknowledged.

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I would like to close.

I close by saying there is no more powerful way to honor the death of an American than flying our Nation's flag at half-staff. Recognizing this, Governors across this great country have issued proclamations to honor servicemembers from their States who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This quiet sign of respect is a powerful message to the family that a grateful Nation and a grateful community mourns and honors the sacrifice made by their fallen hero. It is also representative of the shared loss felt by our communities who mourn a family member, a friend, a neighbor and a colleague.

The Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Flag Code Amendment Act will ensure that each of our fallen heroes receives the ultimate honor due to Joe and his family; his wife, Romona; and parents, Ken and Amy Micks. To them we owe a great debt of gratitude. I hope this legislation passes the House today and moves to the Senate, and we can get it completed by Flag Day on June 14.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 692, which authorizes Governors of the several States to order the National Flag to be flown at half-staff in the event of the death of a member of the Armed Forces. Section 2(a) would add "or the death of a member of the Armed Forces from any State, territory, or possession who dies while serving on active duty" to the list of persons under 4 D.S.C. §7(m) for whom the Flag should be flown at half-staff for a period of ten days from the date of death.

Under section 2(b), the bill authorizes the Governor of a State, territory, or possession to issue a proclamation under section 7(m), as amended by the Act, ordering the Flag to be flown at half-staff in honor of a member of Armed Forces who dies while on active duty.

Madam Speaker, it is a privilege for me to support a bill that honors the service of our fallen members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty. These brave men and women have given great contributions and have made incredible personal sacrifices so that all of us in this country might live in a safe and secure Nation and world. In my State of Texas, 287 service members have already given the last full measure of devotion in Operation Iraqi Freedom. I think everyone of these fallen heroes deserve recognition for their supreme sacrifice.

Flying the Federal Flag at half staff to honor the service of fallen members of the Armed Forces is only a small step towards repaying

the insurmountable debt that all of us owe to all veterans. For, what is the price of freedom?

As President Kennedy once said, "The price of freedom is high, but Americans have always paid it." And no one has paid a higher price than the brave men and women through the years who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country. Whether it is the ultimate sacrifice of life or the loss of limb or the loss of time with family and friends, we owe our veterans and in this case, those who have died during their service, an enormous outstanding debt of gratitude.

From Bunker Hill to Yorktown, from Washington, DC to the Battle of New Orleans, from Bull Run to Gettysburg and Antietam to Appomattox, brave Americans gave their lives so that the Nation might live. And from Alsace Lorain to Verdun, and Normandy to Berlin and Pearl Harbor to Okinawa, from Inchon and Correigidor to Vietnam, Lebanon, Grenada, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq, Americans have nobly sacrificed their lives so that the world may live in freedom.

The debt of gratitude we owe to all of the soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who answered their Nation's call and made the supreme sacrifice can never be repaid. But we can give these fallen service men and women the recognition and honor they deserve by flying the National Flag at half-staff.

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring our fallen heroes by supporting H.R. 692.

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

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, once again I urge passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 692, 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. STUPAK. Madam 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.

□ 1100

JOHN R. JUSTICE PROSECUTORS AND DEFENDERS INCENTIVE ACT OF 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 916) to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 916

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 ''John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. LOAN REPAYMENT FOR PROSECUTORS AND DEFENDERS.

Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3711 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''PART JJ—LOAN REPAYMENT FOR PROSECUTORS AND PUBLIC DEFENDERS

''SEC. 3111. GRANT AUTHORIZATION.

''(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to encourage qualified individuals to enter and continue employment as prosecutors and public defenders.

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) PROSECUTOR.—The term 'prosecutor' means a full-time employee of a State or local agency who—

''(A) is continually licensed to practice law; and

''(B) prosecutes criminal or juvenile delinquency cases (or both) at the State or local level, including an employee who supervises, educates, or trains other persons prosecuting such cases.

''(2) PUBLIC DEFENDER.—The term 'public defender' means an attorney who—

''(A) is continually licensed to practice law; and

''(B) is—

''(i) a full-time employee of a State or local agency who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases (or both), including an attorney who supervises, educates, or trains other persons providing such representation;

''(ii) a full-time employee of a nonprofit organization operating under a contract with a State or unit of local government, who devotes substantially all of such full-time employment to providing legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases (or both), including an attorney who supervises, educates, or trains other persons providing such representation; or

''(iii) employed as a full-time Federal defender attorney in a defender organization established pursuant to subsection (g) of section 3006A of title 18, United States Code, that provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases (or both).

''(3) STUDENT LOAN.—The term 'student loan' means—

''(A) a loan made, insured, or guaranteed under part B of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq.);

''(B) a loan made under part D or E of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq. and 1087aa et seq.); and

''(C) a loan made under section 428C or 455(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078–3 and 1087e(g)) to the extent that such loan was used to repay a Federal Direct Stafford Loan, a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, or a loan made under section 428 or 428H of such Act.

''(c) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, establish a program by which the Department of Justice shall assume the obligation to repay a student loan, by direct payments on behalf of a borrower to the holder of such loan, in accordance with subsection (d), for any borrower who—

''(1) is employed as a prosecutor or public defender; and

''(2) is not in default on a loan for which the borrower seeks forgiveness.

''(d) TERMS OF LOAN REPAYMENT.—

''(1) BORROWER AGREEMENT.—To be eligible to receive repayment benefits under subsection (c), a borrower shall enter into a written agreement with the Attorney General that specifies that—

''(A) the borrower will remain employed as a prosecutor or public defender for a required period of service of not less than 3 years, unless involuntarily separated from that employment;

''(B) if the borrower is involuntarily separated from employment on account of misconduct, or voluntarily separates from employment, before the end of the period specified in the agreement, the borrower will repay the Attorney General the amount of any benefits received by such employee under this section; and

''(C) if the borrower is required to repay an amount to the Attorney General under subparagraph (B) and fails to repay such amount, a sum equal to that amount shall be recoverable by the Federal Government from the employee (or such employee's estate, if applicable) by such methods as are provided by law for the recovery of amounts owed to the Federal Government.

''(2) REPAYMENT BY BORROWER.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Any amount repaid by, or recovered from, an individual or the estate of an individual under this subsection shall be credited to the appropriation account from which the amount involved was originally paid.

''(B) MERGER.—Any amount credited under subparagraph (A) shall be merged with other sums in such account and shall be available for the same purposes and period, and subject to the same limitations, if any, as the sums with which the amount was merged.

''(C) WAIVER.—The Attorney General may waive, in whole or in part, a right of recovery under this subsection if it is shown that recovery would be against equity and good conscience or against the public interest.

''(3) LIMITATIONS.—

''(A) STUDENT LOAN PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Student loan repayments made by the Attorney General under this section shall be made subject to the availability of appropriations, and subject to such terms, limitations, or conditions as may be mutually agreed upon by the borrower and the Attorney General in an agreement under paragraph (1), except that the amount paid by the Attorney General under this section shall not exceed—

''(i) $10,000 for any borrower in any calendar year; or

''(ii) an aggregate total of $60,000 in the case of any borrower.

''(B) BEGINNING OF PAYMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall authorize the Attorney General to pay any amount to reimburse a borrower for any repayments made by such borrower prior to the date on which the Attorney General entered into an agreement with the borrower under this subsection.

''(e) ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—On completion of the required period of service under an agreement under subsection (d), the borrower and the Attorney General may, subject to paragraph (2), enter into an additional agreement in accordance with subsection (d).

''(2) TERM.—An agreement entered into under paragraph (1) may require the borrower to remain employed as a prosecutor or public defender for less than 3 years.

''(f) AWARD BASIS; PRIORITY.—

''(1) AWARD BASIS.—The Attorney General shall provide repayment benefits under this section—

''(A) subject to the availability of appropriations; and

''(B) in accordance with paragraph (2), except that the Attorney General shall determine a fair allocation of repayment benefits among prosecutors and defenders, and among employing entities nationwide.

''(2) PRIORITY.—In providing repayment benefits under this section in any fiscal year, the Attorney General shall give priority to borrowers—

''(A) who, when compared to other eligible borrowers, have the least ability to repay their student loans (considering whether the borrower is the beneficiary of any other student loan repayment program), as determined by the Attorney General; or

''(B) who—

''(i) received repayment benefits under this section during the preceding fiscal year; and

''(ii) have completed less than 3 years of the first required period of service specified for the

borrower in an agreement entered into under subsection (d).

''(g) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General is authorized to issue such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

''(h) REPORT BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall submit to Congress a report on—

''(1) the cost of the program authorized under this section; and

''(2) the impact of such program on the hiring and retention of prosecutors and public defenders.

''(i) GAO STUDY.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Comptroller General shall conduct a study of, and report to Congress on, the impact that law school accreditation requirements and other factors have on the costs of law school and student access to law school, including the impact of such requirements on racial and ethnic minorities.

''(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2013.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Madam 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 Michigan?

There was no objection.

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

I am proud to join with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) and rise in strong support of H.R. 916 because our Nation's criminal justice system depends on the hard work and commitment of the men and women who serve as prosecutors and defenders; yet the ability of the public sector to attract qualified individuals and to retain experienced attorneys is increasingly becoming more compromised.

As many of us know, recent law school graduates are often burdened with overwhelming student education loans. The amount of their debt can effectively preclude a young attorney from choosing to practice in the public sector, and with the median salary for an associate in private practice now many times the median salary of a State prosecutor, public-spirited attorneys who owe extensive student loans have a very hard time deciding that they can afford to work in our criminal justice system.

In Wayne County, Michigan, our county prosecutor Ms. Kym Worthy, a veteran trial lawyer before she assumed the position, has come to me repeatedly asking for help in this area.

So this measure addresses the critical problem by directing the Attorney General to establish a loan repayment assistance program for an individual who agrees to remain employed for at least 3 years as either a State or local criminal prosecutor or as a State, local or Federal public defender for criminal cases.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

H.R. 916, the John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007, establishes a loan forgiveness program within the Department of Justice for State and local prosecutors and for Federal, State and local public defenders. However, the bill, as introduced, raised several concerns regarding the breadth and cost of the loan forgiveness program.

I am pleased that the majority listened to our concerns, and at the Judiciary Committee markup we were able to reach a bipartisan compromise that ensures fiscal responsibility while encouraging young attorneys to join the criminal justice system and preventing attrition.

Many law school graduates carry a large amount of student loan debt, on average between $50,000 and $80,000. More than 80 percent of law students borrow to pay for their law degree, and the amount borrowed by many students exceeds $100,000.

At the same time, the median entry level salary for State prosecuting attorneys is $46,000, and the median entry level salary for public defenders is $43,000.

Several States and prosecuting agencies currently offer loan repayment programs. Yet, H.R. 916, as introduced, made no provisions for whether participation in existing State and local loan repayment programs would offset repayment from this program.

This substitute amends the bill to direct the Department of Justice to consider applicants' participation in other loan repayment programs when determining their ability to pay their loans.

The bill, as introduced, would have resulted in a very costly program. Although the bill caps repayment at $60,000 per applicant, as few as 25,000 applicants would have cost $1.5 billion over the life of the program, even with the cap in place.

The bill also authorized the program at $25 million for the first year and such sums as are necessary for each additional year. The bipartisan compromise authorizes $25 million a year for 6 years. This fiscally responsible limit on the authorization provides Congress the opportunity to review the cost effectiveness of the program.

The bipartisan compromise directs the Inspector General of the Department of Justice to review the costs of the program and determine whether the program positively impacts the hiring and retention of prosecutors and public defenders.

The compromise also directs the Department of Justice to administer this program subject only to the availability of appropriations, ensuring that the Department's criminal justice responsibilities remain a priority.

H.R. 916, as amended, directs the Attorney General to give priority to those applicants with the least ability to repay their loans. This provision guarantees that funds will be made available under this program to those prosecutors or public defenders suffering the greatest burden.

I thank Chairman CONYERS and Crime Subcommittee Chairman SCOTT for their cooperation on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to congratulate the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES), the floor manager of this bill, and to thank him for the helpful compromises that he led in working out the bipartisan support of this bill. I thank you.

Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), the author of the bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank very much Chairman CONYERS. This is indeed a great moment. It is a great time, and I appreciate the leadership that you provide as chairman of the committee and all of our colleagues.

This is definitely a bipartisan effort to really deal with one of the most pressing issues facing our country today, Madam Speaker. I cannot think of a more significant thing we can do to make the essence of this country a reality for all. For at the cornerstone of America are these words: wisdom and justice and fairness and moderation. That is what makes this country great.

And at the cornerstone of that is to be able to have, when you come before the bar of justice, that justice is indeed blind and that everyone will be able to receive justice in a fair way. Regardless of whether or not you are a wealthy person or if you are a poor person, one thing is important: you are an American citizen and you deserve to make sure that you have fairness and justice and integrity when you come before the criminal justice system.

Unfortunately, now, Madam Speaker, that is not the case. For in all too many cases, when it comes down to public defenders and prosecutors, that is not the case because of the strains and the interplay of our economic system and the pressures that the marketplace has on that.

But what I am talking about is this, that right now the cost of living has gone up 28 percent, but the costs of tuition for 3 years in law school has gone up 167 percent. So that the average cost now per year for a student to go to law school is $50,000 a year. For 3 years, that's $150,000.

So, Madam Speaker, what I am saying is when that individual gets out of

school he has to go into a marketplace where the private economy is willing to pay him an average now of $110,000, and in some markets in this country, such as New York or California and even in my home State of Georgia in Atlanta, beginning law school students going into the private sector can earn as much as $160,000 a year. But if you're a public defender, if you're a prosecutor, the average starting salary is just $43,000.

That is the crux of the problem, and that's why we have this bill, Madam Speaker, so that we can bring some equity to the playing field; so that we will be able to provide law students with the opportunity to help them with their loan repayment; so that we can have a partial loan forgiveness, not total.

This package that we're offering would give an individual up to $10,000 from the Federal Government to help offset his loans, and he must serve in the public sector for 3 years. But there's also contingent in our bill that with agreement with the employer if he wants to extend that after priority has been given to those that come in at 3 years first, that he will be able to extend it for 3 more years. So the maximum they can get is $60,000.

No, this will not solve the problem, Madam Speaker, but this is a very complex problem. But there are young people that understand the virtues and the need of this country to serve in the public arena, and we need those bright and talented individuals to be able to come into this arena, and this is a small incentive package for which we give.

As my colleague pointed out, this amounts to $25 million a year up to 6 years. It is a small gesture, but it is a meaningful investment because otherwise what we have is today where many innocent people are languishing in jails because we are not addressing this issue and many who are criminals are going free.

And that's why for the last 2 years, Madam Speaker, I have been pushing and working on this bill because, at the crux of it all, as I said, America is great because of many things, but paramount is justice, it is wisdom and it is moderation. That's in our flag, that's in our motto, and that's what is in this bill.

This bill is a companion bill. We have the Senate who has already moved on this in a bipartisan way under the leadership of Senator RICHARD DURBIN of Illinois, their distinguished majority whip, and we're very proud.

So I am very proud for this moment at this time in this House of Representatives for us to move forthright and to be able to bring some help to our college law students and especially into the private sector and to those individuals who cannot afford a high-priced attorney but have to rely on a public defender.

Madam Speaker, don't these individuals deserve to be able to have the best legal representation? Yes, they do, and that's why this bill is important and that's why I commend this to the full House of Representatives, and I am sure we will have a strong bipartisan vote for it.

I thank the chairman and thank my colleagues, and I urge your passage of this bill.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), an individual who knows firsthand the importance of good prosecutors and public defenders having served as a district court trial judge.

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding some time.

Madam Speaker, I was a former prosecutor for 8 years and a judge in Texas for 22. I spent all my life basically in the criminal justice system as a prosecutor or as a trial judge, and I can attest to the high workload, long hours and low pay attributed to our Nation's prosecutors and to public defenders.

I have found over the years that most of them do what they do because they are committed to serving the public, either as a prosecutor or a public defender. They certainly don't do it for the money.

According to the Law Schools Admission Council, however, the average law school debt for an individual who borrows Federal or private loans is anywhere from $90,000 up. The starting salary for local and State prosecutors and public defenders starts anywhere at $25,000 and sometimes it reaches $50,000. It is not nearly enough to cover the expenses and keep up with the high loan repayments every month that these lawyers have to deal with.

This leaves many qualified and dedicated lawyers leaving the district attorney's office and the public defender's office for work in the private sector where they can make more money. What happens is these lawyers get trial experience at taxpayers' expense, then leave for the big law firms because of their low government salary and their high law school debt.

When I served in the criminal courts as a judge for 22 years, I saw many good prosecutors and public defenders just leave public service because of this problem.

The people of our Nation and the victims of crime need to have the best trial lawyers we can find to prosecute criminal cases. Defendants, likewise, need conpetent public defenders to represent the rights of the citizen accused.

I am honored to be a cosponsor of H.R. 916, the John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007. Prosecutors and public defenders can have up to $30,000 of law school debt erased if they serve 3 years in their current position in public service.

□ 1115

Of course, this is a renewable debt forgiveness. If the trial lawyer is willing to work another 3 years as a prosecutor or public defender, then a total of $60,000 of law school debt can be forgiven. Most of the time, this will still not cover the majority of their law school debt.

Of course, local and State courts will benefit because they will be able to keep qualified and competent trial lawyers. We need the best trial lawyers in our legal profession to try criminal cases for the State and the defense.

Madam Speaker, we basically have two types of lawyers—trial lawyers. We have civil lawyers, and there are a lot of wonderful trial lawyers who are civil lawyers.

But, basically, civil lawyers argue in the courtroom over money. Nothing wrong with that, but that's what they are arguing over.

But in the criminal courts, we are arguing over something much more important than money, and it's the liberty of the person on trial. It is very serious business, and that's why you need the best prosecutor and the best public defender that we can find to represent both sides because the stakes are so high.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 916.

I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) for introducing this important piece of legislation.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute and that is to describe the wide spectrum of legal support for this measure: the National District Attorneys Association, the American Bar Association, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the National Legal Aid & Defender Association, and many others.

Madam Speaker, I am now pleased to introduce a gentleman from South Carolina, the chairman of the Budget Committee, as much time as he may consume, Mr. JOHN SPRATT.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for this opportunity to say something on behalf of my constituent, John Reid Justice of South Carolina, my good friend, my constituent, my trusted counselor, whenever we had or I had any questions or any issues about criminal justice, because he was the expert.

Madam Speaker, John Justice was almost elected to Congress himself. But in the middle of his campaign, he did what duty called him to do. He was in the National Guard, he took 2 weeks out for summer camp, and never quite caught up. But for that, he might have been here sponsoring legislation like the very bill before us which is named after him.

But providence had a better role for John Justice. He became a prosecutor. We call them solicitors in South Carolina, not district attorneys. He became a solicitor for nearly 30 years, and he became a model solicitor. Others looked to him, admired him, and followed his example. The better part of

his professional life, he was the prosecutor in the Sixth Judicial Circuit of South Carolina. He was, as I said, a model prosecutor, so much so that the National District Attorneys Association elected him, from Chester, South Carolina, as president not long ago, just before he died.

In addition, he was a model prosecutor. If you could have seen his funeral, you would understand when I say the entire law enforcement community in South Carolina turned out to pay honor to this splendid fellow. He would have been proud to know that this bill bears his name, particularly because of its substance, not just because of the honor, but because of the substance of the bill. He would be proud to know that he was having some part in helping young lawyers afford the crushing burden of student loans.

So on behalf of the friends of John Justice, who knew him well and practiced with him, on behalf of his family, on behalf of all those who worked with him, I want to thank the committee for naming this bill after him and for honoring him in this very special way.

I urge support for the bill.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I didn't know he was going to yield so quickly. I am still out of breath from running over here.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to come and lend my support to my good friend, Congressman DAVID SCOTT, my colleague from Georgia, and the John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act.

Congressman SCOTT and I both served in the Georgia senate, he for a while longer than I did, and with more power in the leadership there, but we had passed similar legislation in Georgia, this commonsense provision, to help give some relief to these young, brilliant attorneys who are willing to go into work to serve either as a prosecutor or a public defender.

The reason I feel so impassioned by it, my daughter, Phyllis Collins, has been practicing in the Cobb County judicial system now for about 3 years. She came out of law school at Michigan State after graduating from undergraduate school with a microbiology degree from Georgia Tech. I thought she would become a doctor, but she became a darn good lawyer instead.

She came out of that school with about $100,000 in debt, just as this bill indicates in the language we have read. That's just a typical situation that my daughter, Phyllis, is in. She took that job for about $60,000 a year, I believe. She served a year and a half as a prosecutor. Now she is a public defender.

It's people like Phyllis Collins that we need to encourage to do this kind of important work on behalf of people, the public defenders, the prosecutors. They are bringing justice to people that otherwise could not afford justice.

I think that I want to say once again to Congressman SCOTT and all the others on our side of the aisle as well, my good friend from Virginia, RANDY FORBES, who have brought this bill forward, I thank you for the time. I support it tremendously, and I congratulate you for doing this.

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

I would bring to the attention of our membership a communication from the National Conference of Chief Justices at the State level in support of Federal legislation to create incentives to law students to participate in public service occupations after graduations.

The 109th Congress considered legislation designed to encourage qualified individuals to enter in and continue employment for at least 3 years as criminal prosecutors and public defenders by means of providing the United States Government payment of a portion of that individual student loan for each year of such employment.

Whereas the 110th Congress is also likely to consider legislation to assist the repayment of student loans of qualified individuals who commit to employment as prosecutors and public defenders, therefore, the Association of American Law Schools, Equal Justice Works, the National Legal Aid & Defender Association, and the American Bar Association have expressed support for the above-described legislation, and the lawyers to engage in civil and legal services to enhance access by justice, by low-income persons rendered valuable public service that is comparable to that provided by criminal prosecutors and public defenders.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Conference of Chief Justices hereby urges the Congress to adopt legislation to give financial incentives to law school graduates to commit to sustained public service as prosecutors and public defenders.

Therefore, the conference additionally encourages Congress to develop and adopt separate legislation providing similar relief for qualified individuals who engage in employment as civil, legal aid attorneys, adopted as proposed by the Government Affairs Committee and the Professionalism and Competence Committee of the Conference of Chief Justices on February 7 in the year 2007.

Madam Speaker, I would be happy to recognize former judge Louie Gohmert of the Judiciary Committee for 1 minute.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do applaud the chairman and the ranking member for the work on this bill.

Madam Speaker, having started out as an assistant district attorney, and then my years as a judge, I constantly saw how difficult it was in our Smith County District Attorney's Office to hire good lawyers, even to hire any lawyers. Thank you for your efforts on this behalf. I think it's a great bill and the right way to do things, providing incentives to do good things. I appreciate it.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his contribution.

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

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, we just request and urge the passage of the bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 916, the John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007. I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for their effort and time in holding this very important markup hearing.

Madam Speaker, I support H.R. 916 because it amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to direct the Attorney General to assume the obligation to repay student loans for borrowers who agree to remain employed, for at least three years, as: (1) State or local criminal prosecutors; or (2) State, local, or Federal public defenders in criminal cases. H.R. 916 also will allow a borrower and the Attorney General to enter into an additional loan repayment agreement, after the required three-year period, for a successive period of service which may be less than three years. The bill also limits the amount paid under such program on behalf of any borrower to $10,000 per calendar year and $60,000 total.

Madam Speaker, this bipartisan legislation will benefit our criminal justice system and our communities by creating a student loan repayment program for law school graduates who agree to serve for at least 3 years as criminal prosecutors or public defenders.

Madam Speaker, over recent years we have witnessed the difficulty prosecutor and public defender offices across the country have had attracting and retaining qualified attorneys. We have also seen that our communities suffer when the criminal justice system fails to obtain and retain a sufficient supply of experienced prosecutors and defenders. Under those trying circumstances, the resulting effect is that criminal caseloads become unmanageable, cases can be delayed or mishandled, serious crimes may go unprosecuted, and innocent defendants may be sent to jail. H.R. 916 will improve the administration of the criminal justice system to recruit and retain talented attorneys and help that system function more effectively.

Although I support H.R. 916, it needs to go a step further in ensuring that bright lawyers will lend their services to civil public service legal careers that include legal aid to this country's most disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. That is why during the markup of H.R. 916 I strongly supported the Nadler Amendment, which included civil legal aid attorneys in the category of lawyers eligible for loan forgiveness. Indeed, the Nadler Amendment is comparable to more extensive legislation that I plan to introduce.

Including civil legal aid attorneys in the group who may qualify for loan forgiveness when committing to work in public service will help to recruit and retain legal aid lawyers so that low-income Americans receive the legal assistance they need. Specifically, the Amendment would provide a loan repayment program for new law graduates who work for legal aid.

Providing loan relief for legal aid attorneys is crucial. Legal Aid attorneys protect the safety, security, and health of low-income citizens nationwide. Support for such programs not only provides relief for prospective legal aid attorneys but also for the most vulnerable members of our population. Such programs are available for Federal prosecutors and other Federal employees. But, for the legal aid attorneys—who have the lowest incomes—there currently is not enough access to loan repayment programs. We must ensure that legal aid attorneys receive the financial incentives they need to commit to a career in legal aid.

Without such incentive as loan relief, the legal aid field will continue to fall far short of the mark to meet the needs and demands of requests for legal assistance. Despite the importance of the services legal aid lawyers provide, almost half of the eligible people seeking assistance from Legal Aid are being turned away because of a lack of resources. As law school tuition has skyrocketed, so has a young lawyer's debt. A recent survey found that with median law school debt at $70,000 with an additional $16,000 in undergraduate debt, over 65 percent of new law school graduates were prevented from even considering a public service career.

Given the financial realities, individuals who take positions with legal aid often leave after two or three years. One Midwestern program cited a turnover rate of 60 percent over a two year period, with an average tenure for new attorneys of 17 months. Many of these young attorneys leave at a time when they have just develop necessary experience, creating a revolving door of inexperienced lawyers. This turnover dramatically decreases the efficiency of the program and the vital services it provides. Such a bill would allow young lawyers to choose a career in public service without having to bear the heavy burden of law school debt on their own.

Madam Speaker, whether legal aid attorneys, prosecutors or public defenders, public service attorneys must be given some comparable incentive to choose a career in public service instead of a career in the higher-paying private sector arena. One of the primary reasons for the recruiting difficulty of the administration of the criminal justice system is that huge amounts of student debt have pulled students in the opposite direction of public service careers such as those of prosecutors and defenders. Why? We all know that no one is going to get rich going into service careers such as teachers, social workers, and prosecutors and public defenders especially when they are starting out with enormous student loan obligations. That is why we must give those who wish to serve in public service careers incentive such as loan forgiveness so that they will not forgo service careers simply because they are buried in mounds of student loans.

H.R. 916, which authorizes $25 million in appropriations for FY08, establishes a program of student loan repayment for borrowers who agree to remain employed, for at least 3 years, as State or local criminal prosecutors or as State, local or Federal public defenders in criminal cases (note that Federal prosecutors are already eligible for loan relief through existing Federal programs). The 3 year period is comparable to other loan forgiveness programs.

Other important aspects of the bill include: allowing eligible attorneys to receive student loan debt repayments of up to $10,000 per year, with a maximum aggregate over time of $60,000; covering student loans made, insured or guaranteed under the Higher Education Act of 1965, including consolidation loans; providing that repayments benefits be made available to eligible attorneys on a first-come, first served basis, subject to the availability of appropriations; and permitting attorneys to enter into additional loan repayment agreements, after the required 3-year period, for additional periods of service. The bill also sets safeguards to ensure loan forgiveness participants satisfy their commitments by requiring attorneys to repay the Government if they do not complete their required period of service.

Madam Speaker, this bill has bipartisan support as well as wide support in the legal community. H.R. 916 is supported by the American Bar Association, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this bill and urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 916, 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. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 263) recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity for Congress to improve the foster care system throughout the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 263

Whereas National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity to recognize the important role that the foster care system plays in the lives of the more than 500,000 children currently in foster care programs throughout the United States;

Whereas National Foster Care Month also provides an opportunity to explore the difficulties faced by children in the foster care system and to reaffirm the Nation's commitment to improving the lives of these children by improving foster care programs;

Whereas many children in the foster care system have spent multiple years in foster care programs and have experienced an unstable home life due to frequent moves from one foster home to another;

Whereas approximately 50 percent of foster care children have been placed in foster care programs for longer than 1 year;

Whereas 25 percent of foster care children have been placed in foster care programs for at least 3 years;

Whereas children in foster care programs for longer periods of time often experience worse outcomes than children in foster care programs for shorter periods of time;

Whereas children in foster care programs are more likely than the general population to become teen parents, to rely on public assistance as adults, to become homeless, and to experience mental health disorders at a higher rate;

Whereas repeated studies have shown that a child's very early years are critical for brain development, meaning that it is extremely important to find suitable permanent homes for children during this critical period;

Whereas there are 119,000 children eligible for adoption every year and less than half of the children in foster care programs actually get adopted;

Whereas a stable home is critical to a child's development; and

Whereas every child deserves to be raised by a loving family: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That in recognition of National Foster Care Month and in order to improve the foster care system throughout the United States, it is the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should ensure that improving the foster care system remains a top priority for both Congress and the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the month of May marks National Foster Care Month. The foster care system provides a safe sanctuary for children who are unable to live safely in their homes.

Its primary goal is to ensure their safety and well-being by providing them with critical services and working to find a safe and loving and permanent home. Over 500,000 American children are in the foster care system on any given day with over 100,000 of these children waiting to be adopted. They need our help, and I believe this is one place where every Member of the House can come together as one, committed to protecting these innocent children.

This morning, we, Mr. WELLER and I, had a hearing in the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support to review the changes and the challenges that child welfare agencies encounter in achieving positive outcomes for children and families under their service.

The hearing identified a number of areas that need to be improved to strengthen children and families, which I am committed to addressing. The hearing also highlighted the commitment of some of our most selfless Americans on behalf of some of our most vulnerable children. Millions of Americans serve as foster parents, and,

in doing so, have unselfishly opened their homes and their lives to children in need. These families are to be commended for working cooperatively with human service agencies and biological parents to strengthen the lives of these foster children.

We should also recognize the work of dedicated case workers, juvenile court justices, physicians and the advocates who have committed their lives to ensuring the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable children. These tireless workers should be commended for their work on behalf of children and families in crisis.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing May 2007 as National Foster Care Month and commending the dedication of foster parents, case workers, judges, service providers and advocates for their commitment to our Nation's most vulnerable children.

□ 1130

Madam Speaker, I would now ask unanimous consent to allow Representative CARDOZA of California, who is the author of this resolution and a staunch advocate for improving the well-being of children in foster care, and actually an adoptive parent of a couple of kids from foster care, so he's done it at every level, to control the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I'd like to allow Mr. WELLER to speak next.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 263, as amended, recognizing National Foster Care Month.

We're here today to discuss foster care, starting with recognizing the thousands of foster parents who step in to care for so many vulnerable young people across America. It is right to celebrate the efforts of foster parents who step in to keep children safe.

In addition to these individuals, thousands of local organizations, with both public and private sector employees and volunteers, are also active in foster care.

In the congressional district that I represent, one good example of a trusted foster care organization is Baby Fold, and Baby Fold is a multi-service family support agency that has served the Bloomington-Normal region in central Illinois for over a century.

Today the Baby Fold specializes in residential, educational, therapeutic, adoption, foster care, pregnancy counseling and family support prevention services for children and their families.

Many similar groups provide similar services in every congressional district in America. These organizations and dedicated individuals, supported by private donations and over $23 billion in taxpayer funds each year, help children and families lead safe and productive lives. Today we thank each of them and all of them for their efforts and dedication.

Yet, despite such dedicated efforts, we also know a lot more work is needed to ensure that all children are adequately protected from abuse and neglect.

I have a longstanding interest in training of child welfare workers. Today I am reintroducing legislation I have authored in prior Congresses designed to address a glaring flaw in current rules by ensuring all child care workers, whether they work for a public agency or a private agency, have access to the same training needed to protect children.

Take Will County Catholic Charities, which helps protect over 300 children in foster care in the congressional district I represent. There's simply no reason why a caseworker with Will County Catholic Charities should have less access to training than an equally dedicated caseworker who happens to be a public employee. Yet, that is what current Federal rules promote, and we should fix this.

We also need to do more to ensure that each and every child involved with the child welfare system is safe. Too often that is not the case. The Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support, on which I serve as ranking member, held a hearing on these challenges earlier today. We focused on areas like Clark County, Nevada, which is home to Las Vegas. A series of child deaths in Clark County has proven the risks for children when foster care and child protection systems fail to protect them.

As an August 5, 2006 article in the Las Vegas Review Journal put it, ''Since 2002, at least 79 children have died of abuse or neglect at the hands of their parents, foster parents or other caregivers while under the watch of the Clark County Department of Family Services.''

As troubling as that is, the response of local officials has only made matters worse. ''For years, the county child welfare system has continuously avoided scrutiny by hiding behind a veil of confidentiality meant to protect children and families, but which the county has used to shield itself from oversight and criticism.''

This sad trail of facts was supported by testimony we received today from Ed Cotton, who has broad experience in child welfare programs in my home State of Illinois, as well as New Jersey and Nevada. Most recently Mr. Cotton conducted a top-to-bottom review of Clark County, Nevada's child welfare program in the wake of tragedies there. And the evidence shows that Clark County is a case study of what happens when there's no oversight from those administering the program, and clearly is a national embarrassment and a disgrace because Federal funds were involved.

As Mr. Cotton testified, in Clark County and too many other places, this system has a very long way to go to ensure that all children are adequately protected.

Madam Speaker, in contrast with the Clark County tragedies, some areas have shown progress, but they're all too rare. Recent positive examples include my home State of Illinois.

Starting under the leadership of former Governor Jim Edgar in the late 1990s, the entire child welfare system in Illinois has undergone remarkable changes, resulting in there being 16,272 children today in foster care, or in January of 2007 that number, down from 28,202 children in September of 2001.

New York City, under the leadership of Mayor Rudy Giuliani, also made changes that were positive, dramatically reducing the number of children who need foster care.

Many experts think we should build on this success and do better when it comes to targeting efforts to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring in the first place. That would result in fewer children needing foster care, tracking the Illinois and New York City experiences, and that would free more resources to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of those children who do not need to be placed in foster care. Both goals are critical, better prevention and better oversight.

In 2006, Congress took some modest steps in the right direction by targeting more funds for child abuse prevention and holding States more accountable for results. So there is increasing recognition of the steps needed to turn this program around.

In the meantime, we will certainly need the continuing involvement and support of tens of thousands of foster parents. We owe them, and especially the children they protect each and every day, our continued full support.

I urge bipartisan support for this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 263, a resolution recognizing May, this month, as the National Foster Care Month.

I want to begin my statement today by thanking subcommittee chairman, Mr. MCDERMOTT from Washington, for his outstanding support and work with us to bring this resolution to the floor. Chairman MCDERMOTT has dedicated virtually his entire life to the work of helping children that have been disadvantaged, and he deserves great praise and thanks for the hard work he continues to do in this Congress.

I also want to recognize Mr. WELLER for cooperating with us today in bringing this resolution to the floor, and also for his thoughtful comments that he just prepared.

However, this resolution has a long and tortuous path to reaching the floor today. My staff's been working tirelessly with both the majority and the minority staffs of the Ways and Means

and Judiciary Committees. Before this bill was able to reach the floor under suspension, I was forced to make substantive changes which severely, in my opinion, gut the force of this resolution.

Specifically, my original resolution, drawing upon the recommendations of the respected Pew Charitable Trust, made clear that we need more funds for the CASA Program, that we need more funds to better ensure that we have trained personnel working with foster children, and that we provide more resources to State agencies that deal with foster children.

In the interest of comity, I was forced to withdraw all these recommendations. Unfortunately, while of course I still support the thrust of the current resolution, without sufficient resources we will never fully tackle this problem.

I'd also like to just point out, and it's important history for us all to remember, that in the previous majority in the last Congress, we took, in my mind, unconscionable measures to reduce the funding to foster children.

On February 8, 2006, President Bush signed the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The CBO estimates that this measure cut funds of $1.3 billion over 10 years to foster care and $2.1 billion over 10 years to Medicaid that would affect these children.

I stood up on the House floor on that day in December when it was being debated in this institution and fought against those cuts. I, at that time, called it ''Scroogenomics,'' because we were cutting the money for foster kids right before the Christmas holiday. And those concerns went for nought. The bill was passed anyway and signed into law, and foster kids continue to suffer because of that act.

I won't belabor the point too much at this point because I really want to focus on the needs today. But, Madam Speaker, I speak passionately about foster children because I have a very personal interest in this issue. Seven years ago I adopted two foster children. In fact, Madam Speaker, as an aside, I'm doing this resolution because they asked me to do it today.

Since then, I have advocated on their behalf and on the behalf of the adoption of foster children in the California State Assembly and now here in Congress.

The need is tremendous and the statistics are sobering. It is estimated that there are 800,000 children in foster care at some point during any given year. Moreover, children of color are disproportionately represented in foster care. African American children make up about 16 percent of the Nation's children, but make up 35 percent of the children in foster care. These children enter foster care at higher rates and remain in care longer, for longer periods than white children.

Too many children in foster care sit waiting for permanent families. There are about 118,000 children in foster care waiting to be adopted, and numerous barriers keep them in limbo. Children often bounce from one system to another, from child welfare to juvenile justice to mental health as their needs intensify.

Each year, about 20,000 children age out of the foster care system without ever being adopted, placed with grandparents or any other supportive adult. Oftentimes, these children have no connection whatsoever to any adult.

Several studies released in 2005 documented the special challenges facing these youths, especially in the area of mental health, education and employment. They are especially poorly prepared to be self-sufficient young adults.

These children are waiting. Speaking from personal experience, there is no greater joy in life than helping a child. My wife and I can attest to this every day.

Every child, no matter what their situation that they may be born to, deserves a chance to be raised in a stable and loving home. Innocent children should not be forced to bear the mistakes of their parents. We have a moral obligation to ensure that these children, no matter what background they come from, have a shot that is equal to the shot that every American has to the American dream.

This is a big problem that will require bold solutions. In order to save the next generation of children, we must rededicate ourselves to their welfare and to pledge to do whatever is necessary to nurture and protect them.

This resolution, by highlighting attention to their problems, is a necessary first step. But, Madam Speaker, other dramatic actions need to be taken. That is why I have introduced legislation to expand Medicaid coverage to children who age out of the foster care system, and I'm considering legislation to ensure that every foster child has a CASA representative, a court-appointed special advocate, the same type of court-appointed special advocate that saved my children.

These are urgent problems. They require bold solutions. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. WELLER. I know he cares passionately about these children, and while we sometimes disagree on the specifics, I know that all Members in this institution care passionately about foster children.

But the time to act is now. We need to do more to work on behalf of these children to eliminate the barriers that prohibit them from leading positive lives in society.

We must extend health care coverage to these young people until the age of 21. It's currently a voluntary program. Thirty-three States in this country do not offer health care all the way to the age of majority. We must, in fact, do more. And it is imperative. And frankly, if we can keep these young people out of a life of crime, out of falling into trouble, assisting them into becoming productive citizens, instead of the current situation where nearly 50 percent of children who age out of the foster care system end up homeless after 1 year, we can do better for our citizens and we can, frankly, probably save money to the taxpayers of the United States.

So, Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of this resolution. I urge my colleagues here today within earshot of my voice to redouble their efforts in helping this population of our citizenry that has become disadvantaged.

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Foster Care Month. Our child welfare system faces severe challenges and this month provides Congress with the opportunity to make needed reforms.

Our society has an obligation to ensure that all children are raised in safe and loving environments. For the 500,000 children in foster care, the State is responsible for providing a stable home, through reunification with their families, permanent placements, or adoption. Tragically, we are not doing a very good job. Half of all foster children have been in care for more than a year. A quarter have been in the system for more than 3 years. For foster children that remain in the system and ''age out'' with no family supports, the future is not very bright. For those children, the odds are that they will end up in jail, homeless, or reliant on public assistance.

The problems that plague our child welfare system are largely the result of poor Federal and State policy decisions. Luckily, we have the power to reform those policies and directly affect the lives of the hundreds of thousands of children who are counting on us to do the right thing.

There are very concrete steps we can take to improve the foster care system. Congress should reform the financing system to make sure that we provide support for every foster child. Currently, the Federal Government supports less than 50 percent of children in care. We can also take steps to improve the child welfare workforce and reduce the number of cases those workers have to handle. A Federal ceiling for the number of cases a worker can handle should be established so that children get the attention needed to keep them safe. In addition, we have to provide better services to the estimated 25,000 children who leave care each year when they turn 18. All of these children should maintain Medicaid eligibility until they are 21 and we should invest further in training, education, and housing assistance for these children.

The resolution before us (H. Res. 263) can serve as a stepping stone for real action to protect our children and help them flourish. I am proud to support it.

□ 1145

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 263, 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.

COPS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1700) to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the COPS ON THE BEAT grant program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1700

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 ''COPS Improvements Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. COPS GRANT IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1701 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) GRANT AUTHORIZATION.—The Attorney General shall carry out grant programs under which the Attorney General makes grants to States, units of local government, Indian tribal governments, other public and private entities, multi-jurisdictional or regional consortia, and individuals for the purposes described in subsections (b), (c), (d), and (e).'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking the subsection heading text and inserting ''COMMUNITY POLICING AND CRIME PREVENTION GRANTS'';

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking '', to increase the number of officers deployed in community-oriented policing'';

(C) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) award grants to pay for or train officers hired to perform intelligence, anti-terror, or homeland security duties;'';

(D) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) award grants to hire school resource officers and to establish school-based partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and local school systems to combat crime, gangs, drug activities, and other problems in and around elementary and secondary schools;'';

(E) by striking paragraph (9);

(F) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (12) as paragraphs (9) through (11), respectively;

(G) by striking paragraph (13);

(H) by redesignating paragraphs (14) through (17) as paragraphs (12) through (15), respectively;

(I) in paragraph (14), as so redesignated, by striking ''and'' at the end;

(J) in paragraph (15), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(K) by adding at the end the following:

''(16) establish and implement innovative programs to reduce and prevent illegal drug manufacturing, distribution, and use, including the manufacturing, distribution, and use of methamphetamine;

''(17) establish criminal gang enforcement task forces, consisting of members of Federal, State, and local law enforcement authorities (including Federal, State, and local prosecutors), for the coordinated investigation, disruption, apprehension, and prosecution of criminal gangs and offenders involved in local or multi-jurisdictional gang activities; and

''(18) award enhancing community policing and crime prevention grants that meet emerging law enforcement needs, as warranted.'';

(3) by striking subsection (c);

(4) by striking subsections (h) and (i);

(5) by redesignating subsections (d) through (g) as subsections (f) through (i), respectively;

(6) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) TROOPS-TO-COPS PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Grants made under subsection (a) may be used to hire former members of the Armed Forces to serve as career law enforcement officers for deployment in community-oriented policing, particularly in communities that are adversely affected by a recent military base closing.

''(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, 'former member of the Armed Forces' means a member of the Armed Forces of the United States who has been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States.

''(d) COMMUNITY PROSECUTORS PROGRAM.—The Attorney General may make grants under subsection (a) to pay for additional community prosecuting programs, including programs that assign prosecutors to—

''(1) handle cases from specific geographic areas; and

''(2) address counter-terrorism problems, specific violent crime problems (including intensive illegal gang, gun, and drug enforcement and quality of life initiatives), and localized violent and other crime problems based on needs identified by local law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and others.

''(e) TECHNOLOGY GRANTS.—The Attorney General may make grants under subsection (a) to develop and use new technologies (including interoperable communications technologies, modernized criminal record technology, and forensic technology) to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in reorienting the emphasis of their activities from reacting to crime to preventing crime and to train law enforcement officers to use such technologies.'';

(7) in subsection (f), as so redesignated—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''to States, units of local government, Indian tribal governments, and to other public and private entities,'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''define for State and local governments, and other public and private entities,'' and inserting ''establish'';

(C) in the first sentence of paragraph (3), by inserting ''(including regional community policing institutes)'' after ''training centers or facilities''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) EXCLUSIVITY.—The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services shall be the exclusive component of the Department of Justice to perform the functions and activities specified in this paragraph.'';

(8) in subsection (g), as so redesignated, by striking ''may utilize any component'', and all that follows and inserting ''shall use the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services of the Department of Justice in carrying out this part.'';

(9) in subsection (h), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''subsection (a)'' the first place that term appears and inserting ''paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b)''; and

(B) by striking ''in each fiscal year pursuant to subsection (a)'' and inserting ''in each fiscal year for purposes described in paragraph (1) and (2) of subsection (b)'';

(10) in subsection (i), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking ''the Federal share shall decrease from year to year for up to 5 years'' and inserting ''unless the Attorney General waives the non-Federal contribution requirement as described in the preceding sentence, the non-Federal share of the costs of hiring or rehiring such officers may be less than 25 percent of such costs for any year during the grant period, provided that the non-Federal share of such costs shall not be less than 25 percent in the aggregate for the entire grant period, but the State or local government should make an effort to increase the non-Federal share of such costs during the grant period''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The preceding sentences shall not apply with respect to any program, project, or activity provided by a grant made pursuant to subsection (b)(4).''; and

(11) by adding at the end the following:

''(j) RETENTION OF ADDITIONAL OFFICER POSITIONS.—For any grant under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (b) for hiring or rehiring career law enforcement officers, a grant recipient shall retain each additional law enforcement officer position created under that grant for not less than 12 months after the end of the period of that grant, unless the Attorney General waives, wholly or in part, the retention requirement of a program, project, or activity.''.

(b) APPLICATIONS.—Section 1702 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting '', unless waived by the Attorney General'' after ''under this part shall''; and

(B) in paragraph (8), by striking ''share of the cost'' and all that follows and inserting ''share of the costs during the grant period, how the applicant will maintain the increased hiring level of the law enforcement officers, and how the applicant will eventually assume responsibility for all of the costs for such officers;''; and

(2) by striking subsection (d).

(c) RENEWAL OF GRANTS.—Section 1703 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–2) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 1703. RENEWAL OF GRANTS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), a grant made under this part may be renewed, without limitations on the duration of such renewal, to provide additional funds if the Attorney General determines that the funds made available to the recipient were used in a manner required under an approved application and if the recipient can demonstrate significant progress in achieving the objectives of the initial application.

''(b) GRANTS FOR HIRING.—Grants made under this part for hiring or rehiring additional career law enforcement officers may be renewed for up to 5 years, except that the Attorney General may waive such 5-year limitation for good cause.

''(c) NO COST EXTENSIONS.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), the Attorney General may extend a grant period, without limitations as to the duration of such extension, to provide additional time to complete the objectives of the initial grant award.''.

(d) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—Section 1704 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–3) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''that would, in the absence of Federal funds received under this part, be made available from State or local sources'' and inserting ''that the Attorney General determines would, in the absence of Federal funds received

under this part, be made available for the purpose of the grant under this part from State or local sources''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The preceding sentence shall not apply with respect to funds made available under this part by a grant made pursuant to subsection (a) for the purposes described in subsection (b)(4).''; and

(2) by striking subsection (c).

(e) STUDY OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.—Section 1705 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–4) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) STUDY OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall provide for a scientific study of the effectiveness of the programs, projects, and activities funded under this part in reducing crime.

''(2) STUDY.—The Attorney General shall select one or more institutions of higher education, including historically Black colleges and universities, to conduct the study described in paragraph (1).

''(3) REPORTS.—Not later than 4 years after the date of the enactment of the COPS Improvements Act of 2007, the institution or institutions selected under paragraph (2) shall report the findings of the study described in paragraph (1) to the Attorney General. Not later than 30 days after the receipt of such report, the Attorney General shall report such findings to the appropriate committees of Congress, along with any recommendations the Attorney General may have relating to the effectiveness of the programs, projects, and activities funded under this part in reducing crime.''.

(f) ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS.—Section 1706 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–5) is amended—

*(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF FUNDING**'' and inserting ''**ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS**''; and*

(2) by striking ''revoke or suspend'' and all that follows and inserting ''take any enforcement action available to the Department of Justice.''.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1709(1) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd–8(1)) is amended by inserting ''who is a sworn law enforcement officer'' after ''permanent basis''.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 1001(a)(11) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3793(a)(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''1,047,119,000 for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2009'' and inserting ''1,150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking ''3 percent may be used for technical assistance under section 1701(d)'' and inserting ''5 percent may be used for technical assistance under section 1701(f)''; and

(B) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: ''Of the funds available for grants under part Q, not less than $600,000,000 shall be used for grants for the purposes specified in section 1701(b), not more than $200,000,000 shall be used for grants under section 1701(d), and not more than $350,000,000 shall be used for grants under section 1701(e).''.

(i) PURPOSES.—Section 10002 of the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking ''development'' and inserting ''use''; and

(2) in the matter following paragraph (4), by striking ''for a period of 6 years''.

(j) COPS PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 109(b) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3712h(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraph (1);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively; and

(C) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated, by inserting '', except for the program under part Q of this title'' before the period.

(2) LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPUTER SYSTEMS.—Section 107 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3712f) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to any grant made under part Q of this title.''.

SEC. 3. REPORT BY INSPECTOR GENERAL REQUIRED.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall submit to Congress a report on the Public Safety and Community Policing (''COPS ON THE BEAT'') grant program authorized by part Q of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd et seq.), including the elements described in subsection (b).

(b) ELEMENTS OF REPORT.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include information on the following, with respect to the grant program described in such subsection:

(1) The effect of the program on the rate of violent crime, drug offenses, and other crimes.

(2) The degree to which State and local governments awarded a grant under the program contribute State and local funds, respectively, for law enforcement programs and activities.

(3) Any waste, fraud, or abuse within the program.

(c) RANDOM SAMPLING REQUIRED.—For purposes of subsection (a), the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall audit and review a random sampling of State and local law enforcement agencies. Such sampling shall include—

(1) law enforcement agencies of various sizes;

(2) law enforcement agencies that serve various populations; and

(3) law enforcement agencies that serve areas of various crime rates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Madam 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 Michigan?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join 102 cosponsors, including a dozen members of the House Judiciary Committee, in supporting this legislation.

During the 1990s, the crime rate for all categories of crime and in all parts of the United States fell dramatically. For example, homicide rates in 2001 plunged 43 percent from their peak in 1991, reaching their lowest level in 35 years.

Now, there are many potential explanations offered regarding the dramatic and unexpected drop in the rate of violent crime during the 1990s. One popular explanation is the Nation's sustained economic growth during the days of the Clinton administration.

But researchers often point to one other explanation: the creation of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services in 1994, the COPS bill; and the subsequent infusion of more than $7.6 billion in grants into State and local law enforcement communities to hire police officers and promote community policing as an effective strategy to prevent crime. The bill before us reinvigorates the COPS crime fighting program in several important respects.

First, it establishes hiring grants for community policing officers, anti-terror officers, and school resource officers. It also reauthorizes ''Troops-to-COPS'' grants to hire former members of the Armed Forces in particular as career law enforcement officers. And it also authorizes a ''Community Prosecutors Program'' to pay for community prosecuting programs, including those that assign prosecutors to handle cases from specific geographic areas or to address counter-terrorism and related problems.

Finally, it authorizes ''Technology Grants'' to State and local law enforcement agencies to help them refocus some of their activities from reacting to crime to preventing it. Crime prevention has now come back into vogue.

So this legislation, because of its long and successful prior experience, has been endorsed by key law enforcement groups: the National Sheriffs Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, and the National League of Cities.

I am proud to indicate their strong support for this measure, and I urge my colleagues to lend their support to a bill whose restoration is more than deserved.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, America's State and local law enforcement agencies are on the front lines combating and preventing crime every day. In the last decade, their dedication and service and innovative policing programs have led to a 34 percent decrease in violent crime.

It is unclear, however, whether the $11 billion in COPS grants awarded since 1994 can receive the same credit. Studies have reached inconsistent findings as to the effectiveness of the COPS program in reducing the Nation's rising crime rates.

The COPS program awards grants to State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire or rehire police officers or procure new crime-fighting technology. It is intended to provide short-term Federal assistance to State and local law enforcement agencies. It is not intended to assume the funding of State and local police, a duty that lies first and foremost with the States.

The COPS program specifically directs that grant money not be used to supplant State or local funds but, rather, increase the amount of funds for

community policing. In reality, this has proven not to always be the case. Studies show that spending on the COPS program has not led to an increase in the overall spending by local law enforcement but often supplants State and local funds.

The actual number of officers put on the street under this program is also in dispute. Estimates vary from 118,000 to as few as 82,000 additional police officers. The answer to addressing crime in the 21st century is not simply more cops on the street. It is innovative programs, such as multi-jurisdictional task forces designed to target specific types of crimes and neighborhoods plagued by gangs and drugs.

We should look to cities like New York and Los Angeles, who continue to enjoy reduced violent crime rates thanks to smart, effective policing.

To put to rest once and for all conflicting findings about the effectiveness of the COPS program, the committee adopted an amendment directing the Inspector General of the Department of Justice to conduct an audit of the COPS program to review three areas: first, the effect of the program on the rate of violent crime; second, the degree to which COPS funding recipients contribute State or local funding to law enforcement programs and activities; and, third, any waste, fraud, or abuse within the COPS program.

As introduced, H.R. 1700 reduced the likelihood that community policing would, in fact, some day be funded by America's communities. The bill stripped several provisions from current law that encourage State and local governments to assume a larger share of COPS grants. This is directly contrary to the purpose of the COPS program and would only exacerbate the use of Federal funds to supplant State and local funds.

H.R. 1700 also stripped from current law limits on the duration of COPS grants and instead allowed unlimited grant renewal. This too is directly contrary to the original intent of the COPS program to provide short-term assistance to State, local, and tribal governments to hire additional police officers.

I am pleased that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle listened to our concerns and supported our changes to preserve the partnership between the Federal Government, State, local, and tribal governments. I thank Judiciary Committee Chairman CONYERS, Crime Subcommittee Chairman SCOTT, and Congressman WEINER for their cooperation.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Los Angeles, California, DIANE WATSON.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvements Act of 2007. As a daughter of a police officer, I believe this bill is essential to keep our citizens safe and help communities combat crime.

Improving the COPS program is very important to the constituents I represent in California's 33rd Congressional District. If this bill passes, my district alone will get at least 25 new police officers, an additional school resource officer, along with more funding to be used for technology in Los Angeles' law enforcement agencies.

Mr. Speaker, today our children are killing one another in my district at an appalling rate. The Los Angeles Police Department recorded 7,714 gang crimes in 2006, a 14 percent jump over the previous year. I believe we need to take a comprehensive approach to combating gang violence and ensure that our youth have safe, quality schools that give them an alternative to the streets.

But there is one action we can take right now that will immediately reduce the level of violence and protect our kids, and that is to put more police on the streets.

We have the bill here today that does just that, the COPS Improvements Act, and I urge colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to thank him and the folks on the other side of the aisle for their leadership in this area.

I rise in support of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvements Act of 2007.

The COPS grant program represents a true partnership between the Federal Government and State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to fight crime. This partnership has enabled more police officers to be hired and rehired and facilitated the use of the most advanced crime-fighting technology to ensure that officers are effectively deployed into our communities all across the country.

As a result of our joint efforts, the number of violent offenses reported in our country is down from the more than 1.8 million reported back in 1994 to 1.3 million reported in 2005. But we cannot become complacent. We must ensure that State, local, and tribal law enforcement officials have the resources they need to keep law enforcement on the streets.

H.R. 1700 accomplishes this by increasing the funds available for the COPS program from $1 billion to $1.15 billion and by creating a number of new grant programs that will assist communities, such as community policing, crime prevention programs, and programs to address illegal drug manufacturing.

Most importantly, the bill that we are considering today stays true to the COPS grant program's original purpose, that the Federal Government support State, local, and tribal law enforcement efforts, not supplant them, as the ranking member indicated. That would be the last thing that we should do. H.R. 1700, in its current form, requires that States, local, and tribal law enforcement demonstrate their commitment to the partnership by making a good-faith effort to match the funds provided by the Federal Government. Yet at the same time, the bill allows the Federal Government to play a primary role in those circumstances in which a grant recipient cannot meet their financial obligation for reasons beyond their control, thus ensuring that our communities remain safe and that crime does not prevail.

H.R. 1700 is an important and necessary tool for law enforcement, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield such time as he may consume to the author of this measure, Mr. WEINER of New York, whose confidence I have so much of this afternoon, notwithstanding that there are eight other speakers, because of his persevering commitment to reinstituting this community policing bill.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for both his confidence and his leadership of our committee, and I also want to thank BOBBY SCOTT, the chairman of the Crime Subcommittee.

We are really here for three reasons. We are here because the COPS program has been a singular success. It has been a success because we identified in the 1990s that crime was not a program that only localities could get a handle on, that we had a Federal role. It is a success because it was a singularly democratic, with a small ''d,'' program.

□ 1200

And small towns and big cities throughout all 50 States wound up benefiting from the over 118,000 police officers that were put on the street because of this program. We know, for example, that 82 percent of the grants went to cities with 50,000 people or less. And while cities like mine did very well because there were more police on the beat, we know that there were a large number of very small towns that benefited.

We know, as you can see, that the COPS program provides resources to all 50 States. This wasn't a political program. If you were a police department and you showed a way to get more cops on the street, the Federal Government wasn't going to sit back; they were going to be actively involved. And we know that it was successful. We know it because the Government Accountability Office looked at the connection between police officers and the reduction in crime and found a correlation. We know the University of Nebraska looked at a very similar thing and said, with all the varying elements that go into reducing crime, was the fact that there are over 110,000 new police officers on the street

funded by the COPS program a correlative effect? And the answer was yes.

We are also here for another reason. We are here because crime has started to creep back up. We are starting to see index crimes in cities around the country start to rise again. After years of decline, we are seeing it go up. And we are also here because there is even more law enforcement burden being put on localities and States than arguably any time in American history. Tom Ridge once famously said that homeland security starts in our hometown. And when we were talking about the cuts that were being made to homeland security, we were reminded that actually it is the localities that we are asking to do more and more of these things.

So we are here in acknowledgement that localities need the help. Localities now have to do more than they ever had to do before, and that's why in this program for the first time we are funding T–COPS, cops that are going to be hired to do antiterrorism work.

But particularly the reason that we're here is a third reason, that my colleagues on that side of the aisle eliminated the hiring component. President Bush eliminated the hiring component. This is a visual about how many police officers were hired under the COPS program from 1995 to 2005. This is what has happened under President Bush and under our Republican leadership. This many police officers. Zero. Zero. Zero in Virginia. Zero in South Dakota. Zero in California. The program was eliminated under my Republican friends. And as they stand up here today, and you're going to see them vote in large numbers for this program, they're going to wrap themselves around the idea that they support the COPS program when in fact overwhelmingly it was quite the opposite.

Let me show you the abandonment that's going on in the COPS program. This is the number of cops that were hired in 1998. Look at the decline. Look at how many were hired in 2005 and 2006. So the third reason we are here is we are taking up the gauntlet that was, frankly, laid down, put in a box and sealed away by my Republican friends. They said, you know what? Law enforcement is not a local job, it's a national job, we heard in committee. We heard, oh, the program hasn't worked the way it was intended. The fact of the matter is, had it not been for the Democrats taking over this body, had it not been for the chairmanship of Mr. CONYERS, this program would be zeroed out this year, too. You know how I know? Because we've had many years where those of us have stood up trying to change this where we were rebuffed again and again.

Now, I can't say all of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. We've got many, including the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) who is an original sponsor of this. But it is stunning to me that anyone can stand up and say that they support this program after supporting this.

In conclusion, I want to thank the chairman and my colleagues for passing this. We're going to ask for a recorded vote, and we're going to watch the large number of folks who helped write bills to zero out the COPS program suddenly embrace the idea that we have to put cops on the street. And I welcome my friends on the other side of the aisle to the cause of providing help for local law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today at long last.

Under new Democratic leadership, the Congress will take up my bill, H.R. 1700, to bring the COPS program back from the scrap heap, back from a point where the program's hiring component has been zeroed out, and restore it to be what it proved to be during the Clinton administration: one of the most successful law enforcement programs in the history of the United States.

We are facing a rise in crime in the United States. In a survey of cities large and small, released last month, the Police Executive Research Board found that 71 percent of cities had seen an increase in homicides, 80 percent had seen an increase in robberies, and 67 percent had seen an increase in assaults with guns. Moreover the FBI recently reported that nationwide figures showed that last year, homicides, assaults and other violent offenses grew by 4 percent, and robberies, which are often interpreted as a precursor to more serious crime, jumped by 10 percent.

Democrats faced a similar challenge in 1993 when asked about the rise in drug-fueled street crime.

Then, Democrats, led by Bill Clinton, answered with the most far reaching and innovative Federal anti-crime initiative ever—the COPS program. It did the most intuitive thing—it hired more than 100,000 beat cops. It worked. It put police in every neighborhood, town and city. Sure, big cities like Chicago and L.A. hired officers with Federal help. But so did small towns like Marengo, IL, and Plano, TX.

Now, as crime rises and we work to combat the new challenges our country faces in the wake of 9/11 the COPS program is again the solution.

The background is this. The COPS program works. A study by the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office recently stated, "COPS-funded increases in sworn officers per capita were associated with declines in rates of total index crimes, violent crimes, and property crime." According to the study, between 1998 and 2000, COPS hiring grants were responsible for reducing crimes by about 200,000 to 225,000 crimes—one third of which were violent. Studies done by the Brookings Institution, the University of Nebraska, Yale and Georgetown Universities, the University of Maryland, and the Urban Institute—among others—found similarly that COPS works.

When John Ashcroft spoke about this during his confirmation hearings for Attorney General, he said, "Let me just say, I think the COPS program has been successful. The purpose of the COPS program was to demonstrate to local police departments that if you put additional police, feet on the street, that crime would be affected and people would be safer and more secure. We believe the COPS program demonstrated that conclusively." That is John Ashcroft.

When Tom Ridge was sworn in as the Secretary of Homeland Security, he said homeland security starts in our home towns.

Over the course of the last 5 years, local law enforcement has become deeply involved in homeland security. Big cities have been forced to upgrade not only their equipment and training but also the type of personnel they hire. Some cities have hired officers exclusively to focus on homeland security—police who work to gather intelligence, analyze terror threats, and monitor our most vulnerable targets.

And how have Republicans in Washington responded since coming to office? They have eliminated the program police departments big and small had grown to depend on: COPS Funded at over $1 billion a year at the end of the Clinton administration, President Bush has zeroed out the hiring component of what some believe to have been the most successful law enforcement program in the Nation's history.

The bill we are considering today would restore the COPS program and update to the challenges local law enforcement agencies face in the post 9/11 world.

This bill breathes new life into the COPS program by authorizing $600 million per year for hiring grants, which could fund up to 50,000 new cops on the beat over the next 6 years. And in an effort to make sure that police departments around the country can use this funding as they need—as terrorism becomes a greater burden on their limited budgets—this bill explicitly enables COPS to provide funding for officers who perform "intelligence, anti-terror, or homeland security duties."

The bill also authorizes $350 million per year for COPS technology grants. These grants will allow police agencies to purchase things like laptop computers for patrol cars, crime mapping software, and interoperable communications equipment.

And the bill explicitly enables COPS to use funding for "Troops to Cops" programs that help returning veterans find employment as law enforcement officers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. CONYERS, the chairman of the Crime Subcommittee, Mr. SCOTT, and the Democratic leadership for bring this bill expeditiously to the floor for passage.

I also want to thank Joshua Fay-Hurvitz, Bobby Vassar, Greg Barnes, Mike Volkov, Caroline Lynch, Karas Pattison, Molly Lothamer, and other members of the Democratic, Republican, and Legislative Counsel staffs who have worked so hard to make this day possible.

I urge passage of the COPS Improvement Act.

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

Over and over again we hear on the floor, we hear outside this body the importance of coming together in a bipartisan manner and what we can do to resolve issues for the American people. The unfortunate thing is when we try to do that, as we have done in this bill and we bring this bill in a bipartisan manner, sometimes my friends on the other side of the aisle simply can't take yes for an answer. And when we hear presentations like we just have, Mr. Speaker, I feel it is incumbent

upon me to stand up and just correct some of those facts.

The first thing is that the COPS program has been authorized in the 2005 Department of Justice authorization bill through 2009 for $1.047 billion. All this authorization will do is increase that to $1.15 billion through 2013.

In addition, when you see these lines that drop off with the number of cops that are being hired, one of the things that we have heard from the testimony that we've had is twofold. One of the reasons that we had declines in the crime rate was not just because of the numbers of police officers, but more importantly, not just because we sent money, but because throughout the 1990s we had a lot of policies from Republican legislators across the States that did things like abolish parole, that did things like mandatory sentences, that did things like truth-in-sentencing that took criminals off the streets and out of our communities. And it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out if we do that, we reduce violent crime.

The other thing that we heard testimony on is that in New Orleans, when we went to do hearings there, the number of police officers increased and the crime increased. And in New York, the number of police officers decreased and the crime decreased. By the rationale we just heard, one would argue we should have less police officers.

But the testimony was, Mr. Speaker, we do need police officers on the streets. That's why we brought this bill in a bipartisan manner. But it is important that we have smart policing, that we have comprehensive programs. Because if we just dump money at the problem and we don't do that, we're not going to solve the problems that are before us.

Mr. Speaker, fortunately there were members from the Judiciary Committee that worked in a bipartisan manner to bring this bill to the floor. I hope we will pass it.

Mr. CONYERS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FORBES. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. I would like to play good cop in this because I want to commend those Republicans who are going to vote for this measure for joining us. Look, it doesn't matter when you come on board. It's that your thoughtfulness in helping us craft a bipartisan bill was exceedingly important, and I personally am indebted to you for that.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Chairman, we certainly thank you for your cooperativeness and support in reaching what we think is a much better bill by the time that it reached the floor than when it started.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be the lead Republican original cosponsor of this legislation which will reauthorize the COPS program and put 50,000 more cops on our streets.

The COPS program is responsible for putting nearly 120,000 cops on the streets nationwide, including 774 cops in central Florida.

Violent crime is on the rise, and we need this legislation now more than ever. For example, in my hometown of Orlando, Florida, the murder rate is up 122 percent. I recently met with all of central Florida's chiefs of police and sheriffs, and 100 percent of them support the COPS program. This legislation is also endorsed by the National Sheriffs Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Is the COPS program successful? Absolutely. Former Attorney General John Ashcroft described the COPS program as a ''miraculous sort of success.'' A 2005 GAO study concluded that the COPS program successfully played a role in the decline in violent crime in the 1990s. And more than 95 percent of law enforcement officers hired by a COPS grant are still on the street today.

Now, some might say that putting cops on the street is not a priority worth funding with Federal dollars. Well, I would rather put cops on the street than build bridges to nowhere or give subsidies to spinach growers. Let's be practical. There are children in Orlando, Florida, growing up in neighborhoods where 49 people were killed last year. Those kids want to be able to walk home from school safely and play in their neighborhoods without fear. These kids don't care if the cops' salary is paid for with purely local funds or a mixture of local and Federal funds. They just want to feel safe.

This legislation is a step in the right direction. I want to thank the cosponsor of this legislation, Congressman ANTHONY WEINER, for his leadership and strong support of the COPS program. He and I worked together earlier to get $70 million added in the supplemental.

Some have said that some Republicans are new to this. I can assure you that I've been an original cosponsor of this bill ever since I got here to Congress. If I can quote L.L. Cool Jay, the rapper: ''Don't call it a comeback; I've been here for years.''

This COPS legislation was approved by the Judiciary Committee by a full voice vote and is worthy of our bipartisan support. I ask my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1700.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON has supported this bill from its inception, and so I recognize the gentlelady from Dallas, Texas, for 1 minute.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the chairman of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the COPS Improvements Act of 2007.

As violent crime continues to rise, we must address the needs of our Nation's law enforcement professionals. Law enforcement presence remains one of the greatest assets against crime. I have witnessed firsthand the importance of this program where our community cops simply work with our young people, help to break up gangs, helping them with tutoring in the evening when they are on duty in those communities. So in addition to this bill just allowing the 50,000 cops to be hired, it also allows for the increase in funding to improve technology for our police agencies. And it may be used to update police stations and cars for providing the latest technology in crime fighting.

I am delighted to see that it is being considered, and I strongly support and recommend the approval.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the COPS Improvements Act of 2007. I want to congratulate Chairman CONYERS, Mr. WEINER and Mr. KELLER for bringing this bill forward.

My written statement talks all about the importance of adding a police officer school, resources officers and things of that nature. I want to talk about an aspect of the bill that I am particularly excited about, and that is the technology grants contained in the bill.

The police departments in my district were recently notified that the backbone radio system that we basically spent millions of dollars on a number of years ago is now going to become obsolete in 2011 because the manufacturer is no longer going to make the spare parts. In the small communities that I represent, it means a bill of $10 million. The technology upgrades in this particular piece of legislation are going to give my communities the opportunity to bid for grants that hopefully will replace that radio system and make our community safer.

Secondly, in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings, I have heard from most of the school districts in my district that we need to build on the success of the last COPS bill where 225 school resource officers were added to the schools in the State of Ohio. And they are excited again about the opportunity to add new school resource officers in the schools to make them safer for all of the students in our school system and across the country.

So again I want to congratulate the sponsors of this legislation. And I thank Mr. FORBES for yielding.

I rise today to speak in support of the COPS Improvement Act of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, when I meet with law enforcement officials across my district, their biggest concern is that Washington keeps asking them to do more with less, especially in the aftermath of 9–11. Each year, they beg me to adequately fund the COPS program and to reinstate the hiring portion.

In my State of Ohio, the COPS program has been a godsend:

It has funded nearly 3,800 additional cops and deputies.

It has infused about 640 departments across Ohio with more than $227 million in Federal help.

More than 225 school resource officers have been added to Ohio.

More than $55 million has gone to Ohio departments to improve crime-fighting technologies.

In my district alone, in the Akron-Cleveland area, nearly $20 million has gone to local departments and 285 officers have been added to streets and schools in my district.

I met with about 50 police chiefs throughout my district early last month to tout this bill, and share the news that it was coming. They are thrilled with this legislation. Many departments in my district were able to add officers thanks to the COPS program, and they have kept them on their payrolls.

They have patiently waited for us to beef up the COPS program, especially as violent crime experiences an uptick. They want and need the Federal Government to help fund cops on the beat, new cops in schools, and they are thrilled that $350 million will be available for competitive grants to pay for laptop computers, radios, cameras, and all the technological marvels our police departments must have and can barely afford.

My police chiefs in Lake County recently found out that they have to replace their entire radio system because the manufacturer will no longer be able to repair or replace them.

My chiefs are thrilled that this bill recognizes the importance of school officers. They spoke of the need to keep schools safe, and the bond that develops with students so students can feel safe to confide in them. These school officers serve as mentors, friends and protectors—they are worth their weight in gold. It's a small investment to make.

In the days following the shootings at Virginia Tech, I heard from many school districts pleading that funding be made available for school resource officers. This bill will allow law enforcement to partner with the schools. I also heard from the Ohio School Resource Officers Association in the aftermath of Virginia Tech. They say passage of the COPS Improvement Act can't happen fast enough. The Senate passed it in March, and I am proud that the House will today.

This is great legislation. It's a good value for taxpayers. We ask our police to protect our homes, our businesses and our schools and for too long we've asked them to do it on the cheap.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 1 minute to the chairman from Illinois, RAHM EMANUEL.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, in 1994, when we passed the Community Policing Program that added 100,000 community police onto America's streets and also followed through with the strategy of not only getting cops on the beat, but getting gangs, guns and drugs off the street, we saw the longest and largest decline of violent crime in America's history.

After that program's success of adding 120,000 community police officers to the streets across this country, when it was ended in 2002 we saw violent crime in America begin to inch up again. Community police officers walking the beat, knowing the neighborhood and knowing their community is the linchpin of a successful anti-crime strategy.

□ 1215

I am so proud that we have a bill here representing, again, going back to a very basic approach of community policing by putting more cops on the beat, which is the success to reducing violent crime in America. We saw that rise again because this COPS Program ended. Every sheriff, police chief and mayor has asked for this program to be renewed, and I am proud we have done that to successfully once again get back to helping our communities reduce crime. In Chicago, we added 1,800 cops and we saw crime reduced in our neighborhood.

I thank the chairman from Michigan and also the gentleman from New York for their leadership in getting this bill passed.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, to both sides, thanks for coming together on this critical bill. Anthony, you have done a good job, and the chairman as well.

There is nothing like the presence of a police officer. It is not only a deterrent to crime, but it is at the very heart of homeland security. That is why the British are way ahead of us. They have a bottom-up philosophy of looking at what is going wrong in the community. We cannot have a top-down.

So 117,000 police officers later, to our rear right now is going the National Peace Officers Memorial Service, and we know who is there. But we know who is here. This is critical. We pray for these police officers on the streets every day. I agree with the gentleman from Ohio, the technology is just as significant as the number of personnel we put on the street.

This administration tried to cut the FIRE Program, and they tried desperately to cut the COPS Program. It is a new day, and we started it in the sunshine.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and I appreciate his leadership on this.

I would rise, Mr. Speaker, to say that all of us obviously support police officers on the street. But there are some legitimate concerns about this bill and others that are brought to the floor. One that I would point out on this bill is that we attempt to find some objective information about the programs that we put in place here at the Federal level.

The Office of Management and Budget has a program called Program Assessment Rating Tool which attempts to determine the effectiveness of what we do here on the floor, and their grade for this COPS Program is ''Not performing, results not demonstrated'' in the latest review.

That is not to say that we don't support cops on the street, police on the street, but it is important to appreciate that there are some legitimate concerns about the program.

Another concern I have is that one of our House rules, XIII section 3(d)(1) says that all committee reports must contain a statement citing the specific powers granted to the Congress in the Constitution to enact the law proposed by the bill or joint resolution. In fact, in this bill being brought to the floor, there is no such statement available from the committee.

So I think there are legitimate concerns, Mr. Speaker, and I ask my colleagues to review those.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1700 and the law enforcement officers that keep our neighborhoods and communities safe.

The small cities of Connecticut's Fifth District may not rival the size of those neighboring districts, but they still have the same need for vigorous community-based law enforcement. Since the COPS Program began in 1994, 265 police officers have been put on the beat in the Fifth District. This bill could put an additional 113 police officers out on the streets. One bill, this bill, could increase the law enforcement personnel by the COPS Program by 50 percent.

For the last 6 years as I sat in the Connecticut State legislature, I have watched the Federal Government walk away from its commitment to partner with States and towns to provide funding necessary to keep our communities safe. In Connecticut, our law enforcement community has been asked to do more with less. They are the pride of our community, but they have seen the cuts in action that have been imposed by this Congress.

The numbers in this bill are meaningful, Mr. Speaker. I urge all Members to support the bill. It is important for our law enforcement officers and important for the safety of our communities.

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

Mr. Speaker, once again I want to emphasize my support of this legislation and my support of additional police officers, but it is important that we continue to make sure we are separating the facts from some statements that are being made.

Testimony that we have received before the committee strikes a great contrast between different areas in our

country. Sending money alone, even putting cops on the streets alone, will not solve our crime problem. As we mentioned earlier, in New Orleans we had testimony that only 7 percent of the individuals arrested, and this is pre-Katrina, only 7 percent of the individuals arrested ever end up in jail, and the police officers themselves, the police chief, testified how demoralizing that was to crime fighting and police officers there.

That is why a comprehensive approach, looking at more police officers, but also such things as abolishing parole, mandatory sentencing and three-strikes legislation work to help cut down on the crime that we have.

We have also heard testimony from both sides of the aisle about the importance of technology. Many police departments are recognizing across the country that it is not just the quantity of police officers, but it is how they use them. New York came in and testified that what they have done is actually decreased the number of police officers they have, but they have used technology to do it in a smarter way, which has reduced overall crime.

Mr. Speaker, we support this legislation, but let's make sure we are not using the hyperbole, that we are using the facts. It is important to have police. It is important to have them used in a smart, effective and comprehensive manner if we are going to deal with the crime that our communities are so concerned about.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The gentleman from Michigan has 5¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield one-quarter of a minute to the author of the bill, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I just want to clarify some of the mistakes made by the previous speaker, at least the misimpressions left.

One, technology grants cut under the previous Republican Congress; two, alternatives to incarceration cut under the previous Republican administration; three, police officers, I have already talked about, cut.

Just about all of the elements of a comprehensive package were eliminated under the leadership of your party. So if you care about reducing crime, this is a better day than it was a year ago.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise in support of this bill. It is the bill that I heard most about when I campaigned.

Crime is the number one issue in Memphis, Tennessee, and I think it is the number one issue in most areas in this country. I spoke with the Afro-American Police Association, and the issue they raised to me was the COPS Program, that community policing works.

I spoke with people in the district and they knew that the COPS Program had been successful, that it worked with community policing, and they knew it had been cut by this Congress and they couldn't understand why, and I couldn't tell them. I told them I was going to come to Congress and do what I could to see that the COPS program was reimplemented, that it was funded in a proper fashion, and that it helped cut crime.

In this bill we have an opportunity to work together to bring our troops home and to support our troops because veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq will be given priorities when feasible to get these positions, to come back and render their abilities and their experience for our people rather than the people of Baghdad.

Support our troops, support the COPS Program and make our streets safer.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Oakland, California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentleman for his stellar leadership as Chair of the Judiciary Committee, and thank my colleague, Congressman WEINER from New York, for your determination to make our country safer by the introduction of this bill.

The reauthorization of the COPS Program really does come at a very important time in our entire country. As an example, COPS has provided since 1994 in my district alone $45.5 million in grants. These funds have allowed law enforcement agencies in my district to hire 552 additional police officers and 45 new school resource officers. COPS has also provided technology grants totaling $2.9 million in my district.

If passed, this bill will allow COPS to hire more necessary officers. The people of Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville, the entire Ninth Congressional District, could see 236 new officers, $13 million in grants, 19 school resource officers and $2.8 million in technology funding over the next 6 years.

Our communities throughout the country need the COPS Program. This is about public safety and violence prevention. Community policing does work.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, what has happened here today is very important in terms of developing a justice system that will operate at a very fundamental and basic level, the police level. It doesn't correct the lack of prosecution that has been raised by the gentleman from Virginia. It doesn't correct many parts of the justice system that we on the committee plan to go into. But I think there is a unanimity on both sides of the aisle for restoring a very important community program that has justified itself, and it is in that spirit that I want to commend everyone on both sides of the aisle for their important work that they have done in beginning to restore the program.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the author of the bill, the gentleman from New York, ANTHONY WEINER, whose perseverance has led us to the floor here today.

Mr. WEINER. And I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the many reasons that the American people have turned the Congress over to Democrats is that we have said, like so many Americans, that we don't want to hear just more talk and rhetoric and posturing; that we want to start to actively solve the problems that people face in communities around this country. And whether it be a sheriff's department of two or three officers, or the NYPD which has some 36,000 officers, after today's vote and after it gets passed in the other body, God willing, and signed by the President, we are going to start to do what we need to do to improve homeland security, to reduce drug crime, to reduce the amount of the day-to-day challenges that people face; to hire more officers to go into schools, to get technology so officers can be out on the beat and doing it more.

This is a program that, frankly, never should have died. It is a program that I think too many of my friends on the other side just got blood in their eyes over the idea that it was offered under President Clinton, passed under President Clinton and single-handedly brought down crime during those years. That is not a good enough reason. Let us get past that kind of political haze and just realize that sometimes things are successful, even though they are the ideas of someone else.

John Ashcroft dissented on several occasions. He said, ''I think the COPS Program has been successful.'' Alberto Gonzales, someone whom I am not prone to quote very often, has said, ''The COPS Program has been beneficial.'' The Oneida County Executive, the former Mayor of Rome, says, ''This program has made a difference,'' a tiny city. John Ashcroft said when testifying before the House of Representatives, ''It has been one of the most successful programs we have ever worked with.''

This is a bipartisan success, because every once in a while around here we get it right. We design a program with a goal in mind, and in this case it was to get the Federal Government off the sidelines.

There are many in this body who hold this kind of old-fashioned federalist notion that, you know what,

protecting citizenry is something that only localities do. Well, we realize now in the post-9/11 world that has changed.

We are doing something about it, and I commend my colleagues of all stripes for finally joining that bandwagon.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, as I rise to close, I just want to say that I don't think the American people much care whether it is Republicans in charge or Democrats in charge. I think what they really care about is whether or not we are reaching across and trying to forge solutions to the problems they face. That is why I want to compliment the chairman for his bipartisan manner in which he has not only handled working on this bill, but has handled this debate on the floor today.

□ 1230

Mr. Speaker, this bill was never put on the sidelines. As I have mentioned before, the facts show in 2005 we reauthorized it through 2009 for $1.047 billion.

The key was the DOJ Office of the Inspector General and GAO reports note that thousands of hires funded by COPS never materialized as law enforcement agencies used COPS funding to cover their own budget shortfalls. In fact, they showed that $277 million were misspent funds.

Mr. Speaker, by working together in a bipartisan manner, I think we have crafted a bill that will help in a comprehensive manner continue to put police officers on the streets and continue to allow our local and State enforcement agencies to be able to use technology and smart policing to do what they want us to do, and that is to reach out to form practical solutions of how they deal with crime and the crime that is plaguing their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce my support for the COPS Improvements Act of 2007. Although the COPS Act was originally introduced in 1994, its reauthorization is a clear indication of this Congress' dedication to passing legislation with the intent of securing our streets and providing for first responders, all of whom are vital to securing our Nation. The COPS Improvements Act is a post-9/11 legislation implementing a homeland security policy, specifically in the areas of terrorism preparedness, intelligence gathering, interoperability and other concerns we have in our communities across America.

The Committee on Homeland Security supports the COPS Improvements Act authorizing $600 million per year to hire officers to engage in their communities across a variety of policing duties, including counter-terrorism. The Amtrak Police Department, whose officers are on the frontlines of transportation security, will be given the resources to hire and train officers to perform intelligence, anti-terror, and other homeland security duties protecting our railroads.

The COPS Improvements Act is also applauded by the Committee on Homeland Security for authorizing $350 million per year for COPS technology grants. Among the grants established, many were dedicated to the development of interoperable communication technologies. The improvement of interoperable communications is vital to homeland security. It ensures there is communications connectivity between and among civilian authorities, local first responders, and the National Guard in the wake of a national emergency. This is a vital lesson we have painfully learned in the aftermath of emergency responders facing a lack of centralized coordination during a terrorist attack such as 9/11.

The reauthorization of the COPS legislation is important to the protection of our citizens and from domestic and foreign threats. I, and the Committee on Homeland Security, promote the COPS Improvements Act of 2007 as it is legislation that assists in protecting all Americans. But, I want to be clear—the Committee on Homeland Security should work with my colleagues in other committees to ensure these grants are used for their intended purpose and do not somehow exceed their legislative bounds. I look forward to discussing this issue further with Chairman CONYERS and others. Terrorism is an issue we at the Committee take very seriously and believe the COPS Improvements Act can serve a vital role in reducing and responding to a possible terrorist event.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation commemorates National Police Week this week and the 26th Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Day today (May 15), let us honor the memory of those who have fallen in the line of duty and thank those who carry on their legacy, serving in communities across this Nation, keeping the peace, and protecting the American people.

It is altogether fitting that today—with thousands of peace officers in Washington to commemorate these events—the Members of this House will consider this very important bipartisan legislation, the COPS Improvements Act of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, when we pass this bill, the new Democratic Majority in this House will again demonstrate its absolute commitment to taking decisive action that protects our communities and combats crime.

In short, this legislation reauthorizes the highly successful Community Oriented Policing Services Program, or COPS, which was enacted in 1994 under the Clinton Administration and which helped local law enforcement agencies hire 117,000 additional officers between 1995 and 2005—including 908 officers in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District.

In fact, the COPS hiring program—with its emphasis on getting more cops on the beat—is credited with reducing the crime rate.

The nonpartisan General Accountability Office, for example, concluded in one study (and I quote): "COPS-funded increases in sworn officers per capita were associated with declines in rates of total index crimes, violent crimes and property crime."

Unfortunately, however, the former House Majority sharply reduced the funding for the universal hiring program under COPS in recent years—from more than $1 billion a year in the late 1990s, to $10 million in 2005, to the complete elimination of hiring grants in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, let's put these figures in perspective. One billion dollars a years for COPS hiring grants is not an insubstantial sum. But today, in Iraq, our Nation is spending approximately $10 billion a month—or $2.5 billion a week.

House Democrats believe it is imperative to reinvigorate the successful COPS program. And thus, this legislation calls for putting 50,000 additional police officers on the streets over the next 6 years by authorizing $600 million a year for COPS hiring grants.

Furthermore, this bill authorizes $350 million a year for COPS technology grants, and $200 million a year for hiring community prosecutors.

Mr. Speaker, today, through this bipartisan legislation, this House will demonstrate that it is committed to protecting and strengthening America's communities.

We will demonstrate that the Federal Government is a committed partner in protecting Americans not only from the threat posed by international terrorism, but also from the dangers posed by domestic crime.

I urge my colleagues: Support the COPS Improvements Act.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, today, the House of Representatives is doing the right thing for our Nation's police and first responders by passing the COPS Improvements Act. This bill will improve the safety of communities across our Nation, and will help to reverse the damaging budget cuts that our first responders have suffered in the past 7 years.

In 1994, President Clinton's COPS program changed the way law enforcement in this country operates, by giving local departments the resources to fight crime and put 100,000 new law enforcement officers on the streets. The COPS program helped transform our major cities, and gave rural police and sheriffs the resources needed to fight the growing problems of drugs and violence.

As a former law enforcement officer, I know how important the COPS program has been to local communities. Its federal-to-local structure puts resources where they are needed: cops on the front lines.

As co-chair of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I work with law enforcement professionals from around the country, and they are unanimous in their verdict: COPS is a program that works.

Unfortunately, the current administration disagrees with the approach that was so successful in reducing crime during the Clinton years. The administration has repeatedly attempted to cut and gut the program, in spite of repeated endorsements from every major law enforcement organization and the proven success of COPS in reducing crime. Under the Republican Congress, COPS funding was reduced from its Clinton-era high of $1.42 billion to less than $500 million in 2006, a cut of two-thirds.

These cuts had a severe impact on local departments in my district and in districts around the country. Attempts to keep officers on the street, protect our schools, fight drugs and improve our homeland security were all undermined. Republicans in Congress and the Bush administration have been full of rhetoric about the heroism of local first responders and the importance of fighting terrorism, but the budget numbers tell a different story: for the Republican Congress, local cops simply were not a priority.

Now we have a chance to set things right. The law enforcement community has a tremendous need for this legislation to be enacted and fully funded. Experts have said that it may cost as much as $18 billion to fully upgrade our first responders to interoperable

communications; this bill will provide money for technology grants to help close that gap. News reports show that the violent crime rate has begun to rise again in our cities; this bill will help local departments deploy more officers to fight violence and make our streets safe.

The COPS Improvements Act represents our commitment to listen to our local police departments and give them the resources they need to do their job. I am proud to support this bill, and I urge the President to sign it into law, so that our law enforcement officers can again receive the support and assistance they deserve to keep us and America safe.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act. The COPS hiring program has been an unqualified success. Since the program first began in 1994, we have seen crime rates plummet throughout the country.

There are many factors one can point to for this drop in crime, but the most obvious one is that the COPS hiring program has given our local governments over $9 billion to hire over 117,000 police officers.

Law enforcement agencies in my district, New York's 17th, have received $625,984,137 in COPS grants since 1994. This funding has translated into 6,997 additional law enforcement officers in my district. Unfortunately, Republicans ended the COPS hiring program last year. A likely result of this, is that crime rates are inching upward.

It is essential that we stay vigilant in our fight against crime by passing the COPS Improvement Act. When this bill passes, law enforcement agencies across the country will be able to add over 50,000 police officers to our streets. In my district, we will gain $190,978,211 in funding and 2,991 more police officers.

But the COPS program is not just about the number of police officers; it is also about giving police officers the tools they need. Since 1994, $26,678,080 in COPS grants have been awarded to law enforcement agencies in the 17th District of New York to purchase technology that enables agencies to put more officers on the beat. This translates into more bulletproof vests and mobile computers.

If the COPS Improvement Act of 2007 passes into law, an additional $8,139,075 in technology grants will likely flow to the 17th District of New York.

Mr. Speaker, I join the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National League of Cities in urging my colleagues to pass the COPS Improvement Act of 2007.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus and proud cosponsor of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act, I rise to urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Since its creation in the 1994 Crime Bill, the COPS program has been a key component of the Federal effort to keep our communities safe. The program has been widely hailed as a success. It has supported the hiring of over 100,000 officers and contributed to a nationwide decrease in violent crime in the 1990s.

H.R. 1700 makes several improvements to the program to increase public safety across the country. It reauthorizes the COPS hiring program to help put 50,000 new police on the beat in our communities, provides $350 million a year for State and local agencies to develop new technologies for crime prevention and police training and provides $200 million a year for community-based prosecution programs.

In my home state of Minnesota, I've seen, firsthand, the importance of the COPS program to local police in reducing crime and improving public safety.

The COPS program has been an invaluable resource to state and local law enforcement agencies for hiring, technology and school safety grants, and has been critical to providing personnel, equipment, training and technical assistance in the war on drugs and homeland security.

We must never forget our cops are on the front lines—in the war on crime, fighting drug dealers and protecting our homeland.

As Chris Matthews of MSNBC said after the attacks of September 11: ''Before the attacks on our homeland, America's heroes were the rich and famous. Since Sept. 11, America's heroes are the cops and firefighters. And that's good for America.''

Today, America's heroes are counting on us. Congress owes it to these brave men and women who put their lives on the line every day they put on the badge. Our nation's law enforcement officers need all the tools Congress can provide. It's time to honor the sacrifices made by our Nation's law enforcement community and give our Nation's finest the support they need.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as a proud co-sponsor I rise in strong support of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act of 2007, introduced by my colleague Mr. WEINER. This act would amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, expanding the ability of the Attorney General to make grants for the COPS ON THE BEAT program. This important program provides for public safety and community policing activities, and it very simply puts more cops on the streets.

This legislation would bring much needed relief to our brave and overworked law enforcement officers, who are on the front line of the war against crime. At a minimum, the passage of this legislation would bring 374 additional police officers to reinforce the streets of the 18th congressional district of Texas, which I proudly represent. These 374 cops would be supported by a much needed funding increase of $17,346,456, as well as an additional $2,753,784 in technology grants to law enforcement agencies in my district. The 18th congressional district is only one of hundreds of communities across the nation that will enjoy greater security, safety, and stability as a result of this important legislation.

During the 1990s, the crime rates for all categories of crime in the United States fell dramatically and almost continuously, with homicide rates plunging 43 percent to reach their lowest level in 35 years in 2001. Unfortunately, after this sustained drop across all geographic areas and population groups, crime rates have once again begun to rise. In particular, 2005 marked the greatest increase in violent crime in 14 years. This increase in crime, not coincidentally, corresponds with cuts to the funding of the COPS program by the GOP-led Congress.

This is not acceptable. As part of the New Direction for America ushered in by this Democratic Congress, we are committed to ensuring that Americans can enjoy real security within our Nation's borders. We are committed to guaranteeing that our country's communities, like my own 18th district, have police forces that are adequately staffed, equipped, and funded. We are committed to reinvigorating programs, like COPS, that have proven highly successful in the past.

Mr. Speaker, an increase in crime mandates an increase in the number of police. Since 1995, the COPS office has awarded over $11.4 billion to over 13,000 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. These funds allow agencies to hire and train law enforcement officers to participate in community policing, to purchase and deploy new crime-fighting technologies, and to develop and test new and innovative policing strategies.

Despite the demonstrated success of the COPS program in reducing crime rates, the current administration has targeted its funding. This would jeopardize the marked headway this program has made into creating and maintaining safe communities nationwide. H.R. 1700 provides an opportunity to reverse this harmful process, and, as a result, enjoys the support of numerous law enforcement organizations, including Fraternal Order of Police, National Association of Police Organizations and the National Sheriffs' Association.

This bill allows us to build upon a program that has already proven successful by expanding the mission and increasing the prospects for grants under the COPS program. It allows us to both protect America's communities from increasing violent crime, and to provide adequate resources for those whom we entrust with guarding our safety.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation because I believe the work of our State, local, and tribal law enforcement officials to be crucial to the security of our communities and our Nation. I believe that the program's record is clear, and the evidence shows that more cops equals less crime. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in support this legislation.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act of 2007. I would like to thank the chief sponsors of this legislation, Congressmen WEINER and KELLER, for their efforts in bringing this bipartisan bill to the floor today.

Congress created the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–322). Administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, the COPS program awards grants to state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing personnel, implement new technologies to combat crime, and develop new policing techniques.

Since its establishment, the COPS program has been widely hailed as a success. It most notably has supported the hiring of over 120,000 additional police officers and helped contribute to a nationwide decrease in the rate of violent crime. In Hawaii alone, COPS grants have helped to hire 522 additional police officers and sheriffs and placed 18 new resource

officers in primary and secondary schools throughout the islands.

Yet funding for this successful program has become a yearly Congressional battle. President Bush's latest FY 2008 budget request seeks to cut funding for the COPS program by 50 percent, which is actually an improvement from previous years in which program funding was simply zeroed out.

In justifying the COPS program funding cut, the administration has often cited the need to refocus our energies on homeland security issues. However, our State and local law enforcement agencies play an increasingly significant role in homeland security through their already established roles in local crime prevention and investigation. It is not unreasonable to suggest that State and local law enforcement entities are among our first lines of defense in keeping our homeland secure. To that end, it is the responsibility of this Congress to continue to support and strengthen the COPS program.

H.R. 1700 is an affirmative step in this direction, as it would authorize $1.15 billion each year in years 2008 through 2013 for the COPS program. This is a 10 percent or $103 million increase from the amounts authorized in current law. Of that amount, $600 million would be allocated each year for the hiring of additional law enforcement officers. It is estimated that this amount will translate into at least 50,000 new police officers on our streets. H.R. 1700 would also allow for up to $350 million annually for grant programs that improve crime-fighting technologies and up to $200 million each year to assist district attorneys in hiring prosecutors.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1700, as it supports the work of law enforcement officers across our Nation. I would also like to extend a heartfelt mahalo (thank you) to our State and local law enforcement officers who serve our Nation with distinction and aloha.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1700, COPS Improvement Act of 2007. Since 1994 the COPS program has allowed local law enforcement agencies to hire an additional 117,000 officers. It is unconscionable that over the past several years, the Republican-led Congress has repeatedly cut the COPS program and eventually eliminated all funding in the 2006 budget.

I'm proud that my district has benefited significantly from the COPS program. In fact, in 1996 President Clinton came to the City of Salinas, CA, to commend Mayor Caballero and Salinas law enforcement officials on a successful community policing program. In addition, Salinas was awarded one of a handful of COPS grants for tracking weapons. These tools enabled the City of Salinas to reduce gang violence. As funding for the COPS program dried up, gang violence in Salinas spiked and in 2005 there were 24 homicides. This time, on its own dime, the City of Salinas and the County of Monterey have busted their budgets to implement a community policing gang task force. Reauthorization of the COPS program, with full funding, will enable Salinas and other communities all across the country to again implement effective community policing programs to combat crime.

Reauthorization of the COPS program should not be a partisan issue. After all, all crime is local. Community policing is effective because it addresses crime at the local level. H.R. 1700 will allow for the hiring of up to 50,000 new cops on the beat over the next 6 years. In addition, the bill authorizes $600 million a year for COPS hiring grants, $350 million a year for COPS technology grants, and $200 million a year for hiring community prosecutors.

I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 1700.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, later today we will consider reauthorizing the COPS program for another 6 years. It is fitting that the House will take up this bill during National Police Week. I hope our law enforcement community regards this bill and this week as recognition of our thanks for keeping us safe and protected. We appreciate their work and sacrifices immensely. Reauthorizing the COPS program is very important to our State and local law enforcement, as the program provides grants directly to them. My district has received nearly $11 million in COPS grants over the past decade and a half, and it is extremely important that this program continues. This money has helped and will help keep Hoosiers in the Ninth District safe by ensuring a greater law enforcement presence on our streets back home and combating violent crime such as meth trafficking and usage. I fully support reauthorizing COPS and thank our law enforcement for all the sacrifices they make day in and day out.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I am deeply disappointed that the Democratic leadership has chosen to bring up H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act of 2007, under suspension. While the Committee on Judiciary reported the bill out without objection, I am concerned that the hundreds of Members not on the committee will not have any opportunity to offer any improvements to the bill.

Had I been allowed the opportunity, I would have introduced an amendment to more fairly allot grants by State. According to last year's funding statistics, small States received a disproportionate amount of funds. In fact, in some cases small States have received more funds than States more than five times their population. For instance, Alabama gets more assistance than California.

My home State, New Jersey, a densely populated State nestled between the major metropolitan centers of New York City and Philadelphia and also home to a heavily trafficked drug corridor and its own inner-cities, receives less than 2 percent of all grants.

As if this imbalance weren't bad enough, the Office Management and Budget's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) graded COPS as "not performing: results not demonstrated." The bill authorizes $1.15 billion for this program next fiscal year and another $4.6 billion over the next 4 years. With so much taxpayer money at stake, and so few positive results demonstrated, why is the House missing this opportunity to fully consider how we might improve a program that is failing despite its good intentions?

The people of New Jersey watch a disproportionate share of their Federal taxes go to Washington to carry out this unproven program in other States. And for these reasons, I regret that I simply could not support this bill on the floor today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvements Act.

This program, begun under President Clinton, has invested over $12 billion to add officers to the Nation's streets and schools, enhance crime-fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, provide training and technical assistance, administer grant programs, and advance community policing. Since President Bush has taken office, he has done everything he could to cut or eliminate funding for this worthwhile program.

In the Third District of Florida alone, over $89,420,196 in COPS grants were awarded to law enforcement agencies: COPS grants have funded 1,192 additional police officers and sheriffs deputies to engage in community policing activities, including crime prevention, in the 3rd District; 24 local and State law enforcement agencies in the 3rd District have directly benefited from funding made available through the COPS Office; $6,187,466 has been awarded to add 52 school resources officers to improve safety for students, teachers, and administrators in primary and secondary schools throughout the 3rd District; and $10,780,628 has been awarded for crime-fighting technologies. This funding has allowed officers to spend more time on the streets of the 3rd District of Florida fighting and preventing crime through timesaving technology, information-sharing systems, and improved communications equipment.

My district is not alone. The COPS program has helped districts across the Nation by reducing crime and making communities safer for residents to live their lives.

Earlier this session, I introduced a resolution urging increased funding for both the COPS program and the Weed and Seed program, which is an innovative, comprehensive, multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and community revitalization. Both these programs go together—community policing and community revitalization.

I am submitting for the record a letter from the city of Orlando in support of this bill.

I urge support for the COPS program, safer communities and this bill.

CITY OF ORLANDO,
Orlando, FL, May 15, 2007.

Hon. CORRINE BROWN,
U.S. Representative,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN BROWN: I am writing on behalf of the City of Orlando to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 1700, the "COPS Improvements Act of 2007".

In 1994, Congress established the Office for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and, in the decade that followed, our nation experienced a significant drop in crime rates. A large part of this success was the nation's commitment to community oriented policing, particularly it's hiring component, which helped get more officers on the beat. This approach was validated by a Government Accountability Office (GAO) study of the COPS program, which stated that: "COPS-funded increases in sworn officers per capita were associated with declines in the rates of total index crimes, violent crimes, and property crime."

Now, after years of historically low crime rates, we are seeing a disturbing new trend—a jump in violent crimes in our City as well as in many of our nation's large and medium-sized cities. Just as the decrease in crime was directly related to an increased focus on hiring law enforcement officers at the state and local level, the more recent increase in certain crimes can be directly related to the loss of Federal funds supporting state and local law enforcement. This legislation will reinstitute the COPS program—a program we all know to be effective—and is needed now more than ever.

Specifically, this bill will establish the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services as a distinct entity within the U. S. Department of Justice and will reauthorize hiring programs for three specific purposes—community policing officers, local counterterrorism officers, and school resource officers. The bill also reauthorizes funds for technology grants and community prosecutors. The COPS program and the community policing approach are, and should continue to be, an important part of our national crime-fighting strategy.

Your commitment to reducing crime and your recognition of the important role local law enforcement plays throughout the nation is commendable. Be assured that the City of Orlando will do our part in the fight against crime and, given the proper resources, we can keep Orlando one of the safest cities in the nation.

Sincerely,

BUDDY DYER,
Mayor.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to show my support for H.R. 1700, the COPS Reauthorization Act of 2007.

The original COPS bill, passed in 1994, enabled local law enforcement agencies to hire 117,000 additional police officers across the Nation. H.R. 1700 will establish the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services as a distinct entity within the U.S. Department of Justice and will reauthorize hiring programs for three specific purposes: community policing officers, local counterterrorism officers, and school resource officers.

School resource officers are especially important to keep schools safe and to keep children in school. About 13.7 million or 22 percent of children and youth were physically bullied in the last year and 15.7 million were teased or emotionally bullied. Bullying behavior has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping and dropping out of school, fighting, and the use of drugs and alcohol. Having school resource officers on campuses will help combat this growing problem.

School resource officers are also needed to combat the national gang epidemic. In Los Angeles alone during the last 5 years, there were over 23,000 verified gang related violent crimes. These include 784 homicides, nearly 12,000 felony assaults, approximately 10,000 robberies and just under 500 rapes. It is imperative to reauthorize the COPS program and get more officers on the street to stop this trend.

I am proud to support this bill and encourage all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 1700, COPS Reauthorization Act of 2007.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1700 the COPS Improvements Act of 2007.

Unfortunately, over the past several years funding for the hiring of additional police officers has been drastically reduced and the COPS program was basically eliminated.

The Community Oriented Policing Services Improvements Act revives the grant hiring program. These grants will allow local police departments to hire 50,000 additional police officers over the next 6 years.

I know in Houston after Hurricane Katrina we saw a significant rise in violent crime. This program will allow our local communities to hire additional police officers to protect their citizens.

This bill will also provide critical funding for technology grants and hiring community prosecutors. These are tools that our communities need to reduce our crime rates.

When the COPS program was eliminated our nation experienced a drastic increase in crime rates. By providing our law enforcement community with adequate funding and technology we will give them the ability to reduce crime rates.

I have strongly supported this program since it was first introduced during the 1990's. Today I urge my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation today.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, in my remarks in support of H.R. 1700, the "COPS Improvements Act of 2007," I refer to amended language in the bill that would have required COPS grant recipients participating in the "Troops-to-Cops" program to give special hiring preference to former members of the Armed Forces who served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. I first introduced this provision in an amendment during the Judiciary Committee markup of H.R. 1700. I withdrew that amendment with the understanding that, after working with Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH upon the committee's urging to craft mutually agreeable language, this provision was to be included in the final version of H.R. 1700.

Through what I believe to have been an inadvertent omission, the hiring preference for veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom was not included in the final version of H.R. 1700 that has been presented to the full House of Representatives. It is my understanding that the language will be added either in the Senate bill or at conference and, therefore, will be contained in the bill sent to the President for his signature.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of HR 1700, the COPS Reauthorization Act. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation that will reauthorize the Community Oriented Policing Services grant programs.

Over the first 10 years of its existence, from 1994 to 2005, the COPS hiring grant programs have helped local law enforcement agencies hire 117,000 additional police officers. As a result there have been significant drops in the crime rates across our Nation. Unfortunately the previous Congress drastically reduced and then eliminated funding for the COPS hiring grants in the 2005 and 2006 funding cycles.

H.R. 1700 will reinvigorate the COPS program by authorizing $600 million a year for hiring grants. This level of funding will help put an additional 50,000 police officers in our communities over the next 6 years. I am proud that this Congress is acting to restore funding for these hiring grants that are so critical to local law enforcement agencies across the country.

In addition, this legislation will authorize $350 million for COPS technology grants. These grants will help local law enforcement agencies buy critical technology like computers for patrol cars and crime mapping software. I have seen this type of crime mapping software at work in the city of Santa Ana, California, in my district. This technology acts as a force multiplier, allowing each officer to be more effective in fighting crime and keeping our communities safe.

H.R. 1700 also authorizes $200 million for programs that focus on hiring the community prosecutors that play a critical role in following up on police work and convicting criminals.

All of these COPS grant programs will provide critical resources to local law enforcement agencies across the country that are facing a variety of challenges including emerging and ongoing gang activity. In previous years, a COPS grant provided funding to the Santa Ana Police Department for Firearms Identification technology that can read the unique fingerprints that connect bullets and guns. The Santa Ana Police Department has been able to solve many gang-related shootings and other violent crimes by using this ballistics technology. I hope that the passage of this legislation will help ensure that law enforcement agencies across the nation benefit from the valuable COPS grant programs.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 1700.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 1700, the Community Oriented Policing Services Reauthorization Act, which has provided greater numbers of police officers to protect our citizens in every State in the union. My district in Oregon has benefited significantly from this program through the addition of 279 police officers and a total of over $24 million secured for local law enforcement agencies since 1994.

I find it perplexing that the administration continually attempts to reduce funding for COPS when independent studies confirm that the grants significantly contributed to the crime reduction in the late 1990s. Nationally, the strain on law enforcement has never been greater, as resources are stretched to combat the recent rise in crime while also addressing homeland security responsibilities. For this reason, I support the revitalization of this program to protect our families and give law enforcement the support they need.

Mr. FORBES. 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 Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1700, 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. CONYERS. 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.

SAFE AMERICAN ROADS ACT OF 2007

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1773) to limit the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to grant authority to motor carriers domiciled in Mexico to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1773

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 ''Safe American Roads Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON GRANTING AUTHORITY.

The Secretary of Transportation may not grant authority to a motor carrier domiciled in Mexico to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border, except under the pilot program authorized by this Act.

SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may carry out, in accordance with section 350 of Public Law 107–87, section 31315(c) of title 49, United States Code, all Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations, and this Act, a pilot program that grants authority to not more than 100 motor carriers domiciled in Mexico to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border.

(b) LIMITATION ON COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES PARTICIPATING IN PILOT PROGRAM.—The number of commercial motor vehicles owned or leased by motor carriers domiciled in Mexico which may be used to participate in the pilot program shall not exceed 1,000.

(c) PILOT PROGRAM PREREQUISITES.—The Secretary may not initiate the pilot program under subsection (a) until—

(1) the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation submits to Congress and the Secretary a report—

(A) independently verifying that the Department is in compliance with each of the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) of section 350 of Public Law 107–87; and

(B) including a determination of whether the Department has established sufficient mechanisms—

(i) to apply Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations to motor carriers domiciled in Mexico; and

(ii) to ensure compliance with such laws and regulations by motor carriers domiciled in Mexico who will be granted authority to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border;

(2) the Secretary of Transportation—

(A) takes such action as may be necessary to address any issues raised in the report of the Inspector General under paragraph (1); and

(B) submits to Congress a detailed report describing such actions;

(3) the Secretary determines that there is a program in effect for motor carriers domiciled in the United States to be granted authority to begin operations in Mexico beyond commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border;

(4) the Secretary publishes in the Federal Register and provides sufficient opportunity for public comment on the following:

(A) a detailed description of the pilot program and the amount of funds the Secretary will need to expend to carry out the pilot program;

(B) the findings of each pre-authorization safety audit conducted, before the date of enactment of this Act, by inspectors of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of motor carriers domiciled in Mexico and seeking to participate in the pilot program;

(C) a process by which the Secretary will be able to revoke Mexico-domiciled motor carrier operating authority under the pilot program;

(D) specific measures to be required by the Secretary to protect the health and safety of the public, including enforcement measures and penalties for noncompliance;

(E) specific measures to be required by the Secretary to enforce the requirements of section 391.11(b)(2) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act;

(F) specific standards to be used to evaluate the pilot program and compare any change in the level of motor carrier safety as a result of the pilot program;

(G) penalties to be levied against carriers who, under the pilot program, violate section 365.501(b) of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act;

(H) a list of Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations for which the Secretary will accept compliance with a Mexican law or regulation as the equivalent to compliance with a corresponding Federal motor carrier safety law or regulation, including commercial driver's license requirements; and

(I) for any law or regulation referred to in subparagraph (H) for which compliance with a Mexican law or regulation will be accepted, an analysis of how the requirements of the Mexican and United States laws and regulations differ; and

(5) the Secretary establishes an independent review panel under section 4 to monitor and evaluate the pilot program.

SEC. 4. INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PANEL.—The Secretary of Transportation shall establish an independent review panel to monitor and evaluate the pilot program under section 3. The panel shall be composed of 3 individuals appointed by the Secretary.

(b) DUTIES.—

(1) EVALUATION.—The independent review panel shall—

(A) evaluate any effects that the pilot program has on motor carrier safety, including an analysis of any crashes involving motor carriers participating in the pilot program and a determination of whether the pilot program has had an adverse effect on motor carrier safety; and

(B) make, in writing, recommendations to the Secretary.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the independent review panel determines that the pilot program has had an adverse effect on motor carrier safety, the panel shall recommend, in writing, to the Secretary—

(A) such modifications to the pilot program as the panel determines are necessary to address such adverse effect; or

(B) termination of the pilot program.

(c) RESPONSE.—Not later than 5 days after the date of a written determination of the independent review panel that the pilot program has had an adverse effect on motor carrier safety, the Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to address such adverse effect or terminate the pilot program.

SEC. 5. INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation—

(1) shall monitor and review the pilot program;

(2) not later than 12 months after the date of initiation of the pilot program, shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of Transportation a 12-month interim report on the Inspector General's findings regarding the pilot program; and

(3) not later than 18 months after the date of initiation of the pilot program, shall submit to Congress and the Secretary an 18-month interim report with the Inspector General's findings regarding the pilot program.

(b) SAFETY DETERMINATIONS.—The interim reports submitted under subsection (a) shall include the determination of the Inspector General of—

(1) whether the Secretary has established sufficient mechanisms to determine whether the pilot program is having any adverse effects on motor carrier safety;

(2) whether the Secretary is taking sufficient action to ensure that motor carriers domiciled in Mexico and participating in the pilot program are in compliance with all Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations and section 350 of Public Law 107–87; and

(3) the sufficiency of monitoring and enforcement activities by the Secretary and States to ensure compliance with such laws and regulations by such carriers.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of submission of the 18-month interim report of the Inspector General under this section, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the actions the Secretary is taking to address any motor carrier safety issues raised in one or both of the interim reports of the Inspector General;

(2) evaluation of the Secretary whether granting authority to additional motor carriers domiciled in Mexico to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border would have any adverse effects on motor carrier safety;

(3) modifications to Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations or special procedures that the Secretary determines are necessary to enhance the safety of operations of motor carriers domiciled in Mexico in the United States; and

(4) any recommendations for legislation to make the pilot program permanent or to expand operations of motor carriers domiciled in Mexico in the United States beyond municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border.

SEC. 6. DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may carry out the pilot program under this Act for a period not to exceed 3 years; except that, if the Secretary does not comply with any provision of this Act, the authority of the Secretary to carry out the pilot program terminates.

(b) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the last day of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a final report on the pilot program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1773.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have before us very important legislation. It is bad enough that NAFTA has caused the United States to hemorrhage more than 1 million jobs; but now the administration with the NAFTA trucks proposal would add insult to injury. Not only would it put in jeopardy more American jobs, those of American truck drivers, but it would also jeopardize the safety of the traveling public on America's highways.

I want to congratulate Representative BOYDa for bringing such an important issue to the Congress so early in her congressional career and Representative HUNTER on the other side of the aisle for his contributions to this issue and to this legislation.

We have here what is called a SAP. It is a statement of administration policy. They take us for saps if they believe we will believe the information they have conveyed to us in this letter.

They say that the safety standards, including hours of service, driver medical standards, financial responsibility, and drug and alcohol testing, will all be remedied by their program. There is and are no hours of service regulations in Mexico. We have heard anecdotal evidence from Mexican truck drivers that they are often forced, as they are exploited down there working for relatively low wages compared to truck drivers in the U.S., to drive for 48 to 72 hours at a stretch. How do they do that? They laugh and they say ''dust.'' What is dust? Drugs, uppers. They are commonly used in Mexico. There are no meaningful hours of service regulation. There is no drug testing in Mexico, and illegal substances are frequently used for these extended trips.

But the administration would have us believe that by signing a piece of paper and waving a magic wand and having in place paper provisions on drug and alcohol testing or hours of service, that these things will happen meaningfully. Suddenly, there will be a tremendous change in the culture of the American trucking industry.

They go on to say there will be an in-depth safety inspection before they are allowed to operate in the United States. Well, that is interesting because in testimony before my committee recently, the administration admitted that when a new bus carrier, and we are having a problem with illegally run bus service, what is called ''curb service'' here in the Northeast, it takes them up to 18 months to get out and certify that company actually exists and look at the papers in a filing cabinet. They never go out and look at the buses. Never.

We have the same thing going on with the American trucking industry. Only a tiny fraction of trucks are inspected on an annual basis. But somehow, magically, an agency that is totally overwhelmed by the volume of traffic is going to inspect each and every truck meaningfully in Mexico, inspect the credentials of the Mexican truck drivers in depth, certify the nonexistent drug testing programs, and certify tracking of the nonexistent hours of service in Mexico. And then they say that this will all be made available to the American public.

Here is the form in which it is made available. It is right here in the Federal Register. They are saying we are requiring publication, and they say it would be redundant to have all of the safety audits in detail published in the Federal Register because they put up this page. It has a date. That is good. That is a good start. It is up for 7 days, by the way.

And in order to access this page, you have to know the MX docket number. You have to know the particular docket number of that Mexican carrier. You have to know specifics to get nonspecific information that will only be posted for 7 days. And if you get through that maze and you happen to hit the 7-day window, because it goes down after 7 days, I guess they don't have enough memory capacity down there at DOT to leave it up longer for the public to review to, you get this, a form that has the applicant information, business address, and status. Quote: ''Provisional authority issued.''

That is the in-depth information that FMCSA is going to put up for the American public to review to understand that these audits are being conducted and these carriers are safe.

We need this legislation so we can be assured that we are protecting the safety of the American public.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to voice my support for H.R. 1773, the Safe American Roads Act of 2007, which passed the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee by unanimous vote, 100 percent support by both Democrats and Republicans.

In order to comply with NAFTA, the Department of Transportation has taken steps to fully open the Mexican border to truck traffic. To start this process, DOT has announced a cross-border demonstration program. The bill we are considering today specifies requirements that DOT must meet when implementing this program.

But compliance with NAFTA does not mean we have to or even that we should open the border without any scrutiny of the process. It is a priority for our committee and for this Congress to stay engaged on this issue and ensure that the border opening for trucks is handled properly with the safety of American motorists as our top priority.

A major theme of the bill we are considering today is constant review of the program as it is implemented by the Department of Transportation.

The bill requires DOT to ensure the trucks crossing into the U.S. not only understand our safety regulations for motor carriers, but that they are fully compliant with them as well. This bill also requires DOT to maintain an active review of the demonstration project. DOT must respond to the Inspector General's periodic reviews and provide comments and suggestions to make the program better. And when we mean better, we mean safer.

I want to say that this bill is an excellent example of bipartisanship. Concern over Mexican trucks does not fall on one side of the aisle or the other. Many Republicans and Democrats both feel strongly about this issue. It impacts the entire country.

Two bills were recently introduced that address this issue, one by our colleague, Mrs. BOYDA from Kansas, and one by Mr. HUNTER from California, on which I was an original cosponsor. While Mrs. BOYDA's bill is the base bill and we certainly want to commend her, the bill we are considering today has many aspects from Mr. HUNTER's bill as well, combined together to create the bill we are voting on today. I believe H.R. 1773 was made stronger by taking the best attributes from both the Boyda bill and the Hunter bill.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we need reciprocity. I said at a hearing on this legislation that we should not approve more Mexican trucking companies than American trucking companies that are approved to go into Mexico. We need reciprocity, and we need fairness for American trucking companies and American workers. Again, though, I will voice my support for this bill, H.R. 1773, and I urge my colleagues to support it as well.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and the subcommittee Chair, Mr. DEFAZIO, and the ranking member, Mr. DUNCAN. I am very pleased to join them in support of this bill.

As you know, Texas shares a longer border with Mexico than any other border State. In 2004, at Texas border ports of entry, there were 3 million commercial crossings.

The safety and congestion impacts of this pilot program will be felt the most by Texas drivers, roads and businesses. The impact will be felt particularly by my constituents as Interstates 20, 30, 35 and 45 all converge in the heart of my congressional district.

I agree with the chairman of the committee when he says we must not bolster trade with Mexico at the expense of the safety of American drivers. This bill requires that Federal motor carriers complete all safety inspections on the Mexican side of the border. The bill also mandates that safety can be assured before Mexican trucks enter our country under this program.

We in Congress cannot afford to be soft in our oversight of this matter. Passing a safety inspection in Mexico, even one administered by Federal motor carriers, is not a guarantee to Mexican trucks and drivers that they will have free rein over our roads.

In the event that this program proves successful, it is important for this body to give adequate guidance and assistance to border States like Texas to address the burden of increased freight traffic, including congestion, air quality, and wear and tear on our roads. The Department of Transportation cannot use Texas and other border States as guinea pigs and not give them the support they need.

In closing, I fully support this bill. It removes much of the uncertainty regarding safety that this committee found in the Department of Transportation's proposed pilot program.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to our colleague, Mrs. MILLER

of Michigan, who has been one of the most active members of our committee on this particular legislation.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I appreciate the gentleman yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of H.R. 1773, the Safe American Roads Act. This legislation sets out very, very stringent, quantifiable safety standards which the Department of Transportation must meet before permitting Mexican-based trucks to operate through the United States.

Before coming to Congress, I had the pleasure of serving for 8 years as the Michigan Secretary of State with a principal responsibility of being that State's chief motor vehicle administrator. I was also the chairman of the Traffic Safety Commission of my State, and so I had the responsibility for all licensing, commercial drivers licenses as well as hazardous material endorsements. So I had immediate concerns about how the DOT pilot program might compromise the safety of our roads. Here in the United States, we have reciprocity amongst the States so we can share driving records across State lines.

□ 1245

In Mexico, licensing requirements are very poor, and it's well-known that fraud in their system runs rampant. In fact, the Transportation Committee heard in testimony from the DOT's Inspector General that one in five Mexican driving records contained an error of some type. Mr. Speaker, if we had a 20 percent error rate in the United States we would consider it a crisis, and I actually believe that was a very low estimate.

There are also concerns about the insurance provisions of this program. American truckers must carry very expensive insurance policies in the event that they are in an accident. What if it happens that a Mexican truck has an accident somewhere in the United States? Good luck to the victims of that accident who will try to collect on damages from a Mexican company.

I believe that if we let these Mexican truckers into our country with questionable identification and insurance, it exposes American drivers to more dangerous conditions on our roadways.

First of all, because the Mexican drivers are allowed to work far longer hours than our truckers; and secondly, it is well-known that there's widespread drug use in this profession, as the chairman of our subcommittee has already articulated. Presently, there is no system under which secure testing could take place. In fact, it's been said that there is a not a single testing lab in Mexico to ensure that the drivers coming into our country are drug free.

The numbers I think are the easiest way to tell whether or not this proposal is a fair deal for the United States. As soon as this pilot program was announced, 800 Mexican trucking companies lined up to come into the United States. By contrast, only two American companies desired to deliver into Mexico. I think those numbers are very indicative of whether or not this is a fair agreement for the United States.

Because of all of these problems, groups like the Teamsters, as well as the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, also the Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety have all come out in opposition to this proposal.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure the program can only take place once these trucks and drivers from Mexico can meet the same standards that American trucks and drivers do. Trucks participating in the pilot program will be subject to rigorous safety inspections limited to a total of 1,000. Their drivers must also demonstrate clean driving records and have a proficiency in English.

This legislation as well would require extensive oversight and review of the pilot program from an independent review panel.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member DUNCAN and Chairman OBERSTAR for this creative solution to a very difficult problem.

I happen to live at the border. I represent the whole California-Mexico border. Through my district, at least 4,000 trucks a day pass through. That means across the whole border three or four, five times that will cross. The volume is enormous. There is no way for us to inspect this incredible volume of traffic. In fact, when there was a test case several years ago of inspecting all the trucks, they found 100 percent of the trucks had either insurance or safety violations.

We are dealing with issues of insurance. We are dealing with issues of truck safety. We're dealing with issues of driver certification and jobs on this side of the border. There's no question that these certifications are just not the same standards that we apply. We have fraudulent use of papers. There is enormous difficulty in getting accountability.

But, in addition, if we allow the truckers to cross they will be in this country and able to take jobs away from our local companies, especially small trucking companies. It costs them about 150 dollars to go to L.A. from San Diego and back. A Mexican trucker will do it for 50 dollars. That puts all our guys out of business if the administration proposal was allowed to go through.

So I thank the Chair for coming up with this creative solution. This is a bad, bad vision that the administration has to allow all trucks across in a way which does not really meet the safety or insurance or certification standards that we have in this country. And we're going to have a major accident somewhere, and the people in America are going to say how did this happen.

Well, we intend in Congress to make sure that we keep our safe roads and we keep our jobs for American truckers.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee for yielding, and I'd like to thank the leadership on the Transportation Committee for the creative solution that you have brought back with H.R. 1773 because it places important restrictions upon the pilot program planned by the Department of Transportation to allow Mexican trucks to operate across this country.

My first concern with the pilot is its impact on the safety of our Nation's highways. This Congress gave this department specific criteria to ensure adequate safety and security measures were taken prior to allowing Mexican trucks to travel on our highways. I believe it is important that all of these criteria are met prior to the start of any pilot project on our Nation's highways.

I am also very concerned about the economic consequences of allowing Mexican trucks to operate within the United States. It is my hope that if this pilot program is indeed implemented, the Department will work closely with State and local law enforcement to ensure that the prohibition on point-to-point deliveries within the United States by Mexican trucking companies is enforced.

I am especially pleased that this bill will require a plan to enforce existing English proficiency regulations prior to the start of any pilot program. It is critical for the safety of anyone on the road that truckers are able to understand traffic and warning signs and are able to communicate with law enforcement and emergency management officials.

It is absolutely critical that we stop the Department from implementing their pilot program until we can ensure the safety of our American motorists and our American highways.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Mrs. BOYDA), the author of the legislation, who's made an extraordinary commitment so early in her career.

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Thank you, Chairman DEFAZIO. I certainly appreciate your support.

This is a tremendously huge issue in my district. People want to know that Congress is out there making our roads safe. I have two children and went back and forth on I–70 between Kansas City and St. Louis for years with two little kids. The truck traffic is amazingly dense. We spent years encouraging truck safety and spending billions of

dollars on safety and environmental standards, and it just does not make any sense to now watch that be reversed.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has unveiled a pilot program that will permit poorly regulated Mexican traffic onto American highways. In its present form, the DOT proposal exhibits reckless disregard for America's road safety, not to mention our border security and our economic interests.

Under current law, trucks registered in Mexico can drive only within a narrow border zone in the United States before cargos are transferred to an American vehicle. This system not only protects U.S. highways from unsafe Mexican traffic, but it prevents drug smuggling and illegal immigration, and it safeguards American transportation jobs.

But the DOT intends to halt this very sensible system. Under their pilot program, Mexican-domiciled trucks could penetrate far into the American heartland. The traditional safety standards required for vehicles on American roads, such as frequent safety inspections, limits on the number of hours driven in a day, drug testing and criminal background checks for drivers hauling hazardous materials, either would not be applied or would be weakly enforced.

Mexico certainly does not have a system right now for keeping these kinds of records in place. It's ridiculous for us to consider that they will be able to enforce these regulations in any way that comes up to our standards.

Again, let me say that our trucking industry has spent so much money getting our trucks, making them safer and so much to bring them up to environmental standards, it's just crazy to now say that we are going to bring in trucks that do not have to meet those same standards.

If the DOT pilot program proceeds as planned, drivers in Kansas and all across America will soon share their roads with unsafe Mexican trucks. The flood of foreign traffic will inevitably rise, result in collisions, injuries and even fatalities.

I introduced the bill now under consideration, the Safe American Roads Act of 2007, to rein in the Department of Transportation. The bill requires the cross-border pilot program to comply with 22 specific strict safety criteria. It creates an independent review panel to monitor and evaluate the pilot program after it launches, and it provides that the program can be terminated at any point if the Secretary of Transportation does not comply with all of these provisions.

By decisively approving the Safe American Roads Act, Congress can protect the millions of American families who drive our highways every day. I'd also like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Chairman DEFAZIO for their assistance and support, and I certainly urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to our colleague from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman DUNCAN for the time and wish to add my strong support to H.R. 1773, along with Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mrs. BOYDA, and want to thank the chairmen and ranking members of Transportation and Infrastructure for their leadership on this issue.

I was proud to cosponsor Congressman HUNTER's legislation, H.R. 1756, and am happy to support the revised H.R. 1773, the bill before us, which incorporates many of the strongest provisions from the Hunter bill. Safety of Americans and American highways must always take precedence over some obscure treaty obligation. As far as I am concerned, the safety of Americans and enforcing American law is far and away the number one priority here.

It's commonsense legislation that would prevent Mexican motor carriers from operating in the United States beyond the commercial zones of the United States-Mexico border until the Secretary of Transportation unequivocally certifies several minimum standards: requiring English language proficiency and ensuring U.S. law enforcement personnel have the ability to access databases, verify driving records, identification, criminal history and risk to homeland security the same way the information is used to verify U.S. operators. We do not need 90,000-pound unguided missiles on our highways.

Every day, the trucking industry ships more cargo in our Nation than any other mode of transportation. The American professionals behind these rigs and their equipment are subject to constant stringent safety standards. This bill ensures that at the very minimum Mexican truckers are subject to the same standards as our own operators. The safety of our citizens on our roadways must be our top priority, and I urge all Members to support H.R. 1773.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, could I ask the time remaining please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oregon has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Tennessee has 10½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee.

I want to thank Congresswoman BOYDA for her work on addressing this very important issue and of course Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA and all those who have worked so hard on this legislation. I am a strong supporter and cosponsor of the Safe American Roads Act.

This legislation takes a reasoned and commonsense approach to dealing with opening our borders to Mexico-domiciled trucks. Instead of providing blanket access to U.S. roads, this bill places important standards and restrictions on the DOT's proposed pilot program, ensuring that our roads remain safe and that our Nation's trucking industry remains competitive.

The heart of this legislation centers on establishing a pilot program that employs standards that we in Congress approved, while maintaining an open comment period to ensure that expert opinions are considered with respect to safety and compliance and enforcement.

The bill ensures accountability through both the administrative and legislative process, requiring an Inspector General review of the pilot program to determine whether Mexico-domiciled motor carriers participating are in full compliance with U.S. motor carrier safety laws, and requiring a report to Congress within 90 days of completion of the program.

The Safe American Roads Act does not aim to close America's roadways to foreign truckers. Instead, it requires the Department of Transportation to tap on the brakes, to slow down and make sure that the road we travel down is one that ensures the highest standards of safety and accountability.

Further, the legislation ensures the competitiveness of our Nation's trucking industry by preventing Mexico-domiciled motor carriers from accessing U.S. highways until U.S.-based trucking companies are given comparable access in Mexico.

□ 1300

Once again, I want to thank Congresswoman BOYDA for introducing this legislation and her work with Mr. HUNTER and so many others. I urge all of our colleagues to join me in supporting passage of this legislation.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on our side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Tennessee has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE. Thank you to the gentleman from Tennessee for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation as a cosponsor. Being from Texas, we get the brunt of trucks coming from Mexico into the United States. Mexican truck drivers shouldn't be treated any better or worse than American truck drivers.

The general reputation of the American trucking industry is very good. They maintain their vehicles, and they maintain competence of their drivers. This legislation will require the same of Mexican truck drivers that come into the United States to have vehicles that don't pollute, that are not overweight, that are maintained as well as American trucks, and it will require the simple but very logical principle that Mexican truck drivers that drive throughout the United States, those massive 18 wheelers, be able to read a street sign.

I think it's important that people who drive our freeways are able to read the directions and the signs of the cities into which they travel. This legislation makes a lot of sense; it's common sense. It's needed to equalize the crossings into the United States of Mexican truck drivers with the competence of American truck drivers.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the chairman of the Transportation Committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, for 5½ minutes.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his splendid leadership of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, this portion of the session holding intensive hearings charting the future course for transportation as we move into the second half of the authorization of the SAFETEA–LU bill, and laying the groundwork for the future transportation of America. The gentleman has done a superb job.

I congratulate the Congresswoman, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, for recognizing the threat of Mexican trucks admitted unabashedly, without restraint, into the United States, or very minimal restraint that the Department proposed.

I also express my great appreciation to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) for participating throughout the shaping of this legislation and working constructively for a reasonable counter to the administration's plan. The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) with his ever-judicial manner has helped us shape a very good balance to the allowing of Mexican trucks into the United States.

This cross-border pilot program the administration launched is not just a little initiative, something to let pass, it's a major shift in transportation policy. They were intent on opening the border with minimum public notification and at great cost to safety.

Despite serious concerns raised by the Congress, by safety advocates in the private sector, by nonprofit organizations, by States who were concerned about Mexican-domiciled trucks coming into the United States, this legislation limits the authority of the Secretary to open the U.S.-Mexican border to trucks coming into the United States.

It will not allow a 1-year pilot program as simply a gimmick, a ruse, under which they can allow the border to be opened unilaterally under terms and conditions that the Department or the administration might choose. Instead, we have a strict set of prerequisites, a strict set of conditions. A pilot program of 3 years, 100 motor carriers for Mexico, 1,000 trucks, does not provide blanket authority for 3 years. If the Secretary fails to comply with any provision of the act, the program terminates.

We also require the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, concurrently, while the program is under way, to review and report back to the public, to the Congress, to the Department where there are failures and deviations, if there are any, from the program that we have set in place, especially if Mexican carriers do not meet strict Federal safety requirements.

This is not a run, operate, and evaluate. It is operate and concurrently evaluate what the Department is doing, what the Mexican trucks are doing. Are they, in Mexico, requiring fundamental elements of highway safety that U.S. drivers are required to submit to? Do they have hours of service requirements comparable to those in the United States?

Mexico does not have a single certified lab to test drivers for drug and alcohol compliance, as our drivers are required to be subjected to. The Inspector General has to verify that every requirement of section 350 of Public Law 107–87, the basic authority under which they propose to operate, has sufficient mechanisms in place to ensure safety, to enforce safety.

DOT has to also, under this legislation, provide the public with an opportunity to comment on issues of safety and cabotage, that the trucks that come into the United States and deliver goods to a destination point and carry goods back to Mexico aren't moving goods from one U.S. city to another U.S. city in violation of our cabotage laws. We don't allow it in aviation; we are not going to allow it in trucking.

We are living up to our commitments under NAFTA, but we have put in place requirements that are vigorous, protections that are important to protect travelers on our U.S. roads from failures in Mexico.

Now, the Department of Transportation has sent up their letter, their statement of policy, in which in one place there is a complaint that this legislation gives the agency ''only 5 days to take action necessary to address adverse findings or terminate the program.''

That's a requirement on safety. If you find an unsafe condition, how much longer than 5 days do you want to allow it to go? How much longer do you want to have an unsafe condition existing on our roads? That's just dead wrong.

Then, in another provision, they complain that we, their language says, purporting to require the Secretary of Transportation to submit legislative recommendations to Congress. They submit legislative recommendations to Congress, every executive branch agency. Whether we want them or not, they submit legislative recommendations. We are saying the Secretary may submit. If there are some things they want changed, we invite them to submit their recommendations to the Congress.

I simply don't buy that. I think they are sort of a half-hearted statement.

This is good legislation, good sound policy. It protects U.S. drivers and allows us to keep commitments under NAFTA, and we will protect American roadways.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the ranking Republican on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, a man who has been a leader on this legislation and on many others, Mr. MICA.

Mr. MICA. I thank our ranking member, Mr. DUNCAN.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today in support of H.R. 1773, the Safe American Roads Act of 2007. This bill has some good provisions in it. I regret that a bill which I consider even better and stronger, which was drafted by Mr. HUNTER, the gentleman from California, and introduced in Congress, is not the bill that we are considering.

I am sorry Mr. HUNTER is not with us today also to speak, but I know he has many important obligations in his responsibility in securing our national defense.

Again, I believe Mr. HUNTER's bill would have been a stronger bill that would have even more teeth to make certain that Mexican trucks comply with not only our safety regulations, but also our economic regulations against cabotage.

Now, let me make the record clear that I served in Congress when NAFTA was voted on in 1993. I did not vote for that legislation, and one reason was some of the unfair provisions, the inequity between the economy of Mexico and the United States. I had no problem with Canada, but Mexico is a different situation. I am for open and fair trade, but what passed in NAFTA then and today was a trade agreement between unequal partners when it comes to Mexico.

This administration, the Bush administration, unfortunately, has inherited what I call the haunting legacy of the Clinton administration, one of the haunting legacies, which pushed for passage of a lopsided NAFTA agreement. Back in 1993, in October, actually in October of 1992, President Clinton had only positive things to say about NAFTA.

Also, I have quotes by current Speaker PELOSI, then the Representative from California: ''In supporting NAFTA, I am casting my vote for the young people of America and for the future.''

The future isn't to send jobs to the south, to Mexico, and then now open up the borders and truck the product produced by those jobs to the north. The responsibility we have in Congress is to make certain that even though we have to comply with some of the terms of this unfair agreement, that we do protect the safety, that we do protect the economic opportunity and the disaster this unfair agreement has brought upon our economy.

So it's critical today that Congress, that what we are doing today maintain, at least at a minimum, in keeping the unfair provisions of the treaty enacted by a Democratic Congress, under the promotion of President Clinton, from doing even more damage to us at this time.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I will close on our side.

I will simply say that no matter how much we want to have good relations and trade with our friends in Mexico, and we all certainly want that, the first obligation of the U.S. Congress is to the American people.

This bill is important for the safety of American roads, it's important to our American trucking companies, our small businesses, and to our truck drivers. It's legislation that all of our colleagues can support, and I urge our colleagues to do so.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

My good friend from Florida, the ranking Republican member of the committee, made a point that NAFTA was promoted by and passed during the Clinton administration. That's true, and I have continually castigated that administration and that President for that act.

However, he does need to remember that the agreement was negotiated by the first Bush administration, adopted by the Clinton administration, unfortunately, and to the discredit of the Clinton administration, and passed the House of Representatives with a large majority of Republican votes. Yes, it was a Democratic House, but a very substantial majority of the Democrats opposed the legislation.

So this is truly a bipartisan problem. But if he wants to attribute blame, the Republican Members of the House would bear that, and not the Democratic Members, although we were in the majority. He also talked about unfair portions of the agreement.

Well, the President has the authority to give 6 months' notice at any time that we are going to withdraw in order to require renegotiation of provisions of the agreement. So if this President felt any of the provisions were unfair, or they felt they were under duress to allow the Mexican trucks into this country, they have the tools to renegotiate that agreement. I wish they would use those tools. But they won't because this administration is all about killing off American jobs and American labor. That's what this is ultimately intended to do.

You can get a Mexican truck driver to work for a heck of a lot less than a Teamster in the United States. You can get a Mexican dock worker to work for a heck of a lot less than a longshoreman in the United States.

That's what this ultimately is designed to do. The dream of the NAFTA proponents is that the goods, all the goods, the things we don't make in America anymore, will be imported from China to a port in Mexico, avoiding the U.S. ports, the U.S. longshoremen, and loaded on Mexican trucks, avoiding U.S. trucking companies and U.S. drivers and brought up into America's heartland.

This bill is about protecting the safety of the American traveling public. That's what's before us today. I would love to renegotiate and revisit NAFTA any day of the week, but today we are all about the safety of the American public. That's what we are ensuring with this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1773, 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. DEFAZIO. 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.

□ 1315

JAMES A. LEACH FEDERAL BUILDING

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1505) to designate the Federal building located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the ''James A. Leach Federal Building,'' as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1505

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, shall be known and designated as the ''James A. Leach United States Courthouse''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''James A. Leach United States Courthouse''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 1505.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1505, as amended, is a bill to designate the Federal building in Davenport, IA, as the James A. Leach United States Courthouse. Our former colleague, Jim Leach, was elected to Congress in 1977 from Iowa and served for 14 consecutive Congresses. His contributions to and interests in the House of Representatives are numerous, including his longstanding support for the use of HOPE VI HUD funds to help smaller cities develop affordable housing.

A career public servant, Congressman Leach served 30 years as a Representative in Congress, where he chaired the Banking and Financial Services Committee, the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, and the Congressional Executive Commission on China.

He holds eight honorary degrees, has received decorations from two foreign governments, and is the recipient of the Wayne Morris Integrity in Politics Award, the Woodrow Wilson Award from Johns Hopkins, and the Adlai Stevenson Award from the United Nations Association, and the Edgar Wayburn Award from the Sierra Club.

Jim Leach was hard working, highly respected on both sides of the aisle, and dedicated to the welfare of his constituents. It is fitting and proper to honor his public service with this designation. I support 1505 and urge its adoption.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1505 designates the United States courthouse located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, IA, as the James A. Leach United States Courthouse. The bill honors Congressman Leach's dedication to public service.

Congressman Leach began his long and distinguished career of public service as a congressional staffer in the 1960s. He later served as a foreign service officer and as a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly.

In 1976 Congressman Leach was elected to the House of Representatives. He served in the U.S. House for 30 years, from 1977 to 2007. During his time in Congress, he chaired the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, and the Congressional Executive Commission on China.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, Congressman Jim Leach was a very decent, distinguished and thoughtful Member of Congress. He was a learned Member of the body. He's a personal friend.

He served this country in many capacities. He began his service as a staff

member for then-Congressman Don Rumsfeld. He went to the State Department in 1968. He served as special assistant to director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. He served in capacities with the United Nations, with the U.S. Advisory Commission on International Education and Cultural Affairs.

He served in an advisory capacity with the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, rather well-rounded career before being elected to Congress one term after I was elected.

He chaired, at one point, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Subcommittee on Asian Pacific Affairs, and the Congressional Executive Commission on China.

He, along the way, collected a number of honorary degrees. He's the recipient of the Wayne Morris Integrity in Politics Award, the Woodrow Wilson award from Johns Hopkins University, the Adlai Stevenson Award from the United Nations Association, and an award from the Sierra Club, the Edgar Wayburn award.

He's now serving on the faculty of Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs as a visiting professor.

He's been ably succeeded by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK), and I really congratulate him and the entire Iowa delegation for so graciously and thoughtfully introducing and supporting this bill to honor one of Congress's most respected and well-liked Members.

There are rare people who pass through this body and leave with good feelings and with good memories by those of us who continue to serve, and Jim Leach is one of those. It is very appropriate to designate the U.S. courthouse at Davenport, Iowa, in his honor, in his name.

And, again, I really express my great admiration to the Iowa delegation for so recognizing this distinguished former Member of Congress. His service in no way takes away from the service of Mr. LOEBSACK who succeeded him, who is, himself, a distinguished professor, has distinguished himself in the arena of public policy during his college teaching career, and brings that same thoughtfulness and constructiveness to the public policy process that his predecessor did, whom we honor today.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and respect the memory of Jim Leach.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding. And I thank the gentleman from Iowa for bringing this resolution to honor our good friend and colleague.

And we are proud, as Iowans, to stand here today and ask for support for this resolution to name the building in Davenport the James A. Leach Courthouse.

I look back on his career, what a stellar career. All of these years, elected to Congress in 1976, served till the end of the 109th Congress, a couple of days into this year, actually.

And one of the things that stands out with Jim Leach is Jim Leach was a champion. He was a champion in 1960 as a State wrestling champion, and I'd point out to our wrestling champions here in this Congress, a State wrestling champion in Iowa is like being a national champion someplace else, just to set humility aside for the moment.

But that is a characteristic that Jim Leach had, the characteristic of real humility and the characteristic of a champion.

And as he came here to Congress and he began that long tenure that was here, he touched a lot of different issues. But his history and his experience in the financial industry was unparalleled in the contemporary Congress. And I know of no period in previous history when there's been someone that's been so respected, that has taken such leadership in the financial affairs.

And as chairman of the Finance Committee, and then later on as chairman of the Subcommittee on International Relations, Jim Leach was a leader that was respected on both sides. He was, some would call him a bipartisan legislator. I would say Jim Leach was a nonpartisan Member of this Congress. He evaluated each one of those issues that came before him, drew an independent judgment.

And if you might question his independence, I'll also make a concession on Congressman Leach in that he didn't always have every bit of his hair in place and he led sometimes with a sweater underneath his jacket, and it was only picked up by Senator GRASSLEY as a stylish tip. But that's because Jim Leach followed his own mission, his own conscience, his own intellect and, in fact, he used his time to focus on those issues that were the good things for Americans, good things for Iowans.

So I'm proud today to stand in support of this resolution and proud to be able to call Jim Leach a colleague and a friend in the opposite order. It's with great admiration I ask support for this resolution of this Congress.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK).

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to offer H.R. 1505. This bill designates the United States Federal building located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, the James A. Leach United States Courthouse.

Jim Leach represented Iowa with grace and distinction for 30 years, and this legislation is a tribute to his service. His legacy of statesmanship, his leadership in foreign affairs and financial services is already recounted. His dedication to public service and his capable representation of his constituents left a lasting impact on the district I am now honored to represent.

Jim is a native son of Iowa; and throughout his time in Congress, his representation of the State was based upon the values of the people he represented and of the town in which he grew up.

Jim recently joined the faculty of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton, his alma mater. As a former professor myself, and I say former now, I believe I can say with some authority that the experience and knowledge that Jim has brought to the Woodrow Wilson School has no doubt been a tremendous asset for Princeton students and faculty.

In fact, as a professor at Cornell College in Iowa, I was pleased to invite Jim to campus to lecture on foreign policy matters. His talks were always informative and engaging. I know that these guest lectures were only a glimpse of the knowledge, the depth of the knowledge and expertise that Jim has brought to Princeton on a daily basis.

That he chose to continue his commitment to public service by training the next generation of scholars and practitioners is indicative of Jim's time in Congress, and I wish him the best of luck in his new career.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Jim for his many years of service. It is my hope that I am able to represent Iowa's Second District as capably as he did for so many years. And I join with my colleagues and urge you to pass this resolution.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LATHAM).

Mr. LATHAM. I thank the Speaker for the time to rise in support of this resolution to honor our great friend, Jim Leach, by naming the courthouse in Davenport, Iowa, after him. It is a well-deserved honor.

I miss Jim Leach around here because of his great sense of humor, his insight, his thoughtfulness, someone who was a strong Iowa Hawkeye supporter, having the Hawks in his district, and I, myself, representing Iowa State, so we used to go back and forth an awful lot.

Jim Leach will be remembered here in this body for his 30 years of service, his great thoughtfulness, his intellect, someone who, whether it be in financial services, and the Financial Services Modernization Act bears his name, the Gramm-Leach-Bliley bill; whether it be trying to stop gambling predators over the Internet; someone who knew and understood international policy, foreign affairs like no one else; someone who had such a broad breadth of knowledge, who could bring that forth and convey it to other folks in a very kind and thoughtful way.

He does represent the very best of what's in this Congress, and that is a spirit of bipartisanship, of thought over politics, of actions rather than posturing; someone who I have the greatest personal respect for. And I'm so pleased that Mr. LOEBSACK has

brought this resolution to the floor of the House, and I would urge everyone to support this resolution in honor of James Leach. And I want to commend him, also his wife, Deva, and the family; just wonderful people, and an honor like this could not go to a nicer person or a more deserving individual.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to add my voice, expressing the appreciation to Mr. LOEBSACK and to the Iowa delegation for bringing this resolution forward commemorating the service of our friend and former colleague, Jim Leach.

The 30 years that we were privileged in this body to watch him at work, the words, the recitation to what Jim Leach did doesn't do him justice. He was dignified and principled, one of the few people who could navigate these Halls successfully without ever being mired in partisan politics, doing it his way, a way that was right for the country, if often difficult for him politically.

Just reciting the facts misses the quality of his service. Jim Leach predicted the savings and loan crisis. He was spot on in his observations about American diplomacy from the Middle East to North Dakota. I meant to say North Korea, probably North Dakota as well, as I think about it.

He, as an example of his principled nature, resigned from the Foreign Service in protest of President Nixon's firing of special prosecutor Archibald Cox.

In his congressional campaigns, he was one of the few people who refused to accept PAC contributions and out of State donations. He wouldn't run negative ads, and he tried to stop outside groups who were supporting him from, in turn, running negative ads.

In 1997, he refused to vote for Speaker Newt Gingrich because of deep ethics concerns. And while it was the right thing to do, as history has shown, it was a tough vote against a sitting Speaker in your own party. But it was an example of how Jim Leach operated.

He correctly predicted what was going to happen with our ill-advised adventure in Iraq with great clarity and force in committee and on the floor. And then he voted against it, again, at some difficulty for himself politically, particularly at that time. That wasn't the direction of the prevailing winds in his party or in the country.

But that's how Jim Leach was. He thought about issues. He analyzed them. He shared his analysis in his own thoughtful, understated way. He was usually right, and the congressional deliberations were better as a result.

I must say that I'm sorry that President Bush chose not to take the advice of dozens of Members in this body on both sides of the aisle who urged that Jim Leach be appointed as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, a post for which he would be eminently well qualified.

□ 1330

I am confident we will see a new chapter in his distinguished career whether in the United Nations, perhaps in a new administration. As a friend, a colleague and an American, I look forward to whatever that next chapter is in Jim's career.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I would love to stand with the gentleman from Minnesota and the gentlewoman from Texas in urging our colleagues to vote for this. He was a good individual.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, and thanks to Congressman LOEBSACK for introducing this bill and working hard to designate the James A. Leach Courthouse in Davenport, Iowa. I would also like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for reporting this bill out of Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Congressman Leach is a good man who served his constituents with distinction and grace, and it is fitting that we honor him with a hometown reminder of his commitment and service to Iowa. While his career in Congress was distinguished and honorable, I want to touch on another passion of his—wrestling.

Jim Leach began wrestling in his birthplace of Davenport as a seventh-grader. As a student at Davenport High School, he won the 1960 state wrestling championship at the 138-pound weight class. Competing for Princeton University, he lost just one dual meet match. Later, as a research student at the London School of Economics, he went on to compete in freestyle matches. In 1995, he was awarded the Outstanding American Award from the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

His wrestler's spirit was evident in his public service, as he took a disciplined and hard working approach to his duties. For thirty years, Congressman Leach served his constituents, and he never lost touch of his Davenport roots. As an original cosponsor of HR 1505, I am proud to support the James A. Leach Courthouse.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1505, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to designate the United States courthouse located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the James A. Leach United States Courthouse'.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR TO CONVEY A PARCEL OF REAL PROPERTY TO ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1036) to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1036

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF GSA FLEET MANAGEMENT CENTER TO ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the requirements of this section, the Administrator of General Services shall convey, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, by quitclaim deed, to the Alaska Railroad Corporation, an entity of the State of Alaska (in this section referred to as the ''Corporation''), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of real property described in subsection (b), known as the GSA Fleet Management Center.

(b) GSA FLEET MANAGEMENT CENTER.—The parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) is the parcel located at the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Christensen Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska, consisting of approximately 78,000 square feet of land and the improvements thereon.

(c) CONSIDERATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As consideration for the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a), the Administrator shall require the Corporation to—

(A) convey replacement property in accordance with paragraph (2); or

(B) pay the purchase price for the parcel in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) REPLACEMENT PROPERTY.—If the Administrator requires the Corporation to provide consideration under paragraph (1)(A), the Corporation shall—

(A) convey, and pay the cost of conveying, to the United States, acting by and through the Administrator, fee simple title to real property, including a building, that the Administrator determines to be suitable as a replacement facility for the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a); and

(B) provide such other consideration as the Administrator and the Corporation may agree, including payment of the costs of relocating the occupants vacating the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a).

(3) PURCHASE PRICE.—If the Administrator requires the Corporation to provide consideration under paragraph (1)(B), the Corporation shall pay to the Administrator the fair market value of the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) based on its highest and best use as determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by the Administrator and paid for by the Corporation.

(d) APPRAISAL.—In the case of an appraisal under subsection (c)(3)—

(1) the appraisal shall be performed by an appraiser mutually acceptable to the Administrator and the Corporation; and

(2) the assumptions, scope of work, and other terms and conditions related to the appraisal assignment shall be mutually acceptable to the Administrator and the Corporation.

(e) PROCEEDS.—

(1) DEPOSIT.—Any proceeds received under subsection (c) shall be paid into the Federal Buildings Fund established under section 592 of title 40, United States Code.

(2) EXPENDITURE.—Funds paid into the Federal Buildings Fund under paragraph (1) shall be available to the Administrator, in amounts specified in appropriations Acts, for expenditure for any lawful purpose consistent with existing authorities granted to the Administrator; except that the Administrator shall provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate 30 days advance written notice of any expenditure of the proceeds.

(f) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Administrator may require such additional terms and conditions to the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Administrator considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(g) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY AND SURVEY.—The exact acreage and legal description of the parcels to be conveyed under subsections (a) and (c)(2) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Administrator and the Corporation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 1036.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1036 authorizes the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation. Subject to certain requirements, but not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the bill, the Administrator shall convey to the Alaska Railroad Corporation a parcel of real property known as GSA Fleet Management Center.

The GSA Fleet Management Center is a parcel located at the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Christensen Avenue in Anchorage, Alaska, consisting of approximately 78,000 square feet of land. The Alaska Railroad Corporation, in exchange for the land, will either provide a replacement facility for the GSA Fleet Management Center to be conveyed or the Alaska Railroad Corporation will pay the Administrator for the fair market value of the GSA Fleet Management Center based on its highest and best use as determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by the Administrator and paid by the Alaska Railroad Corporation. All proceeds derived from the possible sale of the GSA Fleet Management Center would be deposited in the Federal Buildings Fund.

I support this bill to transfer this property, Mr. Speaker, from the GSA inventory to the Alaska Railroad Corporation and particularly want to note, consistent with Transportation and Infrastructure Committee policy and guidance on these transfer matters, that the bill protects the Federal interest.

H.R. 1036 requires either the GSA is provided with a replacement facility or the railroad corporation will pay the fair market value for the building based on an appraisal of the highest and best use. Further, if the building is bought by the railroad, the proceeds will be deposited into the Federal Buildings Fund.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1036, as amended, was introduced by Representative Don Young from Alaska on February 13, and it requires the Administrator of General Services to convey a small GSA property to the publicly owned Alaska Railroad.

The parcel of property is known as the Fleet Management Center. It is located in Anchorage, Alaska. It is currently being utilized as a GSA motor pool, but it is necessary for the planned expansion of the rail yard there in Anchorage.

H.R. 1036 requires the Administrator to sell the property at either fair market value or to exchange the property for a like valued piece of real estate. The value of the property will be determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by the GSA and paid for by the Alaska Railroad Corporation. This bill requires that all the proceeds from the sale be deposited into the Federal Buildings Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I support this measure, and I urge my colleagues to do so.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the chairman of the committee, Mr. OBERSTAR.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

It is very important to move this legislation. The former chairman of our committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), introduced this legislation in the 109th Congress, but for various reasons of logjams, legislative logjams, it just didn't make it to the House floor because of scheduling problems of the House. But it is very important for the Alaska Railroad, which is an entity of the State of Alaska, and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) has several times talked to me about the need to move this bill. We had it all ready to go in the last Congress, as I said, and I am very happy we are able to bring it up early on in this session of the 110th Congress.

If looked at on its face, it would be a very simple matter to do, a 78,000 square foot parcel of real property in Anchorage, Alaska, needed for the Alaska Railroad's operations. But as we got into it, the Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office raised some scoring issues. So in further review of the matter, we found a way to subject the transfer and the transfer of funds to the appropriation process. That removes the scoring issue. The Administrator of GSA will require the Administrator of the Railroad Corporation to pay fair market value of the property based on highest and best use by an independent appraisal, and that independent appraisal will be commissioned by the Administrator of GSA and will be paid for by the Alaska Railroad Corporation. Then that money will be deposited into the Federal Buildings Fund and the whole exercise will be subject to the appropriation process. That way the interests of the Federal Government are fully protected and the entire transaction will be totally transparent. It is a very good outcome. It benefits the GSA. It benefits the Public Buildings Fund of the Federal Government, and it benefits the Alaska Railroad and the State of Alaska.

I know that the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) is very pleased with the outcome, and I want to thank the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management for his participation through this process and bringing it to a successful conclusion and also the Chair of our subcommittee, Chairwoman Norton.

With that, I urge passage of this legislation.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Minnesota said it all.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1036, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 123) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 123

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR D.C. SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN.

On June 8, 2007, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may jointly designate, the 2007 District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run (in this resolution referred to as the ''event'') may be run through the Capitol Grounds as part of the journey of the Special Olympics torch to the District of Columbia Special Olympics summer games.

SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITY OF CAPITOL POLICE BOARD.

The Capitol Police Board shall take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the event.

SEC. 3. CONDITIONS RELATING TO PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS.

The Architect of the Capitol may prescribe conditions for physical preparations 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 gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Concurrent Resolution 123.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1345

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 123 authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

The Capitol Police, along with the D.C. Special Olympics, will participate in the torch run to be held on June 8, 2007. The D.C. Special Olympics will work closely with the Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol to make sure that the event is in full compliance with rules and regulations governing the use of the Capitol Grounds.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for the Special Olympics is run nationwide by law enforcement officials leading up to each State's or national Special Olympics summer games. Each year, nearly 50 local and Federal law enforcement agencies in Washington, D.C. participate to show their support of the D.C. Special Olympics. This torch relay event is a traditional part of the opening ceremonies for the Special Olympics. For the fifth year these opening ceremonies will take place at Catholic University in the District of Columbia. This is a worthwhile event attended by thousands of Special Olympians, their families and friends, and I support the resolution.

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

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

House Concurrent Resolution 123 authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run, which will be held June 8, 2007. This event is cosponsored by the U.S. Capitol Police.

The Special Olympics is an international organization dedicated to enriching the lives of children and adults with disabilities through athletics. The U.S. Capitol Police will host the opening ceremonies for the torch run, which will take place on the west terrace of the Capitol. Once lit, the torch will be carried to Fort McNair. An estimated 2,000 law enforcement representatives from more than 60 local and Federal law enforcement agencies will participate in this year's event.

Congress has traditionally supported this worthy cause by authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds. I encourage my colleagues to join the law enforcement community in supporting the Special Olympics and join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 123, which authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

Thanks to the tenacity to Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her family, thousands of Special Olympians see their self-confidence, self-esteem, and health increase by participating in the Special Olympics. These games highlight the athletic feats of mentally challenged children and young adults. Confidence and self-esteem are the building blocks for these Olympic Games. Better health, coordination, and lasting friendships are the results of participation.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for the Special Olympics is run nationwide by law enforcement officers, leading up to each state's and the national Special Olympics Summer Games. Each year, nearly 50 local and Federal law enforcement agencies in Washington, DC, participate to show their support of the DC Special Olympics. This torch relay event is a traditional part of the opening ceremonies for the Special Olympics. Law enforcement officers, who are part of the extensive volunteer network that supports the games, carry the Olympic torch across the Capitol Grounds through the District of Columbia to Catholic University. The Capitol Police, along with the DC Special Olympics, will participate in the torch run to be held on June 8, 2007.

Each year, approximately 2,500 Special Olympians of all ages compete in the DC Special Olympics in more than a dozen events. The event is supported by thousands of volunteers from the District and the region and is attended by thousands more family and friends of Special Olympians.

These games are a wonderful expression of inclusiveness and a confirmation of individual contribution. I enthusiastically support this resolution and the very worthwhile endeavor of the Special Olympics.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 123.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 123.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 352) supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 352

Whereas public works infrastructure, facilities, and services play a pivotal role in the health, safety, and well-being of the people of the United States;

Whereas public works infrastructure, facilities, and services could not be provided without the skill and dedication of public works professionals, including engineers and administrators, representing State and local governments throughout the United States;

Whereas public works professionals design, build, operate, maintain, and protect the transportation systems, water supply infrastructure, sewage and refuse disposal systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities that are vital to the citizens, communities, and commerce of the United States;

Whereas the Department of Transportation estimates that every $1,000,000,000 invested in the Nation's highway system creates 47,000 jobs, and every $1 invested in the Nation's highway system generates more than six times that amount in economic activity;

Whereas every $1 invested in public transportation generates as much as $6 in economic returns to the Nation's economy;

Whereas the capital asset program of the General Services Administration is authorized annually to provide Federal employees with necessary office space, courts of law, and other special purpose facilities;

Whereas since 1972 the Nation has invested more than $250,000,000,000 in wastewater infrastructure facilities to establish a system that includes 16,000 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants, 100,000 major pumping stations, 600,000 miles of sanitary sewers, and 200,000 miles of storm sewers;

Whereas the Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration is charged with the safe and secure movement of almost 1,000,000 daily shipments of hazardous materials by all modes of transportation and oversees the safety and security of 2,200,000 miles of gas and hazardous liquid pipelines, which account for 64 percent of the energy commodities consumed in the United States;

Whereas the National Railroad Passenger Corporation annually provides more than 25,000,000 people with intercity rail service;

Whereas over the next 5 years, 8 airfield projects, including 5 runways, 2 runway extensions, and 1 airfield reconfiguration, will be commissioned providing some of the busiest airports in the Nation with the potential to accommodate more than 400,000 additional annual operations, while decreasing the average delay per operation at these airports by approximately 2 minutes;

Whereas in the report of the Department of Transportation entitled ''2006 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions & Performance'', the Department confirms that investment in the Nation's highway, bridge, and transit infrastructure has not kept up with growing demands on the system;

Whereas in that report, the Department of Transportation found that to maintain highway, bridge, and transit networks, governments at all levels would need to invest $94,600,000,000 per year for each of the next 20 years, and to improve highway, bridge, and transit networks that level of investment would need to increase to $153,700,000,000 per year; and

Whereas public works professionals are observing National Public Works Week from May 20 through 26, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week;

(2) recognizes and celebrates the important contributions that public works professionals make every day to improve the public infrastructure of the United States and the communities that those professionals serve; and

(3) urges citizens and communities throughout the United States to join with representatives of the Federal Government in activities and ceremonies that are designed to pay tribute to the public works professionals of the Nation and to recognize the substantial contributions that public works professionals make to the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

National Public Works Week is celebrated yearly during the third week of May. The week has been designated by a variety of organizations to celebrate our public works professionals and the critical work that they do to keep our infrastructure and transportation systems working efficiently and economically. House Resolution 352 pays tribute to these professionals, recognizing their work the week of May 20 through 26, 2007.

''Public works'' are loosely defined as projects that are carried out for the public good, aptly named because they enable the public to complete its work. Hazardous materials, pipelines, municipal infrastructure such as water supply infrastructure and sewage and refuge disposal systems, and transportation systems, such as rail, highways, airports and public transit, all fall under the public works umbrella.

Our public works are vital to our Nation. Our commerce depends on the shipment of goods through rail, on our roads and through the air. Public transportation provides many with a cost-effective way of travel, while also reducing harmful effects on our environment.

Our public health depends on our water supply infrastructure as well as our sewage and disposal systems. According to a U.S. Geological survey, one person uses an average of 150 gallons of water per day. Although running water is expected in most homes in our Nation, many developing countries still consider this a luxury. Globally, 50 percent of the world's hospital beds are filled with patients suffering from water-borne illnesses, with one child killed every 8 seconds due to water-related sickness.

People in more developed nations, such as the United States, use up to 10 times more water than those in the underdeveloped poor countries. And we do take it for granted. For the importance that they play in our daily lives, our transportation and infrastructure systems and facilities often get the bad end of the deal, that is, although public works are depended on consistently, they receive no glory or praise when accomplishing the job. Rather, many only pay tribute and attention to these public works when they fail, such as sewage line breaks that flood our basements, or levee failures that result in flooded communities.

This legislative session the House has passed several key bills that will improve our water and wastewater infrastructure to further reduce facility and system failure. H.R. 569, the Water Quality Investment Act of 2007, amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for sewer overflow control grants. H.R. 700, the Healthy Communities Water Supply Act of 2007, amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to extend the pilot program for alternative water source projects.

H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007, amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds.

And lastly, H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act, authorizes water projects and U.S. Corps of Engineers policy changes.

It has been more than 6 years since a water resources bill was signed into law. And although water resource legislation is expected to be signed into law every 2 years, President Clinton was the last White House occupant to take an active role in our country's water and public health needs.

I recognize the importance of public works for our communities and our country, and I am grateful for the administrators, engineers and servicemen who continue to utilize their skills and provide hours of service and dedication to ensure these necessary facilities and systems work for our Nation.

I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to support it as well.

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

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

House Resolution 352 is a bipartisan resolution which recognizes the important contributions that public works professionals make every day to improve the public infrastructure of the United States. I represent a coastal district in which healthy water transportation and infrastructure systems add to the economic and environmental prosperity of southeast Virginia. Healthy water transportation and infrastructure systems are not only important to coastal communities, but to every district across the country. To meet these needs, as well as the need for flood protection and environmental restoration, passing a Water Resources Development Act for 2007 is a matter of high importance.

According to separate studies conducted by the Congressional Budget Office, EPA and municipal groups, the current rate of capital investment will not keep our wastewater treatment systems operational. State and local governments are spending approximately $10 billion a year in capital investments in wastewater infrastructure. Most of this funding comes from local ratepayers. For rural towns like those located on the eastern shore of Virginia, this often proves to be an unattainable feat.

Because of the importance public infrastructure places in enhancing our quality of life, improving our environment and contributing to our economic prosperity, it is important for Congress to recognize the contributions that professionals, engineers and administrators make to ensuring America remains the world's premier economic power.

I urge all Members to support H. Res. 352.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 352, supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week.

Our Nation's public works—which consist of transportation systems, water supply infrastructure, sewage and refuse disposal systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities—help our country function in an efficient and effective manner. As our public works support our economy, our public health, and our communities' livelihood, we must support the many public works professionals who design, build, operate, maintain, and protect these systems and structures. National Public Works Week is observed for a full week in May each year.

House Resolution 352 pays tribute to public works professionals, celebrating their work the week of May 20 through 26, 2007.

Without our vast network of rail, highways, airports, and public transit, our industries would not have the global reach that they currently utilize each working day. Without these transportation systems, many tourists would not have the chance to experience the vastly different climates and cultures our Nation has to offer.

Without our water supply systems, or our sewage and waste disposal facilities. our communities would not be able to exist and thrive. Simple conveniences that we may take for granted—running water in our homes for cooking and cleaning, and water systems that feed our backyard gardens, as well as our agriculture, factories, and industry—would not be possible without the dedicated work of the public works professionals who keep these facilities moving on a daily basis.

Indeed, it is often only when our systems and facilities fail to work consistently that we appreciate their contribution to our daily routines.

Infrastructure keeps our country working, but in previous legislative sessions, we have not kept working on our infrastructure. In the "2006 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions and Performance" report prepared by the Department of Transportation, the Department confirms that investment in the Nation's highway, bridge, and transit infrastructure has not kept pace with demands on the system.

This Congress, we are working to reverse this unjustifiable trend.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has taken our public works needs seriously. Since the start of the 110th Congress, the Committee has shepherded four critical water infrastructure bills through the House:

H.R. 569, the Water Quality Investment Act of 2007; H.R. 700, the Healthy Communities Water Supply Act of 2007; H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007; and H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

It is my hope that this Resolution will reinforce the necessity for our colleagues in the other body to pass similar legislation. It is critical for us to conference these bills without delay, and ask the President to recognize both the needs and the accomplishments of public works and its professionals.

I celebrate our country's transportation and infrastructure.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting House Resolution 352, to honor the professionals who provide the backbone for our transportation and infrastructure systems and facilities.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would urge the passage of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 352.

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.

COMMEMORATING MARINAS AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR SIXTH ANNUAL NATIONAL MARINA DAY

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 343) commemorating the marinas of the United States, expressing support for the designation of the sixth annual National Marina Day, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 343

Whereas the citizens of the United States highly value recreation time and their ability to access 1 of the greatest natural resources of the United States, its waterways;

Whereas, in 1928, the word ''marina'' was used for the first time to define a recreational boating facility;

Whereas the United States is home to over 12,000 recreational boating facilities that contribute substantially to their local communities by providing safe, reliable gateways to boating for members of their communities and welcomed guests;

Whereas marinas of the United States also serve as stewards of the environment, actively seeking to protect their surrounding waterways not only for the enjoyment of the current generation, but for generations to come;

Whereas marinas of the United States also provide their communities and visitors a place where friends and families, united by a passion for the water, can come together for recreation, rest, and relaxation; and

Whereas marinas throughout the United States will be celebrating National Marina Day on August 11, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commemorates the marinas of the United States for providing environmentally friendly gateways to boating for the citizens of, and the visitors to the United States; and

(2) supports designation of the sixth annual ''National Marina Day'' in order—

(A) to honor the marinas of the United States for their many contributions to their local communities; and

(B) to make citizens, policy makers, elected officials, and employees more aware of the overall contributions marinas make to their well-being.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 343.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 343, as amended, which would support designation of August 11, 2007, as the sixth annual National Marina Day.

National Marina Day recognizes the central role that marinas play in giving shelter and providing gateways to the nearly 13 million recreational boats registered in the United States. National Marina Day is also intended to recognize the important role that recreational boaters and marina operators play in protecting our Nation's critical marine resources.

Recreational boating is a central part of the tourism and recreation industry in the United States. According to the National Marine Manufacturers Association, in 2005 recreational boating generated an estimated $37 billion in sales and services nationwide. In my own State of Maryland, there are just over 200,000 registered boats. A study by the Maryland Sea Grant program estimated that in 2005 every 7.5 boats in the State supported a job in our State's economy and contributed just over $7,600 in economic activity. Recreational boating contributed an estimated $1.8 billion to the State's gross product.

The millions of Americans who participate in recreational boating activities rely on the estimated 12,000 marinas and associated boating facilities in our Nation to access not only the water, but also the support services that boats and boaters need. An estimated 30 percent of these marinas are owned by municipal or State governments and provide the public with water access at low or limited cost. The remaining 70 percent of marinas are private, and many are owner-operated facilities with long family histories.

Importantly, however, marinas are not only centers where boats can obtain fuel and services. They are also centers providing boating safety and boating education programs intended to help improve the operating proficiency of recreational boaters.

□ 1400

Though 35 States now have some type of operator education or licensing

requirement, the National Transportation Safety Board reported in 2007 that more than 80 percent of all recreational boaters have still never taken any kind of boating educational program. Perhaps in large measure as a result of the still limited enrollment in recreational boating safety classes, total deaths in recreational boating exceed deaths in general aviation. Marinas will continue to play a critical role in helping to reduce boating accidents and to lower the number of fatalities associated with recreational boating by organizing and hosting boating education programs to complement the technical services they provide.

I hope that all marina operators through these United States will take the opportunity afforded this year by the National Marina Day to continue their vital effort to expand boating safety programs and efforts. I commend marina operators for their vital role in supporting recreational boating in the United States.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 343, which was introduced by my colleague HAROLD ROGERS, recognizes August 11, 2007, as National Marina Day. This resolution acknowledges the significant contributions that marinas provide to so many of our local waterfront communities.

There are over 12,000 marinas in the United States, and these facilities serve as a place where people who share a passion for the water can come together to enjoy our Nation's oceans, lakes and rivers. Marinas also serve as stewards of the environment and actively seek to protect the waterways that surround them.

I represent a district in which recreational boating plays an important role in the lives of many constituents, and marinas provide an easy access point for citizens who wish to enjoy our Nation's waterways. This resolution highlights the importance of marinas and their role in promoting recreational boating and in connecting people to their local waterways.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding me time, and I want to thank the gentlelady and the chairman for ushering this piece of legislation through the committee and on to the floor honoring and acknowledging the contributions of marina owners and operators across this great country.

Whether it is fishing one of the 1,000 lakes in Minnesota, cruising the inland waterways of the Sunshine State, or enjoying the 1,200 miles of shoreline along Lake Cumberland in my district, marinas are America's launching point for millions of boats and boaters seeking to enjoy the beautiful rivers, lakes, bays and oceans.

These marinas employ nearly 140,000 people at over 13,000 operations nationwide, providing safe harbor and supply depots for boaters. In Kentucky, over 130 marina facilities served over 176,000 registered boats in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, from Fishtrap Lake in the east to Lake Barkley out west. In between in my district is the crown jewel of Kentucky's waterways, Lake Cumberland.

Over 5 million visitors a year jet ski, enjoy bass fishing and cruise the 40,000 acres of Lake Cumberland. Lake associated businesses, including the 11 large scale marina operations, generate over $160 million in economic activity for the region.

The lake area is famously dubbed the ''Houseboat Capital of the World,'' made famous by the prominence of world class houseboat manufacturing in Wayne, Pulaski and Russell Counties. These 100-foot houseboats are literally floating homes, with hot tubs, roof decks, full size kitchens, waterslides, grills, kitchens and the like. These boats are great venues for fishing trips, reunions or weekend escapes on the waterways across the Nation.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, recognizes the essential role marinas and the men and women who own and operate them play in the United States, providing their communities and visitors a place where friends and families can come together for recreation, rest and relaxation.

I thank the committee for bringing this resolution through to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and designation of National Marina Day.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER), the cochair of the Boating Caucus.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlelady yielding, and I certainly rise in strong support of House Resolution 343, which commemorates the marinas of the United States and expresses support for the sixth annual National Marina Day.

The purpose of National Marina Day is to inform the public about the important role that marinas do play in our local communities by providing a very safe, family-friendly venue to encourage the recreational boating industry, which can generate literally millions and billions of dollars in economic activity. The positive spin-off effects of marinas encourage the development of all kinds of businesses and restaurants to supplement the marinas' putting people to work.

Actually, in my home municipality of Harrison Township, Michigan, a huge part of our commercial tax base is marinas and recreational oriented businesses, and my congressional district is a shoreline waterfront district as well and our marinas play a very large role in the very identity of our region.

In the Great Lakes region alone, boating and marinas generate $4.3 billion annually. Actually, I grew up in the marina business. It was our family business as well as our hobby. So I know firsthand that marinas also provide an essential venue for recreational boating, which is an important part in creating a very high quality of life in a community.

While increasing access to our Nation's water resources, marinas also play an important role in keeping our Nation's water clean. Marinas provide an appropriate place to dispose of waste materials so that they are not discharged out into the waterways. Operators of marinas often play an important role in organizing cleanup efforts to collect marine debris to keep our waters clean.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, marinas are playing a very important role as well in the defense of our Nation. I say that because they have been partnering with the United States Coast Guard, and the marina operators and their customers are staying vigilant and keeping their eyes open for suspicious activity. Just as our truck drivers are our eyes and ears on the interstate, marina operators and their customers are really our eyes and ears on the waterway as well. Marina operators fill a critical role in keeping our Nation secure along our liquid borders, such as the one that my home State of Michigan shares with our great neighbors of Canada.

So I would certainly urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, once again I want to thank Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky for this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 343, commemorating the marinas of the United States and expressing support for the designation of National Marina Day on August 11, 2007.

There are more than 12,000 marinas in the United States. They provide services and access for millions of recreational boaters to the lakes, rivers, and bays of the United States. In my State of Minnesota, marinas provide boaters access to thousands of lakes and the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

Each weekend, millions of Americans take to the water from marinas to enjoy fishing, kayaking, sailing, and just cruising down the river enjoying the water. Marinas make all of this happen. They employ more than 140,000 people whose sole purpose is to help boaters enjoy their time on the water safely.

On August 11, 2007, National Marina Day will focus on the role marinas play as safe, family-friendly gateways to boating, and the invaluable service marina operators and owners perform as stewards of the environment. Activities include fishing tournaments, boating

safety demonstrations, water sports, and environmental demonstrations.

We also recognize that the role of the marina operator has changed since September 2001. They are helping the Coast Guard and others keep an eye out for suspicious activities on the waterways. Marina operators are on the water every day. They know what is routine—and what looks suspicious. They are keeping a lookout for aggressive behavior, unusual diving, suspicious packages on bridges or terminals, and other activities that appear out of place.

Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure recognize the waterways of the United States as an important component of our national transportation system. However, these waterways also serve another important purpose: They allow people to have fun on the water. Marinas allow these types of recreational activities to occur.

I thank the gendeman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) for introducing this resolution and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 343.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the National Marina Day. Kentucky's Marinas aye a substantial impact on the Commonwealth's economy. The First District of Kentucky is home to many of the United States' most adored lakes, which provide recreation areas for Kentuckians and important habitats for fish and wildlife.

While it would be too exhaustive to name every lake, two of the largest lakes are Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley. Together they create the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, LBL. LBL contains nearly 17,000 acres of habitats, trails, and campsites, providing tourists with a wide array of outdoor experiences. A canal connecting Lake Barkley with Kentucky Lake forms one of the greatest freshwater recreational complexes in the country. This site has been used for numerous fishing tournaments and other outdoor events. These lakes are also home to many marinas that facilitate boating and fishing activities. Their presence helps ensure safe and reliable access to our lakes.

On the eastern side of my District is another exhilarating outdoor experience. Lake Cumberland is visited by more than 4.7 million people annually. According to the Travel Industry Association of America, the tourism economic impact for the four-county area, Clinton, Pulaski, Russell, Wayne, with access to the lake is $152.6 million. Recently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began a rehabilitation project at the Wolf Creek Dam on Lake Cumberland, which has impacted some of the marinas in the area. However, the lake continues to be a great recreation and vacation spot, and we welcome visitors to come enjoy the opportunities available at the lake.

Marinas are instrumental to recreation and tourism and that is why I stand today in support of this industry. I ask that my colleagues do the same by voting in favor of H. Res. 343 sponsored by U.S. Representative HAL ROGERS.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 343, 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.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR THE GREATER WASHINGTON SOAP BOX DERBY

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 79) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 79

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF SOAP BOX DERBY RACES ON CAPITOL GROUNDS.

The Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association (in this resolution referred to as the ''Association'') shall be permitted to sponsor a public event, soap box derby races, on the Capitol Grounds on June 16, 2007, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may jointly designate.

SEC. 2. CONDITIONS.

The event to be carried out under this resolution shall be free of admission charge to the public and arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress, under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board; except that the Association shall assume full responsibility for all expenses and liabilities incident to all activities associated with the event.

SEC. 3. STRUCTURES AND EQUIPMENT.

For the purposes of this resolution, the Association is authorized to erect upon the Capitol Grounds, subject to the approval of the Architect of the Capitol, such stage, sound amplification devices, and other related structures and equipment as may be required for the event to be carried out under this resolution.

SEC. 4. ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board are authorized to make any such additional arrangements that may be required to carry out the event under this resolution.

SEC. 5. 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, with respect to the event to be carried out under this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 79.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 2007 Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. As with all events on the Capitol Hill, this event will be open to the public and free of charge. The event organizers will work with the Office of the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Hill Police to ensure all rules and regulations will be followed.

The 2007 Greater Washington Soap Box Derby takes place on Constitution Avenue between Delaware Avenue and Third Street, N.W., on June 16, 2007. This event has been held on the U.S. Capitol Grounds since 1991 and has attracted over 50 participants, ranging in ages from 8 to 17. Participants competing in the event will come from the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. The D.C. metropolitan race winners from each age division will meet later in the summer in Akron, Ohio, to compete in the All American Soap Box Derby.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the resolution and reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 79 authorizes the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 66th Annual Greater Washington Soap Box Derby to be held on June 16, 2007. The event is open to the public and free of charge.

The Greater Washington Soap Box Derby is one of the largest qualifying races in the country. The races take place on Constitution Avenue between Delaware Avenue and Third Street, N.W. Participants are residents of the Washington Metropolitan area and range in age from 8 to 17. They compete in three open divisions depending on their level of expertise. The winners of these races will represent the Washington Metropolitan Area at the national finals held annually in Akron, Ohio.

The Annual Soap Box Derby is a wonderful summer tradition. I support this resolution, which continues our custom of authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for this exciting event, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the majority leader, who is the sponsor of this resolution, one who has constantly put children first.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding and I congratulate him on his leadership of this subcommittee and

his leadership in our State of Maryland. I am proud to be Mr. CUMMINGS' colleague. I also thank the gentlelady from Virginia for her leadership in bringing this matter to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly sponsor this resolution allowing the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association to hold the 66th Annual Greater Washington Soap Box Derby on the Capitol Grounds on Saturday, June 16.

□ 1415

Our Nation's tradition of soapbox racing began, Mr. Speaker, as you may know, in 1934, when Myron E. Scott, a photographer for the Dayton Daily News, saw boys racing engineless cars down a hill. This inspired Mr. SCOTT to hold a race and award the winner with a ''loving cup.''

The first year, the race took place in Dayton, Ohio. The following year the race moved to Akron due to the city's numerous hills. With the hard work of countless civic organizations, a permanent track site for the youth racing classic was created with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration, affectionately known as the WPA.

Soapbox derby racing in our Nation's Capital has a long and rich tradition as well. In 1938, Norman Rocca beat out 223 other racers to win the inaugural Greater Washington Soapbox Derby, which was then held on New Hampshire Avenue.

Over the years, thousands of the region's young people have participated in this great race. Although the location has moved from the original site on New Hampshire Avenue to Capitol Hill, the essence of the race has remained the same: homemade gravity-powered cars, the spirit of competition, and the pure joy of racing.

The soapbox derby consists of dozens of drivers, both boys and girls, ranging in ages from 8 to 17. These racers are divided into three divisions: stock, superstock and masters. The local winner of each division will automatically qualify to compete with racers from around the world in the 70th All-American Soapbox Derby in Akron, Ohio, on July 26.

The festivities in Akron begin when the racers receive a police escort into town and conclude in the winner's circle with the awarding of scholarships and merchandise. In between, the racers and their families participate in a whirlwind of activities that leave them with enduring friendships and memories that last a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, this event has been called ''the greatest amateur racing event in the world,'' and it is an excellent opportunity for the contestants from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia to learn basic building skills while gaining a real sense of accomplishment and competition.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to join with me and the other original cosponsors, Representatives FRANK WOLF, JAMES MORAN, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, AL WYNN, and CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, as well as Mr. CUMMINGS and Mrs. DRAKE, in supporting this resolution, which honors such an extraordinary and in some respects uniquely American event here on Capitol Hill.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I join the Majority Leader (Mr. HOYER) and Ms. NORTON, along with Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. WYNN in supporting House Concurrent Resolution 79, to authorize use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. I especially want to acknowledge the dedication of Mr. HOYER, who faithfully introduces this resolution each year to authorize use of the Capitol Grounds for this wonderful event.

This annual event encourages all boys and girls, ages eight through 17, to construct and operate their own soap box vehicles. The Washington event, which attracts a great number of spectators and extensive media coverage, has grown in size and has become one of the best-attended events in the country. The winner in each of three age divisions wins a trip to the national race in Akron, Ohio. The Washington Soap Box Derby is supported by hundreds of volunteers and parents.

The principles of aerodynamics are combined with fun and excitement for all participants and their families in the Greater Washington area. It is an excellent opportunity for parents to have direct involvement in their children's activities. The derby's mission is to provide children with an activity that promotes technical and social skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

This year, the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby is scheduled for June 16.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Concurrent Resolution 79.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this wonderful resolution, and with that I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 79.

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.

PROMOTING NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 386) recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 386

Whereas recreational boating is one of our Nation's most popular pastimes, with an estimated 78,000,000 recreational boaters in the United States and nearly 13,000,000 recreational vessels registered;

Whereas the number of recreational boating fatalities has declined by more than half since 1970, thanks to the increased use of life jackets, cooperative boating safety education, enforcement efforts between the Coast Guard and State governments, and safer vessels and equipment manufactured in accordance with Coast Guard standards;

Whereas recreational boating accidents have nevertheless claimed the lives of 697 Americans in 2005, more than half of whose lives could have been saved with the proper use of a personal flotation device;

Whereas a continued emphasis on accident prevention can reduce recreational boating fatalities still further, and in particular deaths by drowning, which remain the leading cause of recreational boating fatalities; and

Whereas boating safety organizations, with the support of the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary, have proposed designating the week of May 19 through 25, 2007, as National Safe Boating Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports initiatives for recreational boating safety education and accident prevention to minimize the number of annual recreational boating fatalities;

(2) recognizes the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and other boating safety organizations for their efforts each year during May to highlight the importance of safe recreational boating; and

(3) supports the goals of National Safe Boating Week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 386.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, I rise today in support of H. Res. 386, as amended.

This resolution recognizes the goals of National Safe Boating Week and recognizes the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary for the outstanding work that they do to keep boaters safe and to rescue those in distress at sea.

Like so many other of the critical safety awareness campaigns in the transportation field, National Safe Boating Week came about through the dedication of a concerned voluntary group. The North American Safe Boating Campaign began some 50 years ago this year. In 1958, a year after the campaign began, Congress passed a joint resolution that authorized and requested the President to designate the week prior to Memorial Day weekend as National Safe Boating Week.

In keeping with this tradition, this year, on May 10, President Bush again

designated the week before Memorial Day as National Safe Boating Week. According to the Coast Guard, as of 2005, there were just under 13 million registered recreational boats in the United States. In 2005 a total of 4,969 recreational boating accidents were reported to the Coast Guard, although it is likely that there were many more accidents that were never reported.

According to the Coast Guard, the leading types of recreational boating accidents were collisions and falls overboard. Careless inattention on the part of a boat's operator was the largest single cause of recreational boating accidents in 2005.

However, the use of alcohol was the largest cause of accidents that resulted in fatalities. Simply put, mixing boats and alcohol can yield the same fatal results that mixing cars and alcohol can yield. In 2005, recreational boating accidents caused nearly 3,500 injuries and nearly 700 deaths. Total deaths in 2005 were down approximately 25 percent below the total of 924 fatalities experienced in 1991. Unfortunately, however, recreational boating deaths in 2005 increased after 3 straight years of steady decline.

The Coast Guard reports that of the nearly 700 people who died in recreational boating accidents in 2005, 491 died as a result of drowning and 426 of those who drowned were not wearing a life jacket. In my own State of Maryland, 13 of the 15 people who died in recreational boating accidents drowned.

In response to the prevalence of drowning as the cause of death among recreational boaters, the theme of this year's National Safe Boating Week is simply ''Wear It.'' This imperative emphasizes the singular importance of the use of personal flotation devices during recreational boating.

Importantly, however, it is not enough merely to have a personal flotational device on board a boat. Recreational boaters must familiarize themselves with the use of life jackets and should also take the time to experience swimming while wearing the device.

I commend all those in our Nation's boating clubs who work year round to train recreational boaters on safe boating practices and to maintain awareness of safe boating practices.

In closing, I want to recognize the outstanding work that the Coast Guard performs preserving life at sea. I have often said they are our thin blue line at sea, and that they are. Last year the Coast Guard saved more than 4,400 lives in the course of its search and rescue operations, many of which were performed under very difficult and dangerous circumstances.

Just yesterday, we were again reminded of the incredible dedication and skill that the Coast Guard brings to their work when they coordinated the successful evacuation of a reported 281 passengers and crew members from the Empress of the North cruise ship off the coast of Alaska.

Finally, I want to remember the Coast Guardsmen who have been lost this year, and all who have died in our Nation's service. I thank all of the members of the Coast Guard for their outstanding work. I also thank them for their work in the gulf coast during the Hurricane Katrina storm.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I introduced House Resolution 386 last week which recognizes the important work of the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and National Safe Boating Council in promoting boating safety.

I represent a district in which recreational boating plays an extremely important role in the lives of many constituents. Sailors, water sports enthusiasts, and fishermen are active recreational boaters in the Chesapeake Bay and in Virginia's coastal waters.

Recreational boating is one of the Nation's most popular pastimes, and while the number of recreational boating fatalities has declined by more than half since 1970, many lives are still lost each year. And, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there are far too many of us who have lost friends or family members.

More than half of these lives could be saved with the proper use of boating safety equipment. The Coast Guard and States continue to work closely together to promote boating safety and to decrease the number of accidents, injuries and fatalities on U.S. waters, and they should be commended for their efforts.

Congress took action in 2005 to support State and Federal boating safety programs by establishing the Sport Fishing and Recreational Boating Safety trust fund. In fiscal year 2006, more than $92 million in recreational boating safety State grants were provided to the States and U.S. territories from revenues that were wholly derived from Federal taxes on marine fuels and fishing equipment. This funding supports programs that encourage the use of personal flotation devices and other safe boating practices and are critical in safeguarding the recreational boating public.

This resolution highlights the importance of safe recreational boating, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional speakers, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of H. Res. 386, commending the efforts of the United States Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week.

I actually grew up in the boating industry. My family was in the marine business and still today our family hobby is boating. As well, I serve as co-chair of the Congressional Boating Caucus, and I know firsthand the benefits and enjoyment to be had from boating, but also the serious risks associated with irresponsible boating practices.

While my home State of Michigan actually has the third most registered boats of any State in the Nation, unfortunately that great enjoyment of our nautical culture goes hand in hand with the many stories each year of boating accidents. We hear about persons lost overboard, or collisions or just reckless boating which results in accidents each year, many of them sadly ending in death that occurred while individuals were enjoying their favorite activity out on the water.

The Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council have taken it upon themselves to promote safe boating practices every day of the year, but especially they emphasize these goals during National Safe Boating Week. House Resolution 386 commends these groups for their service in this field.

Mr. Speaker, some of the principles that are espoused by the National Safe Boating Week include the proper use of personal flotation devices or observing the rules of the road like who has the right-of-way, just understanding port from starboard, attending a boating education course, and avoiding the use of alcohol while operating a boat. All of these things can significantly cut down on the number of on-the-water accidents and help everybody enjoy their time on the lakes, rivers, bays, and oceans we are absolutely so very blessed to have in our great country.

It is my pleasure to support this resolution, as well as all of the groups that it commends. In fact, I want to make note that my congressional district is a shoreline district and I also want to say thanks as well to all of the sheriff's marine divisions that operate not only in my counties but all around the Great Lakes basin and throughout our great Nation as well. They play a critical role in keeping our waterways safe. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentlelady for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the introduction of this legislation is very important, because it honors our Coast Guard, our Coast Guard Auxiliary and the National Safe Boating Council.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the brave men and women of our Coast Guard and our Coast Guard Auxiliary, including those that work at Coast Guard Sector Key West in my congressional district. They work night and day to keep our

Nation's waterways safe. Without their tireless dedication and outstanding service, we would not have such a superb safety record on our oceans, on our lakes and on our rivers.

Recreational and commercial boating is also a big part of life for my district, Congressional District 18 in Florida, and our citizens truly appreciate the hard work and the dedication of the Coast Guard patrolling our Nation's waters.

I will also once again express my deep appreciation for the remarkable work that our Coast Guard and Auxiliary does on behalf of the public as we celebrate the upcoming National Safe Boating Week, and I thank the gentlelady for introducing this legislation.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Very briefly, we want to again congratulate Mrs. DRAKE on the sponsorship of this legislation. It is very important.

One of the things our Subcommittee on the Coast Guard just recently had, we had a hearing with regard to fishing safety. One of the interesting things that came forth during that discussion and during that hearing was how the industry was so very much interested in making sure that there was boating safety, and they wanted to make sure that their industry was regulated.

□ 1430

That was very pleasing to our ears. So it is with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 386, recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and other boating safety organizations for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week.

National Safe Boating Week is really about educating boaters. In 2005, there were 697 boating fatalities in the United States. The leading cause of death in a boating accident is drowning. Of the 491 people that drowned in 2003, almost 90 percent were not wearing a lifejacket. It is estimated that more than 50 percent of these deaths could have been prevent by proper use of a Personal Flotation Device.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary, and its 27,000 members, are on our Nation's waterways every day conducting voluntary safe boating examinations and educating the public about safe boating practices. In addition, the Auxiliary conducts harbor patrols, assists in search and rescue and marine environmental protection, and conducts boating safety courses; volunteering more than 2 million hours annually to benefit their fellow boaters.

Boating safety organizations, such as the National Safe Boating Council, educate recreational boaters about safety issues. As the summer boating season begins, they have some simple recommendations for boaters:

Do wear a Life Jacket. They Float. You Don't.

Don't mix alcohol and boating.

Do observe the nautical rules-of-the-road.

Don't stand in a small boat.

Do check the weather forecast before getting underway.

Don't overload your boat.

Do keep a good lookout.

Mr. Speaker, this House should help educate the boating public about prudent safety measures that can help save their lives.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 386 and help bring more attention to the importance of boating safety.

Mr. CUMMINGS. 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 Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 386, 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.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Resolution recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and other boating safety organizations for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL EOSINOPHIL AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 296) supporting the goals and ideals of National Eosinophil Awareness Week, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 296

Whereas the term ''eosinophilic disorders'' is a general term used to describe a group of diseases and disorders caused by the production of too many white blood cells called eosinophils;

Whereas eosinophilic disorders patients suffer from their immune system attacking their body's own normal, healthy tissue, resulting in inflammation or swelling;

Whereas an estimated 50,000 people are affected by eosinophilic disorders in the United States, many of whom remain undiagnosed or misdiagnosed;

Whereas inflammatory eosinophilic disorders are thought to be both allergic and autoimmune diseases, such that the body's immune system, which normally fights infections and viruses, mistakes common food proteins and environmental allergens as foreign;

Whereas eosinophilic disorders cause chronic illness that significantly impacts a person's quality of life and ability to attend school and work, and dramatically alters dietary lifestyles;

Whereas some eosinophilic disorders cause life-threatening and sometimes fatal illnesses by causing inflammation of the vital organs, such as the heart, lungs, kidney, and gastrointestinal tract;

Whereas eosinophilic disorders are difficult to diagnose and treatment is often delayed, resulting in unnecessary suffering;

Whereas many patients with eosinophilic disorders often have severe long-term disabilities as well as the severe limitations imposed by the disease itself;

Whereas some eosinophilic disorder patients will suffer permanent irreversible organ damage as a result of delays in diagnosis and proper treatment; and

Whereas the American Partnership For Eosinophilic Disorders has identified the third week of May as an appropriate time to recognize National Eosinophil Awareness Week in order to educate communities across the Nation about eosinophilic disorders and the need for research funding, accurate diagnosis, and effective treatments: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Eosinophil Awareness Week; and

(2) encourages health care providers and the American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders to increase education and awareness regarding eosinophilic disorders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 296, recognizing National Eosinophil Awareness Week, and I commend my colleague Congressman JOHN LARSON for bringing attention to this issue.

Eosinophilic disorders are devastating as patients literally suffer from an attack on their bodies by their own immune systems. They are chronic disorders that have no cure and can even be fatal. Because they are rare, patients often go undiagnosed or misdiagnosed.

And as a nurse, I have seen intimately how heartbreaking it is for a patient and his or her family to go through test after test while suffering all the while from an unidentifiable condition.

That is why I support this resolution, calling for greater awareness of eosinophilic disorders and encouraging health care providers to increase education about these diseases.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution as well.

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

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

I am pleased to speak on behalf of this bill which does promote awareness about eosinophil disorders. These are little known disorders that are thought

to be both allergic and autoimmune in nature. The body produces white blood cells in higher than normal amounts, and it attacks food proteins and tissues as a result.

The patients who have this chronic disease suffer a variety of symptoms, and of course it is sometimes life-threatening. As of now, there's no known cure.

I know Mr. LARSON is going to be speaking on this because he personally has firsthand knowledge.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding but also for her continued outstanding service in the United States Congress and bringing the knowledge of her profession and her expertise to this body on a regular basis and especially the compassion that's needed for so many of those who suffer from eosinophilic disorder, more than 50,000 in this Nation.

I want to applaud my colleague from North Carolina, also, Representative MYRICK, for her cosponsoring this legislation and understanding as well the importance that this has for so many families who oftentimes are the ones who suffer along with the patient because of lack of diagnosis, and then also because of the way Representative CAPPS has described the nature of this disease, what it does to the patient that it attacks when the white blood cells in your own system begin to attack itself and creates the disorders that it does, often resulting in people having to be fed by tubes. You can imagine the tremendous stress that this causes on the parts of parents and of course family members.

This bill comes before us not because of me, but because of a courageous woman like LOIS CAPPS and like SUE MYRICK who understand what families go through when they face issues like this.

I was fortunate to have Dr. Wendy Book from my district in Connecticut, who resides in Gastonbury, a doctor herself, as well as her husband, come before me to talk about this disorder because of their desire to make sure that the Nation be made aware of what so many children are suffering from.

She was joined by Beth Mays, who together are the co-founders of the American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders. When Dr. Book's son Ryan was sick before his first birthday, doctors sent him home with a feeding tube and no explanation for his mysterious illness. This illness went undiagnosed for 2 more years. Now, this Ryan, his parents are doctors. They are in the field, and so for doctors to be as confounded by a lack of understanding or a diagnosis, imagine the consternation that they feel, and then exemplify that by how other parents must feel who do not come from similar professions.

And so they felt in founding this organization, this partnership, that what was needed across the country was awareness and understanding. Quite frankly, what's also needed is funding, but it has to start in a place of education, awareness and understanding, and as most pieces of critical legislation do, it comes not from a Member of Congress, but it comes from a constituent, a citizen, who has the temerity to stand up and speak out for suffering that a neighbor or one of their own children is going through.

As Mrs. CAPPS pointed out, sometimes there is no cure or the diagnosis eludes all the best efforts of professions, but it is getting better, and with awareness, they know they can deal with this going forward.

Hospitals in Cincinnati, and most notably, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where I visited personally, are working hard at identifying this disorder and helping parents and working with them. I want to commend the work of Dr. Chris Lancouris and Dr. Jonathan Spergel and especially Michelle Shuker who spent so much time dealing with the parents and helping them through this process.

As someone who has a son who has an illness that has gone undiagnosed, I empathize deeply with parents who go through this experience and understand deeply the need for education, the need for better understanding, and the responsibility that we share as Members of Congress to do our part, to first educate the public with respect to this disorder, but then secondly and more hopefully, to make sure that we follow through by funding and assisting.

But what you have to step back and admire, however, is the courage of these parents who, without their love and devotion and care for their children, without their consistent nurturing and support, you wonder what would happen to these children. But because of their courage and because of their ability to come forth and speak out about this, hopefully through resolutions like this and greater understanding we will be able to assist them and help them and assist families, and their not-for-profit organization will get the support that it needs, will create the understanding that it needs and provide the much needed relief for the children who are afflicted and the families that deal with this problem.

So I thank Representative CAPPS and I thank Representative MYRICK and a number of cosponsors on this legislation for having come forward and assisted in bringing this to the forefront.

There will be members from this association on the Hill tomorrow going to various House Members and to their offices and talking with them and their staff about this disorder. Please listen to them. Take them into your heart. It is an important issue and vital not only for their children, their families, but I dare say for all of us in the country. It speaks volumes to the better angels that we have here in the United States Congress and our willingness to reach out and assist the constituents we are sworn to serve.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I would like to inquire of the gentlewoman if she has any more speakers.

Mrs. CAPPS. I have no more speakers.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. As I indicated, I have no more speakers, either, but I do want to say a word of thanks to my colleague from North Carolina. We serve on the same committee. This is an issue that we both care about, but particular thanks to my colleague from Connecticut for reaffirming in me one of the major reasons that I am pleased to be part of this body, which was illustrated by his comments regarding his constituent.

As he observed their personal experience and was able to relate some of his own is when we do the work of the people, to carry the pain and suffering, if you will, the unanswered questions and the concerns, and to do the people's work by first creating an awareness of a situation. We have many issues before us, but for a family with a person diagnosed with an eosinophilic condition, it is a major, major part of their lives.

And we owe a responsibility and it is a privilege and a honor to carry their concerns to this body, to take this first step of recognition and to be welcoming to those who come with personal experiences to our office doors tomorrow and then to learn what the next step after this one might be and to stand ready as elected officials to work on behalf of those who simply desire to relieve the pain and suffering of dear and loved members of their family.

So I thank both of my colleagues for bringing this to the floor.

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. CAPPS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 296.

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.

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. 634, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 692, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 916, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1700, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1773, by the yeas and nays.

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

AMERICAN VETERANS DISABLED FOR LIFE COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 634, 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 Kansas (Mr. MOORE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 634, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 416, nays 0, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 345]

YEAS—416

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
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 (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
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
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
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—16

Bartlett (MD)
Brady (PA)
Cubin
Davis, Jo Ann
Engel
Fattah
Gutierrez
Hunter
McMorris Rodgers
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Paul
Pickering
Pitts
Tancredo
Wasserman Schultz

□ 1510

Mr. STEARNS changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

ARMY SPECIALIST JOSEPH P. MICKS FEDERAL FLAG CODE AMENDMENT ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 692, 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 Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 692, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 4, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 346]

YEAS—408

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee

Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
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 (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
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
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
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—4

Campbell (CA)
Flake
Sessions
Shadegg

NOT VOTING—20

Bachus
Bartlett (MD)
Brady (PA)
Cubin
Davis, Jo Ann
Engel
Fattah
Gutierrez
Hastert
Hunter
McMorris Rodgers
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Paul
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Sali
Tancredo
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1516

Mr. NUNES changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

JOHN R. JUSTICE PROSECUTORS AND DEFENDERS INCENTIVE ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 916, 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 Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 916, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 341, nays 73, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 347]

YEAS—341

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heller
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (FL)

NAYS—73

Aderholt
Akin
Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Brown (SC)
Burton (IN)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Coble
Conaway
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Doolittle
Duncan
Ellsworth
Feeney
Flake
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Goode
Goodlatte
Graves
Hastert
Hayes
Hensarling
Herger
Inglis (SC)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
King (IA)
Kline (MN)
Kuhl (NY)
Lamborn
Lewis (KY)
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McHenry
Miller, Gary
Myrick
Neugebauer
Pence
Petri
Rehberg
Reynolds
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Smith (NE)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Thornberry
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Weldon (FL)
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—18

Bartlett (MD)
Brady (PA)
Buyer
Cubin
Davis, Jo Ann
Engel
Fattah
Gutierrez
Hunter
McMorris Rodgers
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Paul
Pearce
Pickering
Pitts
Tancredo
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1524

Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. GRAVES changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. KINGSTON changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

COPS IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1700, 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 Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1700, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 34, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 348]

YEAS—381

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

NAYS—34

Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Buyer
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Conaway
Deal (GA)
Doolittle
Duncan
Ehlers
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Hensarling
Herger
Inglis (SC)
Johnson, Sam
Kingston
Lamborn
Linder
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
McKeon
Pence
Rohrabacher
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Weldon (FL)
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—17

Allen
Bartlett (MD)
Brady (PA)
Cubin
Davis, Jo Ann
Engel
Fattah
Gutierrez
Hunter
McMorris Rodgers
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Paul
Pickering
Pitts
Tancredo
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes left on this vote.

□ 1532

Mr. MACK and Mr. GINGREY changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. PEARCE changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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.

Stated for:

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, in roll call 348, which I just missed a minute ago, the COPS Improvements Act of 2007, I am a strong supporter of that bill. That bill provides, we believe, 165 police positions in my home State of Maine. I certainly intended to vote for that bill and would have had I been in the Chamber at that moment.

SAFE AMERICAN ROADS ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1773, 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1773, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 3, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 349]

YEAS—411

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.

Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
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 (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
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
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
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—3

Cuellar
Flake
Gonzalez

NOT VOTING—18

Bartlett (MD)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Cubin
Davis, Jo Ann
Engel
Fattah
Gutierrez
Hunter
Marchant
McMorris Rodgers
Miller (FL)
Nadler
Paul
Pickering
Pitts
Tancredo
Wasserman Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes left on this vote.

□ 1539

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the Chamber today. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 345, 346 and 347, 348, and 349.

WAR IN IRAQ MUST BE WON

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to publicly condemn the recent remarks of Senator HARRY REID, the majority leader of the United States Senate. For the leader of one of the greatest legislative bodies in the world to concede defeat in Iraq is a sad commentary on the state of politics in our Nation.

Our troops are the finest fighting force this world has ever known. Our generals are among the finest military minds in the world. My faith is with these brave men and women who put their lives on the line each day in battle, and not on the political choices of a Washington, DC politician.

The American public does not want our troops to shuffle out of Iraq with our tails between our legs. America wants to achieve victory in the global war for freedom, a battle whose center is in the Middle East and in Iraq. Defeatist comments like ''the war is lost'' should be condemned by any freedom-loving Member of this body.

DEFENDING SENATOR REID

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I just happened to be on the floor when I heard the last speaker talking about Senate majority leader HARRY REID and condemning his comments.

I have known Senator REID since I was a high school senior at Valley High School in Las Vegas, Nevada. I don't know a public servant who has devoted more of his life to this country, his State and his community than Senator HARRY REID.

Now, I can't account for everything this man has ever said, but to get on the floor of the House of Representatives and condemn a true patriot, somebody who cares passionately about his fellow citizens and somebody that stays awake at night because of the loss of life and limb in Iraq, to condemn that person on the floor of the House of Representatives I think is a disgrace. And if I didn't stand up and say something, I would never forgive myself.

PULLING OUT OF IRAQ WILL MEAN DEATH SENTENCE TO IRAQI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, you know, one of the questions that I never hear asked and certainly don't hear answered by those who want to pull out of Iraq, like HARRY REID, who says the war is already lost, I have a question for him and others who say that the war is lost. As soon as America pulls out, the people like al Maliki, or Deputy Prime Minister Saleh, who was here in the Capitol last week, it would be a death sentence to them. All those folks who stepped forward who bought into the American and international concept of freedom and self-government and democracy, they will be executed.

Now, what are we going to do? Are we going to give amnesty to political refugees, 50,000, 100,000? Maybe those on the left have an estimate of how many people we would open our border to.

But I can say this: There is no question about it, these folks who stepped forward to try to build a new government will be executed. Their children will be executed. Their spouses will be executed. Their grandparents will be executed. So inevitably we will open up the borders to them as political refugees. My question is, how many of those will we let in, and can we do that now on a bipartisan basis?

□ 1545

SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENT IN THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I heard the gentlelady speak a moment ago about some of the statements made about Majority Leader REID in

the Senate, and she condemned people for criticizing him for what he said about the war being lost. But I haven't heard anybody over there say anything good about the President, who is trying to protect us against terrorism around the world, which is emanating from the Middle East and al Qaeda. Al Qaeda are the ones that are running the opposition to the United States troops over there right now.

We were attacked by al Qaeda. We were going to go to war to stop terrorism against al Qaeda. And nobody is saying anything good about the President, who is trying to protect this country, and if we say one thing about the majority leader on the other side we are supposed to be condemned. I don't understand it. I just don't understand it.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SARBANES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE 147

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, under the hot summer-like sun of today, several thousand peace officers dressed in their bright uniforms, along with citizens, paid tribute to the 147 peace officers killed in service to America in 2006. Also honored were the families, the spouses, the children, the parents of these peace officers. This service today was held on the West side of the Capitol. It was attended by some of us in Congress and the President of the United States spoke.

The wind blew the flags of the 50 States. They were held by peace officers, and the bagpipes played a solemn tribute in the background to these 147 peace officers. It was a fitting event sponsored for the 26th year of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Mr. Speaker, I have known a lot of police officers for the last 30 years. I was a prosecutor for 8 years in Texas, and then a criminal court judge for 22 years. I came to know a lot of them. Those rare and noble breed that wear the badge of a peace officer are remarkable people. I have even known some that have given their lives in the line of duty for the rest of us.

Peace officers that patrol the small towns or the big cities or the vastness of our counties, whether they are local, State or Federal officers, are America's first line of defense against the lawless, the criminals, the outlaws that live to steal, murder, rob and assault America. Keeping the peace this last year cost 147 men and women from across the Nation their lives. I will submit the names of these 147 names for the record.

Peace officers are all that stand between the law and the lawless. They stand between the good and the evil. They stand between the people and the criminals. When they wear the badge, they are the protector of America's people and the public servant of all communities.

They are on patrol 24 hours a day, so that the rest of us can go about our lives in peace. When we are fearful, they are fearless, and when we flee from terror, they run to terror. They are a cut above the rest of us. They are a true example of the public hero.

So we do not forget the fallen and forget what they have done with this solemn reference today, we remember the 147.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I include the names of the peace officers killed in the line of duty in 2006 for the RECORD.

PEACE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY IN 2006

ALABAMA

Anthony Maurice Andrews, Micah Joe Burks, Keith Edwin Houts, Mary Freeman Smith.

ARIZONA

Robert Daniel Targosz, Kevin Louis Weeks.

ARKANSAS

Stacy Edward McMurrough, James Walter Sell.

CALIFORNIA

G. John Bailey, Pierre Walter Bain, Kyle Russell Ballard, Daniel S. Bessant, Nich Tomasito Birco, Brent William Clearman, Landon Michael Dorris, Scott Anthony Hanson, William Joseph Hudnall Jr., Richard Allen May Jr., Jeffrey Vaughn Mitchell, David Stan Piquette, Maria Cecilia Rosa, Earl Harwood Scott, Darryl Takeo Tsujimoto, Bryan D. Tuvera.

COLORADO

Jared Scott Jensen, Kenneth C. Jordan, Michael Del Thomas.

CONNECTICUT

Daniel Patrick Picagli.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Gerard Walter Burke Jr.

FLORIDA

Phoenix Montana Braithwaite, Michael Anthony Callin, Christopher Cooper Daniels Sr., Margena Silvia Nunez, John Michael Piskator, Ryan Christopher Seguin, Juan A. Serrano, Brian Keith Tephford, Vernon Matthew Williams.

GEORGIA

Peter William Faatz, Michael William Larson, John William McKinney, Dennis Carmen Stepnowski, Joseph Tim Whitehead Jr., Dennis Christian Wright Sr., Michael Douglas Young.

HAWAII

Steve Bastidas Favela.

ILLINOIS

Jeremy Chambers, Thomas Alan Cook, Elizabeth Mazella Edwards, Brian Keith Gibbons, James F. Knapp, Rodney Todd Miller, Eric Solorio, Thomas T. Wood.

INDIANA

Gary E. Dudley, Gary L. Martin, Scott Lee Severns.

KANSAS

James Leroy Johnson, Cory Allen Ricks.

KENTUCKY

Elmer Kiser, Jonathan Kyle Leonard, David George Whitson.

LOUISIANA

Herman Wayne Brooks, Christopher John Doyle III, Octavio Rafael Gonzalez, Christopher Michael Metternich, Jeremy Paul Newchurch.

MAINE

David Jerome Rancourt.

MARYLAND

William H. Beebe Jr., Anthony A. Bryd, Robert Thomas Krauss, David Warren McGuinn, Jeffery Alan Wroten.

MASSACHUSETTS

Paul Francis Barry.

MICHIGAN

Kenneth Lee Daniels Jr., Jason Anthony Makowski, Riley Scott Sumner, Matthew J. Tuttle.

MISSISSIPPI

T. Michael Byrd, Robert Michael Langley.

MONTANA

David Leroy Briese Jr., Patrick Roy Kramer.

NEVADA

Henry Prendes.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Michael Leland Briggs.

NEW JERSEY

Wayne Robert Clark, Matthew J. Melchionda, Kieran Tyon Shields.

NEW MEXICO

James Archuleta, James Francis McGrane Jr.

NEW YORK

John Robert Allen, Joseph Daniel Corr, Francis J. Hennessy, Kevin M. Lee, Joseph Anthony Longobardo, Andrew J. Sperr, Craig J. Todeschini, Kenneth P. Wilcox.

OHIO

Lawrence M. Barnes Sr., Ethan G. Collins, Dale Rodney Holcomb, Joshua Patrick Risner, Jonathan James Schroeder.

OKLAHOMA

William Lloyd McClendon, Steven Roy Smith.

PENNSYLVANIA

David Michael Petzold, Gary S. Skerski, Scott Alan Wertz.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Jason Lannes Sheppard.

TENNESSEE

William Birl Jones, L. Keith Lyon, Jeremy Victor Reynolds.

TEXAS

Eduardo Chavez, Dwayne N. Freeto, Dale David Geddie, Rodney Joseph Johnson, Matthew DeWayne Myrick, Gregory Dean Stewart, James Lee Sunderland Sr., Donald Ellis Wass, Billy Jack Zachary.

UTAH

Kevin Shumway Orr.

VIRGINIA

Vicky O. Armel, Gary Jonathan Buro, Seneca Bailey Darden, Charles Aubrey Fisher, Michael E. Garbarino, Robert Earl Green, Robert A. Hill Sr., Kevin Carder Manion, Eric E. Sutphin, William Henry Tiedeman Jr.

WASHINGTON

Joselito Alvarez Barber, Steve E. Cox, Edwanton Allen Thomas.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charles Eugene Smith.

WISCONSIN

Stephen Joseph Hahn, Jackie Davis Ryden.

WYOMING

Dennis Merwin Shuck.

FEDERAL

Lorenzo Gomez, Nicholas D. Greenig, Daniel Joseph Kuhlmeier, Gregory J. Rahoi, William Sentner III, David Norman Webb.

PUERTO RICO

Juan Jose Burgos-Velez, Raul Canales-Mundo, Jose Luis Torres-Martinez.

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

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEALING WITH THE HIGH PRICE OF GASOLINE

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. Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the year, gas prices across the Nation have been increasing. With the summer driving season fast approaching, prices at the pump are again reaching record highs.

With the price quickly approaching $4 a gallon, it is time again for Congress to act to help consumers with this increased cost. High gas prices not only increase the cost of living for American families, but increased gas prices will affect the prices on nearly every single consumer good on the market. Working families are not only paying more at the pump, but at the grocery store, the pharmacy and the shopping malls as well.

These increases have a harmful effect on our Nation's economy and security. They make it harder for working families to commute to and from work, especially in cases where public transportation is lacking. It also increases the cost for public transportation, which makes it harder for those individuals without automobiles to travel.

But we see the effects of high prices across the board. Parcel delivery rates increase. Municipalities must increase their taxes to pay for gas for their emergency responder vehicles. Our utilities go up. We cannot afford to stand by idly as our cost of living steadily increases for the sake of continued record oil company profits.

In response to the rising gas prices, I have requested that the Federal Trade Commission investigate possible gasoline price gouging and hold those accountable who engage in such practices.

I am also a cosponsor of Congressman STUPAK's legislation, H.R. 1252, the Federal Gas Price Gouging Prevention Act. This much needed legislation calls on the FTC and the Attorney General to investigate possible price gouging, both nationally and locally, and to prosecute any group found to be taking advantage of the American people. As summer approaches, travel within the United States historically does increase. According to the Automobile Association of America, gasoline prices may reach an all-time high by Memorial Day.

The time has come for Congress and the President to work together on a solution for the American people. Earlier this year the House passed legislation to repeal tax breaks for oil companies while devoting more Federal resources to renewable fuels. I am hopeful the Senate will quickly act on this much needed legislation this month.

If we are serious about reducing our dependency on foreign oil, we must work with manufacturers and researchers to bring renewable fuels to the forefront. Our environment and economy depend on it.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure American consumers are given a voice about the high price of gasoline.

INVESTIGATING INJUSTICE PERPETRATED AGAINST BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is the 119th day since a great injustice took place in this country.

On January 17, 2007, two U.S. Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison to begin serving 11 and 12-year sentences respectively. I am hopeful that this will be the month that House Judiciary Chairman JOHN CONYERS and Senate Judiciary Chairman PATRICK LEAHY will hold a hearing to investigate the injustice perpetrated against these two U.S. Border Patrol agents.

Agents Compean and Ramos were convicted last spring for wounding a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 734 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas. These agents never should have been persecuted. Yet the U.S. Attorney's Office granted immunity to the drug smuggler and prosecuted the agents who were doing their job to protect our borders.

The illegal drug smuggler received full medical care in El Paso, Texas, was permitted to return to Mexico and has sued the Border Patrol for $5 million for violating his civil rights. Many Members of this House, including Congressman TED POE, who is a former judge from Texas, have voiced concerns about the unfair prosecution of these agents.

With the troubling revelations surrounding the leadership of the U.S. Justice Department, I believe it is necessary to investigate the U.S. Attorney's Office in western Texas and the prosecutor's actions in this case. Never in America should the Congress sit by and allow a breakdown of honesty and integrity in our Nation's judicial system.

Mr. Speaker, if the American people cannot have faith in our Federal courts, I am afraid the future of our democracy is in danger. For the sake of these agents and their families and the integrity of our judicial system, I am pleased and grateful that Mr. CONYERS and Senator LEAHY will be holding hearings to investigate the injustice perpetrated against these two agents.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, there are very few instances where I have had a Member of Congress persist in the search for justice with the same zeal as my friend from North Carolina, and I commend you.

I recall that I had an opportunity to meet the widow of the slain officer, and I have talked to the gentleman from Virginia, BOBBY SCOTT, chairman of the Crime Subcommittee, and his ranking member about the importance that we pursue at the earliest possible moment a complete and total investigation and hearing about the matter that the gentleman and other colleagues that have now joined you have persisted in.

I congratulate you, and recommit publicly once again to our search and pursuit of justice, because if we don't protect our border agents and law enforcement officials generally, I can only shudder to think how the safety of this country will deteriorate.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I am grateful to the chairman

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

(Mr. FORTENBERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MONITORING DEFENSE SPENDING

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, we all respect, admire and appreciate those who serve in our Nation's Armed Forces. Serving in our military is certainly one of the most honorable ways anyone can serve our country. I believe national defense is one of the very few legitimate functions of our national government, and certainly one of the most important.

However, we also need to recognize that our military has become the most gigantic bureaucracy in the history of the world. And like any huge bureaucracy, it does many good things; of course, always at huge expense to the taxpayer. And like any huge bureaucracy, our military does many things that are wasteful or inefficient. And like any huge bureaucracy, it tries to

gloss over or cover up its mistakes. And like any huge bureaucracy, it always wants to expand its mission and get more and more money.

Counting our regular appropriations bills, plus the supplemental appropriations, we will spend more than $750 billion on our military in the next fiscal year. This is more than all the other nations of the world combined spend on their defense.

The GAO tells us that we presently have $50 trillion in unfunded future pension liabilities on top of our national debt of almost $9 trillion. If we are going to have any hope of paying our military pensions and Social Security and other promises to our own people, we cannot keep giving so much to the Pentagon.

No matter how much we respect our military and no matter how much we want to show our patriotism, we need to realize that there is waste in all huge bureaucracies, even in the Defense Department.

There is a reason why we have always believed in civilian leadership of our Defense Department. The admirals and generals will always say things are going great, because it is almost like saying they are doing a bad job if they say things are not doing well and the military people know they can keep getting big increases in funding if they are involved all over the world.

However, it is both unconstitutional and unaffordable for us to be the policeman of the world and carry on civilian government functions in and for other countries. National defense is necessary and vital. International defense by the U.S. is unnecessary and harmful in many ways.

Now we are engaged in a war in Iraq that is very unpopular with a big majority of the American people. More importantly, every poll of Iraqis themselves shows that 78 to 80 percent of them want us to leave, except in the Kurdish areas.

They want our money, but they do not want us occupying Iraq. Surely, we are not adopting a foreign policy that forces us on other people, one that says we are going to run Iraq even if the people there want us to leave. A majority of the Iraqi Parliament has now cosponsored a bill asking us to leave.

It is sure not traditional conservatism to carry on a war in a country that did not attack us, did not even threaten to attack us, and was not even capable of attacking us. And it is sure not traditional conservatism to believe in world government even if run by the U.S.

Our war in Iraq has greatly damaged the Republican Party and conservatism in general. Even though this war has gone against every traditional conservative view, especially fiscal conservatism, it is seen by most as a conservative war. Even worse than the damage it has done to my party and a philosophy I believe in very deeply is the harm it has done to our relations with other countries, especially other countries in the Middle East. But worst of all, of course, is the fact that so many young Americans have been killed and horribly wounded in a very unnecessary war.

President Bush when he ran for office in 2000 campaigned strongly against nation building. Unfortunately, that is what we have been doing in Iraq. The President in 2000 said what we needed was a more humble foreign policy. That is what we needed then, and it is what we need now.

William F. Buckley, often called the godfather of conservatism, summed it up best in a column he wrote almost 2 years ago: ''A respect for the power of the United States is engendered by our success in engagements in which we take part. A point is reached when tenacity conveys not steadfastness of purpose but misapplication of pride. It can't reasonably be disputed that if in the year ahead the situation in Iraq continues about as it has done in the past year, we will have suffered more than another 500 soldiers killed. Where there had been skepticism about our venture, there will be contempt.'' That was William F. Buckley in 2005, and the key point there, he said ''a point is reached when tenacity conveys not steadfastness of purpose but misapplication of pride.''

□ 1600

BALANCED TRADE NOW

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, last Friday it was announced that the Democratic leadership had struck a deal with the administration and the United States Trade Representative regarding how this country will approach trade agreements with other nations.

While very few have seen the actual text of what this deal looks like, many of us in Congress have concerns as to how these new standards on labor and environment will realistically and effectively be enforced.

As a member of the newly elected class of 2006, I was elected to help change the course of this country, to help change our Nation's trade policy in particular, a policy that cuts the legs out from under American workers and places our industries at a competitive disadvantage. It threatens our quality of life and our global environment at the same time.

We are now operating under a flawed model; and until that model is fixed, our Nation's jobs and the livelihoods of our constituents in Wisconsin and elsewhere are in jeopardy.

As we have seen in our trade with China, we have been unable, unable to stop illegal subsidies, unable to stop illegal dumping and blatant violations of basic human labor rights and environmental standards. What will we Americans have to give up next?

Trade deals in the past were flawed, and the ones still being negotiated must show promise of helping American workers, of helping their families and American communities.

I believe that John Sweeney, president of the AFL–CIO, put it clearly in his statement when he said about a new deal: ''Our trade policy will not be fixed overnight. The Bush administration's consistent unwillingness to enforce trade violations against nations like Jordan and China remind us there is no guarantee the executive branch will enforce any new rights workers may gain through these negotiations, and President Bush has negotiated flawed agreements with gross human rights violator Colombia and a losing, one-sided agreement with South Korea.''

My friends, it is time that the United States of America begins shipping our values overseas and not our jobs. It is time for America to take back our rich history of manufacturing, of making things. After all, if we don't make anything, we won't have anything. What everyone in Wisconsin is asking for is balanced trade, and we need it now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas). 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.)

HONORING MAGGIE RODRIGUEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Maggie Rodriguez, who recently accepted the lead anchor role on the nationally televised CBS ''Saturday Early Show.'' Maggie has been covering south Florida with CBS's local affiliate, CBS 4, for 7 years. As a news anchor on the 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts, Maggie has delivered news to millions of people in my community on a regular basis since the year 2000.

Maggie is a product of south Florida who has distinguished herself in her chosen field of journalism. She attended Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, located in the heart of my congressional district. In 1991, she graduated from the University of Miami, my alma mater. As a fellow south Floridian, I am very proud to honor Maggie on her many achievements. She is moving to New York, but she will always be welcomed in her hometown.

Her husband, Michael, is the general manager of Telemundo's local affiliate in Miami. I am sure that Maggie will continue to spend significant time down home in south Florida.

Since beginning her career with Univision in 1991, Maggie's warm personality, coupled with her strong work

ethic, has made her very successful. She has delivered breaking news on a number of notable stories throughout the years. She has extensive experience covering natural disasters. Before taking over as news anchor on CBS 4, Maggie reported on earthquakes and mudslides with KABC in Los Angeles. With CBS 4, she has, unfortunately, covered numerous hurricanes. Like any newscaster in south Florida, the long hurricane season every year has kept Maggie busy.

When hurricanes hit our region, local newscasters play a pivotal role in helping residents prepare and recover from hurricane damage. Oftentimes, they provide around-the-clock coverage. Most recently, Maggie did outstanding work reporting on Hurricane Wilma which severely impacted our region in the year 2005.

Maggie will be moving to New York where she spent significant time reporting for CBS 4 in the aftermath of 9/11. Maggie was noticed by CBS executives for her coverage of this year's Super Bowl in Miami. This led to guest appearances on the ''Saturday Early Show'' and eventually to a full-time position on this program.

Maggie is a great role model also for Hispanic girls in our community. She received the Young Hispanic Leadership Award from the Hispanic Heritage Council for both her professional accomplishments as well as her efforts in strong community service.

As a local news anchor, she has become an active member of our community, lending a helping hand to those in need. Her professional portfolio has garnered several awards, including six Emmys, along with two Edward R. Murrow awards.

She will be missed by so many people who tune in every afternoon and evening to watch her on CBS 4. However, we look forward to watching her on Saturday mornings nationwide. Her pleasant personality makes her ideal for this new role.

Once again, I congratulate Maggie Rodriguez as she begins this new chapter in her life. She truly deserves the recognition she has received, and now millions of Americans across the country will have the opportunity to watch her on Saturday morning.

Godspeed, Maggie.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING GOVERNOR JAMES HUNT

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today with Congressmen JONES, PRICE, WATT, ETHERIDGE, MCINTYRE, MILLER and SHULER, all of North Carolina, to honor and observe the 70th birthday of our four-term Governor of North Carolina, the Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.

Over the years my long-time and dear friend, Governor Hunt, has successfully dedicated so much of himself to public service. He is a man of immense vision with an extraordinary ability to implement his vision with great results. That vision has often been focused on education.

Governor Hunt's list of accomplishments is long and highly distinguished in the area of education. He led efforts to establish the State's primary reading program. He also spearheaded the efforts to reduce class sizes and prevent students from dropping out of school. Governor Hunt assumed the lead role in establishing the State's school of science and mathematics, the Microelectronics Center of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center.

Smart Start, which was established under Governor Hunt's leadership, has become a nationally recognized and award-winning public-private partnership that ensures that children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. The program helps provide quality child care, health care and family support for every child in need, and there are now 14 States using this model.

Governor Hunt also assisted with establishing one of the most rigorous approaches to measuring student performance, requiring mastery before promotion and graduation, and providing assistance to turn around failing schools.

He did not allow these initiatives, or any of the many others he headed, to stand alone after he signed them into law. Instead, he demanded follow-through and results, and he got them. A study by the RAND Corporation found that our public schools raised their test scores more than any other State in the 1990s.

Governor Hunt's strong-held belief that the key to a quality education is great teaching has benefited students well beyond North Carolina's borders. In fact, it has benefited students and teachers throughout our Nation.

As the founding Chair for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Governor Hunt was a driving force in fulfilling the promise of improving student achievement by raising the standards. Today, virtually every State and more than 25 percent of all school districts offer financial rewards or incentives for teachers seeking certification.

Madam Speaker, the economic value of an education and knowledge was well understood by Governor Hunt long before people started talking about its central role in the global economy.

Madam Speaker, Governor Hunt has also led the way in opening up the Democratic Party of our State to full participation by minority citizens. As Governor, Governor Jim Hunt appointed many African American lawyers to the trial bench and appellate court benches to hold positions that had been virtually impossible for them to otherwise obtain. Many of them now serve as judges with distinction, and it was Governor Hunt who made that happen.

In closing, we are honored today to recognize this great man of conviction, principle, and exceptional character on such a joyous occasion. I ask you to join us in congratulating the ''Education Governor,'' the Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr., on his 70th birthday, and in wishing him and his wife, Carolyn, many more years of happiness and accomplishment.

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

(Mr. MICHAUD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

□ 1615

VERMONTERS SPEAK OUT

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I rise to report on an effort in Vermont that honors the tradition of Vermonters speaking out on issues of conscience. Vermonters take public service, political integrity and citizen involvement extremely seriously. This is a tradition that dates back to our earliest days when Vermont became the very first State to ban slavery.

But with rising alarm, Vermont has watched abuse of power and a disregard for checks and balances in Washington that has occurred over the past 6 years.

□ 1615

Vermonters have such extraordinary concern, particularly with the prosecution of this war in Iraq, that many are now actually calling for the President and the Vice President to be impeached.

Impeachment is a dramatic position, but it reflects the collective judgment of many in Vermont that we are in extreme circumstances. Madam Speaker, I do not believe that impeachment is the answer, but I endorse the indictment of the policies of the current administration.

What this Nation has experienced over the past 6 years has been staggering: a war in its fifth year that was justified based on false intelligence; the politicization of our Nation's top

law enforcement agency; the cavalier disregard for civil liberties and constitutional protections; no-bid war contracts to well-connected friends; the use of signing statements to disregard the law; and the denial of habeas corpus, a basic right, for those in U.S. custody.

The list could go on. These and other transgressions have caused some Vermonters to rise up and promote the use of impeachment to restore accountability and curb the abuse of power. This impeachment movement in Vermont started last year in the small town of Newfane, population 1,700, by Dan DeWalt, a selectman on the town board.

After voting for the town clerk, the tax collector and voting whether to fund a village sidewalk project and the local school, the town then voted on a resolution to send a message to Congress to initiate impeachment proceedings. This initiative then spread from one small southern Vermont town to 40 towns across the State.

My own hometown of Hartland joined this call, and I've spoken with many of my neighbors, farmer, teachers, doctors and store owners, about their vote, and what they share is an outrage about the conduct of this administration and the prosecution of this terrible war.

Even last month, the Vermont General Assembly took up the issue. On April 20, the Vermont State Senate voted 16–9 in favor of Congress launching impeachment investigations, and while the Vermont House of Representatives defeated the resolution, it still received 60 supportive votes from Vermont legislators. And nearly 400 Vermonters representing 102 of Vermont's 251 towns came to the State House that day to voice their views. And this past Saturday, I held a town meeting in the town of Hartford, Vermont, and heard from 250 Vermonters advocating for this extraordinary measure.

I applaud these citizen activists who have acted in the Vermont tradition of speaking out and taking a principled stand to protect our democracy. They raise valid concerns about the actions of this administration and, if those actions are allowed to go unchecked, the threat to democracy that we face. Their concerns are well-founded.

But let me be clear, opinion is divided in Vermont about whether impeachment is the right remedy and whether it's the right tactic, but what motivated this effort is a commonly shared view that this administration has grossly abused its power and pursued terribly misguided policies.

Madam Speaker, while I disagree with the tactic of impeachment, I completely share the goal of restoring accountability and a new direction to our government.

Our oversight investigations in Congress have exposed egregiously substandard care at Walter Reed where we have heard about soldiers still recovering from brain surgery forced to wander the grounds to find the outpatient care they were promised.

Congressional oversight has documented unacceptable accounts of political interference by the administration over sound global warming science, with political appointees editing scientific reports.

And our probes have uncovered waste and fraud and abuse associated with the war in Iraq to an unimaginable scale, $12 billion of $100 bills flown from the United States to Iraq and then distributed from the back of pickup trucks.

And through our oversight and subpoenas, we are vigorously seeking to expose and investigate the peddling of faulty intelligence that the administration presented to justify their case for war.

And through our oversight and subpoenas, we are vigorously seeking to expose and investigate the peddling of faulty intelligence the Administration presented in their case for war.

We must demand to know whether the Administration's active dissemination of bad intelligence was premeditated with the intention of deceiving the American people, or was it reckless and cavalier, done to justify a decision to go to war that had already been made?

At every corner, step by step, Congress is methodically peeling back the layers of deception and deceit, holding this Administration accountable. We must get the facts and follow the facts. And that is exactly what is being done.

Madam Speaker, this pursuit of impeachment has consequences to real lives and real people. I measure every decision I make here in Congress based on whether it will hasten or delay an end to this war. Nothing illustrates this urgency more than a phone call I received before a recent trip to Iraq. The call was from a mother in the town of Brattleboro who lost her son in this terrible war. She so desired closure over her son's death, that she asked to accompany me to Iraq so she could see where her son had died. It was a stark reminder that there is no greater challenge we face than ending this war.

I also submit for the record a letter that was read at the Hartland town meeting from Lisa Johnson of Essex Jct. about the death in Iraq of her son Captain Pierre Piché.

I am proud of the Vermonters pushing for facts, prodding for accountability, and demanding oversight.

As I travel around the State, meeting with Vermonters, I also hear a sense of optimism: it is the optimism that comes from Congress restoring the checks and balances that had for too long been lost and an optimism from seeing a Congress finally getting down to making progress with new priorities and a new direction for this country.

SENATE RESOLUTION 16

Whereas, President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney have exercised the duties of their respective offices with respect to both domestic and foreign affairs in ways that raise serious questions of constitutionality, statutory legality, and abuse of the public trust, and

Whereas, the President's conduct in his role as Commander in Chief in leading our nation into the military conflict in Iraq, and the Vice President's continual advocacy for American troops remaining in Iraq, have cost the United States much of the good will that was extended to our country in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, and

Whereas, the President's and the Vice President's domestic leadership on issues relating to individual privacy and personal liberty under law has raised constitutional issues of the greatest concern to the nation's citizenry, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont urges Vermont's Representative in the United States House of Representatives to introduce, and Vermont's United States Senators to support, a resolution requiring the United States House Judiciary Committee to initiate impeachment proceedings against the President and the Vice President of the United States, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to United States Representative Peter Welch, United States Senator Patrick J. Leahy and United States Senator Bernard Sanders.

MAY 11, 2007.

DEAR MR. WELCH: my son, Captain Pierre Piche', should be teaching young people history or political science right now. Like many of the young people who represent the best that our country has to offer, he is a casualty of the war in Iraq. He was killed in a Blackhawk helicopter on November 13, 2003. He was sent to fly over a high-risk area in Bagdad because he was being required to attend a mandatory R and R. He did not want to go. He knew it was very dangerous and he also knew that was completely illogical. It turned out that these soldiers were being sent in to be part of a photo op for the president. I have to live with this knowledge every day.

My son served proudly in the military for ten years before being sent to Iraq. He earned the rank of captain with blood, sweat and tears, and he loved every minute of it. Before my son was killed he told me that he did not like what he was seeing in Iraq and he did not want to be a part of it.

My son Pierre gave the ultimate sacrifice, knowing that he had been deceived. It is difficult for all of us who oppose this war to observe the ongoing carnage and wearing down of the fabric of the American spirit as this war kills our young people, eats away at the economy and, worse yet, the hearts of the American people. For me, the betrayal is pointed and more personal.

There must be accountability for the real reasons for this war. Keep up the investigations. Keep up the pressure, and add to the pressure by investigating the two people most responsible, Bush and Cheney.

Your courage is needed because this war has to end.

Thank you.

LISA JOHNSON,
Essex Jct. Vermont.

WARNING FOR THE 2006 ANNUAL NEWFANE TOWN MEETING AND ANNUAL NEWFANE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING, NEWFANE UNION HALL, MARCH 7, 2006

The legal voters of the Town of Newfane, Vermont and the Town School District of Newfane, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned that, pursuant to Title 17 VSA, Section 2655, they are to meet at the Union Hall, in the Village of Newfane, Vermont on Tuesday, March 7, 2006 at 9 a.m. to act upon the following Articles, to wit:

Article 1: To elect all Newfane Town Officers and Newfane Town School District Officers as required by law for the ensuing year.

(Voting on this article to be by Australian Ballot from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m.)

Town: Constable 1 year term; Delinquent Tax Collector 1 year term; Grand Juror 1 year term; Lister 3 year term; Lister 1 year term; Moderator—Town 1 year term; Selectman 3 year term; Selectman two 1 year terms; Town Agent 1 year term; Town Clerk 1 year term; Town/School Treasurer 1 year term; Trustees Moore Free Library; and Building Fund five 1 year terms

School: Moderator 1 year term; School Director 3 year term; School Director two 1 year terms.

Leland & Gray: Newfane Representative 3 year term and Newfane Representative 1 year term.

Article 2: To see if the voters of the Town and the Town School District will accept the annual report of the Auditor and other Town Officers.

Article 3: To see what salaries and expenses the Town and the Town School District will vote to pay its Officers for the ensuing year. Town Clerk—$12.49/hour, not to exceed 40 hours per week; Town Treasurer—$12.49/hour, not to exceed 40 hours per week; Listers—$10.00/hour. Other Elected or Appointed Officers—$7.25/hour; School Treasurer—$12.49/hour; Mileage reimbursement at 34 cents per mile.

Article 4: To see if the voters of the Town and the Town School District will vote to authorize the Selectmen and the School District to borrow money in anticipation of taxes and in anticipation of Federal & State Monies to be allocated to the Town and the Town School District.

Article 5: To see if the voters of the Town will pay taxes for the ensuing fiscal year on a quarterly basis, due on the 15th of August, October, January and April; and that the charge for interest be at the maximum legal rate of 1% per month for the first three months and 1.5% per month for each month thereafter until paid.

Article 6: To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize operational fund expenses in the amount of $1,582,195 for the coming year.

Article 7: To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town School District.

Article 8: To see if the voters of the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or otherwise convey property acquired through tax sale proceedings.

Article 9: Shall the voters of the Town of Newfane instruct our State Representatives and Senators to oppose: any use of the State Education Fund for purposes that are outside the law's original intent to make payments to school districts and supervisory unions for the support of education; the shifting of existing State General Fund expense obligations to the Education Fund; and the reduction of any existing State General Fund revenue support to the Education Fund?

Article 10: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $750 (Seven-hundred fifty dollars) for Connecticut River Transit, Inc.

Article 11 : To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $420 (Four-hundred twenty dollars) for West River Watershed Alliance.

Article 12: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $1,000 (One-thousand dollars) for Williamsville School Preservation Society.

Article 13: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise $3,760 by taxation for the Visiting Nurse Alliance of Vermont & New Hampshire (VNA of Southeastern Vermont and the Southern Vermont Home Health Agency). [In the budget]

Article 14: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise $2,700 by taxation for Early Education Services. [In the budget]

Article 15: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise $2,604 by taxation for the Valley Health Council. [In the budget]

Article 16: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise $2,500 by taxation for Grace Cottage Foundation, which supports the services of the Otis Health Care Center, including Grace Cottage Hospital and Emergency Room, Grace Cottage Family Health Services, and Heins Home Community Care Home. [In the budget]

Article 17: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $15,000 to help defray the cost of the Village of Newfane Sidewalk project on West Street (TH#1).

Article 18: To see if the voters will vote to exempt from taxation all real property of the Incorporated Village of Newfane Union Hall building and land property (3 acre ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA ' 3840.

Article 19: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to exempt from taxation all real property of the South Newfane Community Association building and land (2 acre ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA ' 3840.

Article 20: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to exempt from taxation all real property for the NewBrook Volunteer Fire Association building and land (1.6 acres ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA' 3840.

Article 21: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to exempt from taxation all real property for the South Newfane/Williamsville Fire Station and land (3 acre ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA ' 3840.

Article 22: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to exempt from taxation all real property of the Valley Lions Club property (12.9 acres ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA ' 3832(7).

Article 23: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to exempt from taxation all real property of the Williamsville School Preservation Society (2 acre ?) for a period of five years pursuant to 32 VSA ' 3832(6).

Article 24: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to approve the expenditure from the Town Reappraisal Fund for town wide update of values for the real property in Newfane to be completed by May 1, 2007 for an amount not to exceed $50,000.

Article 25: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to raise by taxes the amount of $75,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund to be used for future Capital needs.

Article 26: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to authorize capital fund expenditures in the amount of $357,142 as proposed in the Capital needs plan for Fiscal Year 2007, with $146,642 to be used from the capital reserve funds.

Article 27: To see if the voters of the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to borrow up to $148,500 for Capital needs.

Article 28: To see if the voters of the Town will authorize Town and Highway operational expenditures in the amount of $980,658 for the coming year.

Article 29: We the voters of Newfane would like Town Meeting, March 2006, to consider the following resolution:

Whereas George W. Bush has:

1. Misled the nation about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction;

2. Misled the nation about ties between Iraq and Al Quaeda;

3. Used these falsehoods to lead our nation into war unsupported by international law;

4. Not told the truth about American policy with respect to the use of torture; and

5. Has directed the government to engage in domestic spying, in direct contravention of U.S. law.

Therefore, the voters of the town of Newfane ask that our representative to the U.S. House of Representatives file articles of impeachment to remove him from office.

Article 30: To transact any other business that may legally come before the Town.

Board of Selectmen School Directors: Hendrik W. van Loon, Chairman; Johanna Gardner, Co-Chairperson; Priscilla M. Cotton Robert Gunther-Mohr, Co-Chairperson; Daniel DeWalt Mikell Lasch; Patricia Halloran Lyssa Singleton; and Gary M. Katz James Urbaska

Town of Newfane, Vermont Town of Newfane, Vermont, February 1, 2006, February 3, 2006.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. HARE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. SHERMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the Speaker so very much for the opportunity for presenting once again before the House of Representatives. I want to thank my leadership for allowing me to head up and chair this hour that is a Special Order hour. It is an opportunity for us in the minority party to come and try to shed some light on some issues that frankly don't get a whole lot of attention here on the floor of the House of

Representatives, and so I appreciate that opportunity once again.

Madam Speaker, most of us go home every weekend and visit our district, talk to constituents. It is a wonderful time to be able to go back and get grounded, go back to that touchstone and those people that supported us as we came to Washington, to try to assist in moving our country in the right direction.

And I have been struck over the last couple of months as I go home every weekend and talk to my friends and neighbors and fellow church-goers in my Sixth District of Georgia on the north side of Atlanta, I have been struck by their concern about what appears to be from their standpoint a continuing decrease in the level of civility here in Washington.

I am in my second term, initially elected in 2004, and one of the things that I thought I would hopefully be able to have some effect on would be to affect positively the level of rhetoric and the level of discourse here in Washington, and the level of frustration that my constituents tell me they have regarding what's going on here in Washington continues to increase.

So one of the things that I and some other Members of our conference have tried to do is to come to the floor, try to do it at least once a week, sometimes we're not able to do that, but talk about issues in a light that is hopefully more positive, hopefully respects the history of our Nation in a way that allows us to kind of glean the role that we ought to play as the House of Representatives and as Congress and to hopefully chart out or to define a path that will continue to allow our children and our grandchildren to live in the finest Nation on the face of the Earth.

In so doing, what we have tried to do is to talk about truth, to talk about facts. So often in the world of politics, in fact we have heard it just within the last few moments, Madam Speaker, the issue of politics over policy. So often when folks come to the floor of the House they talk more about politics than they do about policy, and I understand that. People have to get elected and I appreciate that, but when you're talking about things that are so incredibly important to the future of this Nation, it would behoove us as a House of Representatives to endeavor as much as we can to work together and to try to come up with the best solution for our Nation.

All of us come from different backgrounds. I happen to come from a profession of medicine. I practiced medicine for over 20 years, and medicine is a little different endeavor than politics and legislating. In taking care of patients what we try to do is try to work together, all for a common goal, which is to get the patient well obviously. So it is a collegial activity. It tends to be an activity where we share information and support one another.

Would that were the case on the floor of this House of Representatives, Madam Speaker, because I share my constituents' frustration with much of the partisanship that goes on here and much of the sniping and the politics over policy that makes it so very difficult, very difficult to move our Nation forward.

So we have developed a group that we call The Official Truth Squad, and its desire, as I mentioned, is to try to shed some light on issues here before our Nation. We have a number of individuals that we like to point to as heroes over the history of our Nation. Many of our former Presidents were certainly individuals who sought the truth and sought to guide this Nation in a positive and an uplifting direction.

One of the individuals that I like to quote is Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Mr. Moynihan was a Senator from the State of New York, and he had marvelous quips and marvelous phrases that he would use. One of them was this one right here. It says, ''Everyone is entitled to their own opinion but they are not entitled to their own facts.'' Everyone's entitled to their own opinion but they are not entitled to their own facts.

So I was struck by that, Madam Speaker, just last week as I was working here late in the Capitol one evening, happened to run into a couple who was in the hallway, obviously tourists, and they were stopping at some of the statues here in the Capitol. They were interested in finding where the gallery to the House of Representatives was, and so I pointed them in the right direction and happened to see them up in the gallery.

I had some friends from home who were visiting as well, and I got a chance to talk to them in the hallway. This young man was a physician. Come to find out he was a doctor who was serving in our military, and in 2 days or 3 days from last week when I met him, he was on his way to Iraq. He was on his way to try to help our men and women who are standing in harm's way and trying to protect our liberty and our freedom to make certain that they were given the finest care they possibly could be given in a difficult situation. He shared with me his frustration about the lack of not just civility but about the lack of attention to urgent problems.

One of the things that we briefly talked about was the responsibility that this Congress has to make certain that our men and women who are defending liberty, defending us, making certain that our children and our grandchildren can live in this great Nation for generations to come, and the frustration that he had with the inability of this Congress to make certain that the resources, the money that's needed to be able to allow our military men and women to protect themselves and to protect us has not been forthcoming, and I shared my frustration with him about that same event.

Madam Speaker, tomorrow I believe will be 100 days, 100 days since the President of the United States has sent to Congress his request for money, resources, for our fighting men and women in Afghanistan and Iraq, and if there was anything that demonstrated politics over policy, it has been this last 100 days. Very frustrating, Madam Speaker, frustrating for me, and I know that it is concerning and frustrating for our constituents all across this Nation, because what has happened has been a length of time that was played out to just apparently get headlines, it appeared to be.

And then there was a supplemental bill that was brought to the floor of the House, and it had in addition to the money that had been requested to allow our troops to defend themselves, it had in addition to that a peculiar set of directions, benchmarks, timelines, for our men and women and our generals on the ground, so much so that they said, look, there isn't any way that we can accomplish what we need to accomplish if you, Congress, adopt this bill, adopts this piece of legislation.

Many individuals on both sides of the aisle said, well, you're absolutely right, that sounds ridiculous. And so then what happened was that in order for the majority party apparently to pass this piece of legislation, they kept adding money on to it. So money in Washington does not start with an M. It starts with a B. So they kept adding billions and billions and billions, over $20 billion, to the bill in order to allow for folks on either side of the aisle who had concerns, enough of them to be able to say, okay, well, I can justify my vote for that bill if I am going to get those kinds of resources.

And so that bill passed the House with a very slim margin and passed the Senate, was sent to the President, the President promptly vetoed it. It came back to the House of Representatives and was delayed for another 4 or 5 days by this majority, Madam Speaker. The only reason that anybody can determine was for, again, politics over policy.

And just last week, another bill was then adopted which had a peculiar arrangement that would allow for some money to go for a while, and then if the Congress still agreed, within a month or two then there would be more money forthcoming. It was what many of us have called war on the installment plan, which is actually a worse plan than the majority party came up with initially.

□ 1630

Now, those are the facts. So that bill is passed, and we are waiting to see what happens from the Senate.

But I get back to the point of that young man who shared his frustration and his concern with me about why Congress can't act on things that are so pressing for the security of our Nation and for those men and women who are serving in harm's way. It just, it is very, very concerning to men and

women across this Nation, that we, as a legislative body, the United States House of Representatives, can't put politics aside and work for the good of the Nation and work for the benefit and the security of our men and women who are defending our liberty and defending our freedom.

So I just offer that as what I am hearing from home. I suspect it's what many of my colleagues are hearing from home as well. I am hopeful that we will be able to move forward with a clean bill, a bill that provides money for our men and women who are defending liberty and defending themselves in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have got a number of folks who will be joining us today, I hope. We will talk about a number of issues, the war supplemental, the budget and some other items, I hope.

But I am pleased to be joined by my good friend and colleague from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) and look forward to your comments. I yield to you.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Mr. PRICE. I appreciate you yielding your time to me. I appreciate you coming down here with the Truth Squad.

Sometimes the truth is many things to many people. But at the end of the day, it's still the truth. As you know, sometimes the truth is ugly. I thought one of the comments you were making about the war supplemental bill, the very truth of what took place to get that bill passed was very ugly.

In fact, this new ethical majority that came up, I felt, was pretty interesting, that, you know, one of the things was not leaving the vote held open to change the outcome, which we have seen several times, that it actually happened; the earmark reform, which is another smoke and mirror that has gone along. Then I think one of the other things was this big lobby reform about buying votes, and I think they called it a ''culture of corruption.''

But I think what we have seen since January is actually an in-house culture of corruption and the fact that they had to buy 218 votes. So that's something that's unique to the situation, because, typically, you don't think about using other people's money to buy votes, but that's what they are doing. They are using the taxpayer dollar, and, like you said, Congressman, it's up into the billions now. I believe it was $20 billion that it cost them to get that 218 vote.

Let's talk about something else for a minute, because, I think the new majority party labeled the 109th Congress the do-nothing Congress, and we have labeled this, being the Truth Squad, and the honest people that we are, the smoke-and-mirrors Congress.

So I want to talk about some of the empty promises, some of the smoke and mirrors that we have all been talking about. One of the things we can all relate to is high gas prices. Mr. PRICE, it's hard to believe that we talk about the good old days of gas being $2 a gallon. But we don't have to go back that far to where gas was $2 a gallon.

I want to read a few quotes if I could, for you, to the people and to the Speaker. This was a quote: ''Democrats have a plan to lower gas prices . . . join Democrats who are working to lower gas prices now.'' This was a quote from now-Speaker PELOSI back in April of 2006, and I believe that gas was probably around $2 a gallon then. Now the Americans are paying $3.49 a gallon in California. That doesn't seem like that much of a reduction in the price of gas. In fact, it looks like almost 100 percent increase.

Another quote: ''Democrats believe that we can do more for the American people who are struggling to deal with high gas prices . . . we have offered legislation that would actually do something about the rise in gasoline prices . . . '' This is a quote from Mr. HOYER. That was back in 2005. I don't know what the gas prices were then in Maryland, but I know today in Maryland they are $2.98 a gallon.

So these are some more empty promises; and not only empty promises, we got to see on some of the votes of the leadership, for the majority party, exactly how they vote.

If you look at the ANWR drilling, no, no, no. No, no, no. If you look at the refineries, where we wanted to expand our capability of our refineries, and be able to refine more oil, no, no, no. I am anxious, aren't you, to see what their result is going to be? I am ready for the answer.

They have left us hanging long enough. They have left us hanging for 2 years, and 1 year, as to what their answer is going to be to relieve these gas prices, to lower them. If anything, since the election in 2006, the gas prices have gone straight up.

So, you know, either they don't want to do what it takes to lower the gas prices, they don't know what it will take to lower the gas prices, or the very economic policies they have adopted in this 110th Congress have caused the gas prices to go up.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman's perspective on the issue of energy, because it's extremely important, because I hear that at home as well. Folks are frustrated by the level of inactivity by this Congress as it relates to many things, and certainly in the area of gas prices.

As you recall, Congressman WESTMORELAND, and I know you appreciate that what we heard out of this new majority was that their bill, earlier this year, their part of their 6 for '06 plan was going to solve a lot of the problems as it related to energy, and what was that plan?

As you will remember, that plan was to increase taxes on American oil companies. Increased taxes on American oil companies was somehow going to be this grand plan that would make it so that those mean and awful oil companies wouldn't be making so much money.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Do you think these are some of the same people that think increasing our taxes by the largest tax increase in the history of this country is going to make our economy better? Could these be the same people that think these economic policies are going to make us better?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Well, I appreciate that observation as well, because that appears to be what they believe. But we are getting a little ahead of ourselves, because it's important to close the loop on this energy issue.

Because what the majority party offered was this remarkable smoke and mirrors that said, as part of their 6 for '06, that if we just passed this bill, if we just increased taxes on the oil company, then what will happen is that they will, by some miraculous determination, lower the price of oil for folks at the pump.

Well, as you well know, what increases taxes on American oil companies does is make it so that they are less likely to be able to compete in the world so that our reliance on foreign oil gets greater.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Just to interrupt you one more time, because I think this is important to understand that those tax increases on an oil company really come from doing away with the tax credits they were getting for new exploration on finding new oil.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Absolutely, without a doubt. There are some real keys, pivotal keys to the real solution to our energy challenges. One of them is conservation. We can all do more in the area of conservation. We can all probably do more on conservation. Probably the long-term solution is some type of alternative fuel. We have done a lot for that. In fact, most Members of the majority party are on record as opposing rewards for the provision of alternative fuel.

But one of the mainstays, especially in the short-term, is to provide American energy for Americans. So, peculiarly, what this majority party did, and it's perplexing, frankly, because it doesn't solve anything, is to pass a bill to increase taxes on American oil companies, again, which makes us less competitive in the world, makes us more reliant on foreign oil, and, frankly, it means that what we do is finance those folks who like us less to a greater degree. That doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I found two more quotes I found interesting: ''House Democrats have a plan to help curb rising gas prices.'' Now, this is Mr. JIM CLYBURN from South Carolina who said that on July 6 of 2006. Gas prices in South Carolina are now $2.81.

There is another one that says: ''With gasoline and other prices rising, America's middle-class families deserve better . . . Nobody thinks $2.50 a gallon is cheap; it's still expensive.'' Now that came from the Democratic Caucus Chairman RAHM EMANUEL on June 2 of 2006. So, evidently, gas prices

were around $2.50 then. Now, in Illinois, they are $3.23.

So, do you think, being the Truth Squad, that this could just be smoke and mirrors to get people to believe that they had some kind of answer to reduce these gas prices to make Americans make it easier for us to meet our energy needs here within this country, without going to foreign imports?

So that seems to be the indication that this is just more smoke and mirrors that the 110th Congress, then the minority, was telling the American public to become the majority. It's kind of like a barking dog behind the fence. As long as that dog is behind the fence, he is going to bark and say and do things to make you think he is going to get out and get something done. But when you open that gate he becomes a little whimpering Chihuahua, does nothing. I think that's what we see in here, a bunch of little Chihuahuas whimpering around.

I do thank you. I thank you for your time. I think the gentlelady from Tennessee may want to add something to that. I appreciate the opportunity.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate your comments so much. I think it's important. It's called smoke and mirrors; I think that's an apt title. I talk about politics over policy, which is what frustrates me, frustrates so many of our constituents at home.

I am so pleased to be joined by my friend from Tennessee, Congresswoman MARSHA BLACKBURN, who is a strong leader on the Energy and Commerce Committee. I look forward to your comments on this issue and others.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman so very much. I am pleased that we are talking about the issue that so many Americans are talking about right now, and that is the energy needs of our country.

One thing that you touched on, I think, that is just so vitally important to see, the solutions that we work toward are going to be American solutions, and it is not going to be something that is simple, or you can't change it with the stroke of a pen. This is something we are going to have to work our way out of, things we can do right now. Right now, through conservation efforts, things that we can do over the next decade, through exploration, through the innovation, things that we can work over the next 25, 30 years toward, as we look at diversification of our supplies, and commercialization of new technologies and new forms of fuel.

But the thing is, when you look at all of that diversity, and having a wide, broad answer, a sustainable American energy policy, we know, it is American solutions that will lead us to being free of the influx of foreign oil and foreign energy sources into our country. I think that what we have to do is look at the steps we are going to take over the next couple of years and the next couple of decades as being more or less next level steps to the building blocks that we have put in place.

Our party has had a tremendously strong record of conservation. You can go back to Teddy Roosevelt and look at the efforts that he had toward conserving this Nation's natural resources and the legacy that was put in place there, and how we have moved forward through the decades now to where we look at our environment and energy and, say, you know, we passed a good bill in 2005. It brought forward, moved forward, a lot of our alternative energy sources, our renewable resources, and allowed for additional exploration of those natural resources that we have here.

Now it is time for us to push it a little bit further down the pike. That's what the American people want to see. They know that fuel prices are high. They understand that. They know that our electricity use is going to increase over the next couple of decades. They understand that. They accept that.

What they want us to do is to get the costs down, to be certain that we have access to an ample supply of affordable energy.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate your passion about this and the information that you bring. I suspect you see what I see at home, and you hear what I hear at home, that is, that Americans want us to be working towards solutions. They want us to come up with solutions and make certain that we are working together to put those solutions on the table and move them forward so that we can work to get that American energy.

What they are concerned about is the lack of solutions that they see being put on the table by the current majority party.

□ 1645

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman will yield. That is indeed one of their frustrations.

And one of my constituents this past weekend said to me, you know, I appreciate all the talk that's out there about the environment. I appreciate the talk that is out there about energy.

But, let me tell you something. Global warming is not a national security issue. And what I don't like is the fact that the liberal left is taking money out of homeland security. They're taking money out of intelligence. They're diverting funds from all sorts of budgets up here to study their fascination with global warming. And that is something that our constituents are not happy with. And as one of my constituents said to me, I don't think global warming had one single thing to do with September 11.

They want us to focus on what should be our priorities. And as we're talking about the budget and the priorities of the House, one of the things we have continued to hear so much about is a tremendous amount of concern from the small business people that are in our district, all of our small business owners, especially our female-owned small businesses who are extremely concerned about the budget that the Democrat leadership has brought forward that would be the single largest tax increase in history.

These are women who have stepped forward. They are taking a risk. They are taking the responsibility of running a company, and now they are getting ready to be hit with the single largest tax increase in history by a leadership that I guess does not understand the necessity of being a small business owner and looking at those books, being a single mom and wanting deductibility for that child tax credit; small business owners that are sharing in the ownership of this; married couples that are looking for marriage penalty relief that want to continue small business expensing. And every time they turn around, the government is wanting to take more of their pay check.

My constituents want to know that they've got first right of refusal on that pay check, not the Federal Government. They know government has a spending problem. It doesn't have a revenue problem.

And as I've said many times on this floor, a lot of my constituents believe if 10 percent is good enough for God, 10 percent is good enough for the government. And they feel like we should do a better job of managing the people's money, and they are exactly right.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Indeed, I will.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate you bringing up the issue of the largest tax increase in American history that was passed by this majority on this floor. And folks at home say, well that can't be true. That just can't be true. We can't allow that to happen. What are they doing?

And what they're doing is displayed in this chart right here, as you well know, because all of these tax rates, all of these tax rates, given the budget that has been adopted by this House, will increase to significant levels in relatively short order. Ordinary income going from the top rate of 35 percent to 39.6, capital gains going from 15 percent to 20 percent, dividends going from 15 percent to 39.6 percent, estate tax goes from 0 percent in 2010 to 55 percent. That's the death tax. It goes to 55 percent in 2011. The child tax credit cut in half. And the lowest tax bracket, amazingly enough, goes from 10 to 15 percent, which is a 50 percent increase.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman would yield, that is their projections for right now. We are just a few months into the new majority, and it took them just a couple of days to increase regulations and increase spending. It took them a couple of months to start raising taxes, and look at where they've gotten. They already are spending so much more than they should be that at this point this is where they are. And we haven't even gotten through the first year of this.

We haven't even gotten through the first budget. And we would see those rates on ordinary income tax go from 35 to 39.6 percent on January 1, 2011. That's 1/1/11. And that is when they would raise that. We would see that child tax credit cut in half. We would see cap gains go back up, and we're just a few months into this. This is the Hold on to Your Wallet Congress, and I would recommend that people hold on to that wallet because they want to get their hand on your pay check. And I yield back.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate the gentlelady's perspective on that because it is so true. And when folks think about the ordinary income going up from 35 to 39.6 percent they say, well, that, you know, that's just all those folks who are at the top, all those rich folks. Well, as you mentioned and so clearly stated, that includes all the small businesses, and what that means is jobs for America. And so the largest tax increase in the history of our Nation is what has been passed on the floor of this House. Very frustrating. And when you talk with reasonable folks on the other side of the aisle about this, they say, oh, well, we're not going to do all that. We're going to change some of those numbers. We're going to make it so that the lowest rate isn't 15 percent, it comes back down to 10.

But the problem is that their budget has spent all of the money that's to come from all of these tax increases. So if they're not going to get that money from one spot, then they've got to get it from another and raise them even more.

So, Madam Speaker, I think that it is clear that this is a real problem that the American people are beginning to appreciate, that the leadership that they thought they were electing in November of 2006 is, in fact, not the leadership that they are getting. Again, politics over appropriate policy.

This is a pie chart, Madam Speaker, that demonstrates who's going to be paying all those new taxes. And it talks about the billions, billions and billions of dollars that will be supposedly raised by those. In fact, what will happen is that it will so depress the economy that it is not likely that you'll see those kinds of revenues. In fact, what will happen is that we'll see fewer jobs, fewer amount of revenue to the Federal Government, and a significant change in what is a relatively good economic picture at the current time.

I am pleased to be joined by my good friend from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), KEVIN MCCARTHY, who is a member, of, I believe a member of the Budget Committee, and has been involved in certainly budgetary aspects and budgetary planning at the State level. And we're pleased to have you join us here in Washington this term as a new Member of the House of Representatives and look forward to your comments this evening.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I just want to congratulate this Member because I truly believe more people are listening than we've been hearing about. We see Nielsen's ratings out there and we see a number of people that watch C–SPAN. But I must tell you, there must be more because when I was sitting in my office, I was reading headlines, and the headline recently said, Congress has its lowest approval rating to date: 29 percent of the United States approves of what Congress is doing. And that means nothing.

And I believe that a lot is coming from what you're talking about. You're giving people truth and accountability on what's gone on in this new majority and what has happened in this new majority.

And that's really what I want to talk about today. Not much has moved. It's more about doing nothing. You talk about they are talking about putting politics before policies. And what I'd like to talk about today is actually a solution. I'd like to talk about putting people before politics. That's where we have to have a new direction and a new change.

When you look at some of the graphs that are sitting down on that floor, you will see, and it is a direct comparison of what policy the Republicans believe in and the policy the Democrats believe in.

A headline that I read just the other day was the largest amount of money coming in on April 15 in the record of the United States of America. The largest amount. And how did we come about doing that? We lowered taxes. It said, if you let people keep more of what they earn, they will invest. And what happens when they invest? They create more jobs. When you create more jobs, you create more homeowners. When you create more homeowners and more jobs, more people are able to go to college, get a greater education. That's talking about putting the people before politics.

It all goes back to the 2003 tax relief bill, much of what your graph will say. It'll show greater job creation the Republicans went out to do, and it'll show greater investment and, in the end, greater amounts of money to America today.

And what happens? It comes down to tell us that this is not a revenue problem in our deficit. It is a spending problem. But the Democrats look at it all different. They believe they should take more of what you earn. And I know I've said it before on this floor but I want to say it again. When you put people before politics, let's talk about taxes. Let's talk about what the Democrats proposed in their 100 days of increasing taxes which, Madam Speaker, our speaker just said on this floor, increasing taxes in every realm. If you have children, it's going to cost you more. If you're married, it's going to cost you more. If you're elderly, it's going to cost you more. If you're in the lowest tax bracket, it's going to cost you more.

Now, I want to put it in perspective, because this is something that this floor doesn't talk about. What is the day-to-day life of an American? How do they pay taxes? Do they pay enough taxes? Well, I want to give you an average day. A person wakes up, they go in and they take a shower. Do you know, when they turn that water on they are paying a water tax?

They get ready for work. They go out, maybe they stop off at a coffee shop, buy a cup of coffee. They pay a tax on that coffee.

They look at their gas gauge. They go to the gas station. I am in California, paid $3.49 a gallon. A lot of that was in tax.

Then I go into work. For the first 3 hours of work, I'm just paying State and Federal tax. Lo and behold, maybe I'm like most of Americans, I have to move in my job. I have to be able to go to other places to be able to sell because it's a global economy. I buy an airline ticket, I pay an airline tax. I rent a car when I get there. I pay a rental tax. I go and work part of the day. I come home, turn on the TV maybe to see our good speaker here on television. I pay a cable tax.

And lo and behold that I was able to put a little money away after they tax me from morning till night, and I invest. I invest for my family. I invest for my children to go to college. I invest and take the risk and hopefully I got a little reward. And maybe I invest in some property. Maybe I invest in the stock market. And because the Republicans lowered the tax and more people are paying dividends, so I'm getting a greater income and my kids can go to a maybe more expensive college. Then maybe I can afford to send my kids to Disneyland a little more. Maybe I can afford to spend time with my family a little more, and that's what Americans want.

But lo and behold, if I invested and I got a return on my investment, and I wanted to leave some money for my children and my grandchildren, what do the Democrats answer with? They answer they want 55 percent of that. They don't even want half. They want 55 percent. Because you decided to invest in America, they think you owe the government.

What do Republicans say? Keep it and add on. Why? Because we believe that's your money. We believe the capital is good for America, good for the investment. It helps us to be more competitive in a global economy. Yeah, you're becoming more efficient; that you should, if you owned a small business, invest in new equipment because your employees will be able to be more efficient. America will be more efficient, and that's what this Congress has produced.

There is a direct change in this Congress, and I applaud this individual on the floor, Mr. PRICE, because from the standpoint I believe more people are

listening. If it's rating a 29 percent, your Truth Squad is getting out that accountability is lacking here in Congress today.

And I would like to just talk to you a little longer about this. Maybe you can dwell on a little more, you have a graph down there. Maybe you can talk a little bit about what you see from the 2003 plan to today's plan as well.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman and the comments that he makes about every single tax that we pay with every single thing we do is so apt because this new majority seems to believe that, well, in everything they do, seem to believe that they have got a better idea. They've got better solutions. They know better than the American people about how they ought to do most anything, and especially how they ought to spend their money.

And when I talk to my good friends on the other side of the aisle who appear to be interested in making certain that America sustains this economic vitality that it has, and you ask them, well, how did that vitality come about, and you point to things like this chart demonstrates, which is where job creation was before the appropriate tax reductions and what happened afterward, it's as clear as the nose on your face or the drawing before you. Before tax cuts were put in place, there was a staggering job growth and mostly negative job creation. But something happened in 2003, as you pointed out. Something happened.

□ 1700

And it resulted in huge, significant job growth, job increase, across this Nation. Literally 49 of the 50 States have increased employment since 2003. And one would think that if you had the responsibility for determining what the economic policies of this Nation ought to be that you would look at that point and you would say, well, it would help me understand what happened then in order to continue the economic growth that we have seen. And it is clear that this job creation, this job growth, was a direct result of allowing Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money. So it is without doubt that we need to continue those policies, in fact, to increase the ability for Americans to keep their own money and, therefore, continue the wonderful growth that we have had.

I am pleased to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. You make a great point. Numbers don't lie. You see it in a graph. You see it in the facts. You see it on April 15, the highest revenue ever to come in.

Now, why do we continue to have these deficits? Because it is a spending problem, not a revenue problem. Just as when you live at your own house, you balance your checkbook. If you have got more money coming in, how come you are going further into debt? Because of the management and the lack of accountability here. You see the unemployment rate continue to go down from 2003. Why? Because if people are able to keep more of what they earn, they are able to invest.

We want America to be the most competitive, to be able to be the most productive, and you need capital to do that. And do you know what else you want? You want the creation of small business. You want everybody across the board to have the opportunity for the American dream.

Well, if you are taking a savings account that you maybe want to invest in your family, to invest for them in the next 21st century, to invest them in the ability to have a small business, invest them in taking a risk and a little reward, you don't want to give 55 percent to the government. You want to be able to hand it down.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Exactly right.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. And don't you want your grandchildren to be able to have a greater opportunity, greater education? It is not just the undergraduates we look at.

As I told you before, I have two kids at home: Connor, who is 13; and Meghan, who is 10. And when I look at their education and we sit around our kitchen table, my wife Judy and I, all we do is talk about the future for our children. And I am not worried about our children competing with somebody from another part of California or even somebody in different parts of America. Do you know whom our children are going to compete with? It is a global economy. They are going to compete with the kids in India and China. And I will tell you in India and China they don't have a 55 percent tax rate on the death tax. They don't hold their children back like we are holding ours back. We don't have the opportunity to grow. And this economy is competitive. And for us to stay that way, we need actually a new direction in this Congress where the people are before politics. And the one thing I have seen in these 100 or so days, this November election never ended, that we continue to have politics on this floor in each and every way we go about doing it. We should now start talking about solutions. How do we solve the problems? How do we make America energy independent? Not how we simply fund greater dictators, not that we buy as much oil from Venezuela as we do from America, and you listen to what Mr. Chavez says about America, ''ending the evil empire.'' We want to make America and this world safer, freer, and leave it a better place for our own children. And we are not going to do it with the change in direction in this Congress. We are not going to be able to achieve those goals.

That is why I want to congratulate you on the work you have done because you are bringing accountability to this floor. You are letting the American people see it. And what we want to derive from that are solutions, bringing people back before politics.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's contributing this afternoon and his perspective.

And it is so appropriate and so uplifting, frankly, to have Members in the House of Representatives who understand and appreciate the connection between cause and effect, the connection between the actions that we take here and then what happens out in the real world. And it is one of those things, Madam Speaker, that frustrates my constituents and I know it frustrates Americans all across this Nation who are concerned that there are fewer and fewer individuals in this House of Representatives that appreciate that connection.

I want to mention just a few more items as it relates to the economy and as it relates to our current situation and, hopefully, what will occur with the policies that are adopted by this House of Representatives and this Congress.

This is a chart, Madam Speaker, that demonstrates the unemployment rate. And as you will recall, at the beginning of this decade, the unemployment rate was increasing significantly and got up to almost 6.5 percent in the early part of 2003. If you were to look at this graph and to believe and appreciate that a low unemployment rate means a vibrant economy, that people are working, that people are being able to support their family, that they are able to change jobs, that they are able to move up in the job market, that is what happens when you have a low unemployment rate. And anything below about 5 percent is considered to be an extremely vibrant economy.

So something happened in 2003 to result in a steady decline in the unemployment rate over the last 3 or 4 years. And what happened in 2003, again, is that we, Congress, and this administration allowed for Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money. Now, when you look at that, it is an important thing to appreciate. It is also important to recognize that cause and effect. But it is also important to look at some other numbers and kind of dig a little deeper into what was the consequence, what happened with the decreases in taxes.

As I mentioned, job growth, 88,000 new jobs were gained in just this past April, with nearly 2 million new jobs being created over the last 12 months. Our Nation has added nearly 8 million new jobs since August of 2003. And, Madam Speaker, sometimes those numbers just kind of get lost. You say 8 million new jobs or nearly 8 million new jobs, and it is tough to know whether or not that is good or bad compared to maybe what the rest of the world is creating. What is happening in the rest of the world?

Well, Madam Speaker, 7.8 million new jobs since August of 2003, that is more new jobs than all other major industrialized countries combined. That is more than all other major industrialized countries combined. That is

more than England plus France plus Spain plus Italy plus Scandinavia plus Japan plus all other industrialized countries combined. That is phenomenal, Madam Speaker. It would behoove us to delve into why that has happened.

Our economy has seen job gains for 44 straight months, and employment has increased in 47 States. I think I should correct myself. I think I said 49 States earlier. It is 47 States within the last year. So the lower unemployment rate that we see, 4.5 percent, among the lowest in the past 6 years. And, Madam Speaker, that rate is lower than the average for the 1960s, for the 1970s, for the 1980s, and for the 1990s. That rate is lower than the average unemployment rate during those periods of time.

Economic growth, this economy that has been in transition has shown a sustainable growth path, an increasing path over a period of time. Real GDP growth is up 1.3 percent in the first quarter of this year and 2.1 percent over the last four quarters. Household spending, what are moms and dads across this Nation spending? Well, their spending is up 3.8 percent, and it remains strong and really is expected to be that kind of firm foundation upon which we continue this positive economic activity. But it will only continue, Madam Speaker, if we are responsible and set appropriate policies that will allow Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money.

By the same token, business investment continues to increase. Capital investment turned up in the first quarter. As my good friend from California mentioned just a moment ago, tax receipts were up. Tax receipts rose 11.8 percent in fiscal year 2006 on top of a 14.6 percent increase in 2005. And so far this year, we have seen growth of 11.5 percent. And that is what is confounding to our good friends on the left who don't seem to appreciate the cause and effect of allowing Americans to keep more of their money. In fact, what they say over and over is, well, the government needs more money in order to X-Y-Z. Even if you believe that all of the things that Washington does are appropriate and even if you believed that there was no waste and that there was no fraud and that there was no abuse that you could squeeze out of the system, even if you believe that, what we see happens when you decrease taxes, when you allow Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money, is that revenue increases. So, Madam Speaker, what we see here on this chart is a chart that demonstrates Federal revenue. That is the amount of money coming into the Federal Government in billions of dollars. And over the first part of this decade, we saw a steady decline in the amount of money coming into the Federal Government. And then once again that magic line, that magic point in time in 2003, when this Congress acted responsibly, along with this administration, and allowed Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money, what happened, Madam Speaker, is a remarkable thing, and that is a significant and huge increase in the amount of money coming into the Federal Government.

It ought not have been a mystery. Many people predicted it. Many people said that is exactly what would happen, and they knew that because that is what happened throughout history. President Reagan knew it when he decreased taxes on the American people and saw increasing revenue to the Federal Government. President Kennedy knew it when he enacted appropriate decreases in taxes on the American people in the early 1960s, and what we saw as a Nation at that time was an increase in revenue to the Federal Government.

So, Madam Speaker, it is important that we look at the cause and effect. What we do here makes a difference in everything. It has consequences for the American people. And so when you have positive activity in our Nation as it relates to the economy, positive job growth, positive numbers coming into the Federal Government, positive business investment, increasing homeownership, low inflation, low unemployment, it behooves us to figure out why that happened. It happened because we allowed more Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money, and we ought to continue those policies.

Now, one of the great concerns that I have, Madam Speaker, is that I don't sense any amount of willingness on the part of our new majority to continue those appropriate policies. And, frankly, I don't sense a whole lot of willingness on the part of a majority of Congress on both sides of the aisle to do what needs to be done in the area of spending. As my good friend said earlier, we don't have a revenue problem here in Washington; we have a spending problem. And it is clear that that spending problem continues regardless of the party in power.

So I am one of those who believes that there needs to be some restraints, some process restraints that ought to be put in place in order to decrease the level of spending appropriately and make certain that we hold people accountable and that we make certain that people are being responsible with the hard-earned money that Americans send to Washington, which is why I support a Federal Taxpayer Bill of Rights.

And I have labeled this chart ''American Values and American Vision'' because, Madam Speaker, I believe that it is an American value to allow individuals to keep the benefits of their labor. I believe that the more we allow individuals to derive the benefits of their labor and their hard work and their entrepreneurship and their ingenuity that what we will do is create more Americans who will strive to do more, who will strive to create more, who will strive to risk more, who will strive to do more in order to succeed. And the more Americans that are willing to do that, I have all the faith in the world that we will continue to be a wonderful and productive and successful Nation.

However, if we as a nation decide, no, we as a government know best, that we ought to tell you what to do, that we ought to tell you where to go, we ought to tell you how much you can make, that we ought to tell you when you make too much, what that does is stifle ingenuity and it stifles creativity and it stifles entrepreneurship and it says, no, we don't want you to be successful. We only want you to do this much, not more. We don't want you to truly reach your full potential. We just want you to do this much. We don't want you to dream big dreams because that wouldn't be a decision that we have made. Your dream may be at odds with some decision that Washington makes.

Madam Speaker, that is not the America that I know. That is not the American value that I was taught. That is not the American vision that I have and that so many of my colleagues have.

So the Taxpayer Bill of Rights that we have introduced in this Congress, Federal Taxpayer Bill of Rights, says a number of things, positively says a number of things. It says that taxpayers across this Nation have a right to a Federal Government that does not grow beyond their ability to pay for it. And what does that mean, Madam Speaker? What that means is that this bill, if enacted, would appropriately reduce the size of government or limit the size in the growth of government to an increase in the population of our Nation plus a cost-of-living adjustment so that the government could rise but no more than the increase in population and the increase in inflation. That is a restraint on the kind of spending that occurs on both sides of the aisle here in Washington. That is the kind of positive solution that I and many people support.

We believe in American values and an American vision and a Taxpayer Bill of Rights that says that taxpayers have a right to receive back every dollar they entrust to the government for their retirement.

□ 1715

The issue of entitlements, Madam Speaker, we haven't even touched on this afternoon, but it's an important issue. The issue of Social Security is one that is extremely important because it was a program that was put in place a number of decades ago, and it was put in place at a time when there were 15 or 16 workers for every retiree, a wonderful program to have in place to allow for seniors to have some nest egg or some cushion that they could rely on when they retire. It also, curiously, Madam Speaker, as you likely know, was put in place at a time when the average life expectancy in this Nation was less than when the benefits

would begin. That is the kind of program that the Federal Government likes. It means that you don't necessarily get what you put into the program itself.

We believe that American taxpayers have the right to receive every dollar back that they put into the Social Security program. We believe that the Social Security trust fund money ought not be spent on anything but Social Security retirement benefits. We believe that is a right that Americans have. We believe that is a responsibility that this Congress has in a positive way to say we will limit the spending of that money to what it was intended for. We believe in American values and American vision, that Federal taxpayers have a right to a balanced budget without raising taxes.

There are a number of ways that you can get to balancing the budget. You can get to it by increasing taxes. You can tax businesses and you can tax people, successful people and folks all across this Nation who work for a living. You can tax them and take more of their hard-earned money and for the short term you can balance the budget. Yes, you can.

But the way to responsibly balance the budget that embraces American values and that embraces American vision and that allows people to succeed and dream and work hard and have the benefits of their labor, the way to do that responsibly is not to take more of their money. The way to do that responsibly is to decrease spending, is to decrease and restrain the growth of government, and to make it so that the Federal Government does what the Federal Government ought to and ought do only. And that requires, I believe, Madam Speaker, a balanced budget amendment.

As I mentioned, folks on both sides of the aisle have difficulty with spending too much of the American taxpayers' hard-earned money. We believe that a balanced budget amendment is imperative.

We believe also that Federal taxpayers have a right to fundamental and fair tax reform. My good friend from Tennessee mentioned earlier that on January 1, 2011, 1/1/11, that this new majority is destined for the largest tax increase in the history of this Nation. We believe that that's wrong. We believe that the manner in which this Federal Government gains revenue stifles entrepreneurship, stifles vision, hurts dreams, harms success, says to folks who are working hard out there across this Nation, Don't do that. Don't work hard. That's not what you want to do, because if you do that, we will just take more of your money. That is not the America I dream about and I believe in. So we believe that fundamental and fair tax reform is imperative.

And finally, Madam Speaker, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights says that in order to increase taxes in this body, that we must have a supermajority. We must have more than just 50 percent plus one. We must convince a supermajority, a vast number of the individuals who serve in this body from all across this Nation, that a tax increase is absolutely necessary. It is one of the provisions that we had in place for the last 12 years, from 1994 to 2006. It's one of the things that was changed on the very first day of this new Congress, that a supermajority was no longer required. It is one of the reasons, Madam Speaker, why there was no significant tax increase over the last 12 years. One of the reasons, Madam Speaker, that we've seen a significant increase in economic productivity across this Nation over the last 4 years is because of appropriate tax decreases and not allowing increases by just a slim majority.

So, Madam Speaker, I am honored to come to the floor this afternoon and to share an American value, American vision that talks about positive things about our Nation and congratulates the men and women around this Nation who are working hard, who are trying to earn for their families and save for their retirement, who are trying to contribute to their own American Dream.

I believe that it is an incredible honor to serve in this United States House of Representatives. I believe it is incumbent on every single Member of this House to respect and value the hard work that each and every American performs each and every single day, regardless of the job that they're doing. Every single job has merit and worth and is deserving of our respect. And one of the ways that we ought to respect it is to allow men and women across this Nation to keep more of their hard-earned money and to be responsible with the spending that we perform here at the Federal level.

So I am honored to have presented that American vision and that American value to my colleagues today. Madam Speaker, I appreciate that opportunity.

I yield back the balance of my time.

BLUE DOG COALITION DEFICITS AND DEBT BACKGROUND

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

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, this evening, as most Tuesday evenings, I rise on behalf of the 43 member strong, fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition. We are 43 fiscally conservative Democrats that are committed to restoring common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government. We are not from one particular region of the country. Members of the Blue Dog Coalition stretch from California and Utah to New York, and we are united in trying to restore fiscal sanity to our Nation's government. Why? Because today, the U.S. national debt is $8,821,563,738,020. And I ran out of room, but right here it should say 12 cents. And for every man, woman and child in America, your share of the national debt is $29,225.95. It is what we refer to as the debt tax, d-e-b-t, which is one tax that cannot be cut; it cannot go away until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

It is hard now to believe, but from 1998 to 2001, we had a balanced budget in this country of ours. And now, under the past 6 years of Republican rule, with the Republicans controlling the White House, the House and the Senate, after 6 years we've got the largest debt ever in our Nation's history and the largest deficit ever in our Nation's history. In fiscal year 2004, it was $568 billion. In fiscal year 2005, it was $493.6 billion. In fiscal year 2006 it was $434 billion. Fiscal year 2006 it was $247 billion, and the projected deficit for fiscal year 2007 is $172 billion, but not really. The projected deficit for fiscal year 2007 is $357 billion. When they tell you it's only $172 billion, they're not counting the money they're borrowing from the Social Security trust fund.

When I first came to Congress in 2001, the first bill I wrote was a bill to tell the politicians in Washington to keep their hands off the Social Security trust fund. The Republican leadership refused to give me a hearing or a vote on that bill, and now we know why, because they are using that money to fund our debt. $357 billion deficit projected for fiscal year 2007, and much of that is coming, about half of that is coming from the Social Security trust fund. Where is the rest of it coming from? It's coming from foreigners. In fact, this administration has borrowed more money from foreigners in the past 6 years than the previous 42 Presidents combined. Let me repeat that. This administration has borrowed more money from foreigners in the past 6 years than the previous 42 Presidents combined. My good friend and a founder of the Blue Dogs, JOHN TANNER, put it best when he said, If China decides to invade Taiwan, we will have to borrow more money from China to defend Taiwan.

David Letterman has a top 10 list, and we've got one, too. The U.S. is becoming increasingly dependent on foreign lenders. Foreign lenders currently hold a total of about $2.199 trillion of our public debt. Compare this to only $623.3 billion in foreign holdings back in 1993. Again, this administration in the past 6 years has borrowed more money from foreign central banks and foreign investors than the previous 42 Presidents combined.

Japan, $637.4 billion. The United States of America has borrowed $346.5 billion from China. The United Kingdom, $223.5 billion. OPEC, yes OPEC, and we wonder why gasoline is approaching three bucks a gallon. Our Nation has borrowed $97.1 billion from OPEC to fund tax cuts in this country for folks earning over $400,000 a year.

Korea, $67.7 billion. Taiwan, $63.2 billion. The Caribbean banking centers, $63.6 billion. Hong Kong, $51 billion. Germany, $52.1 billion. And rounding out the top 10 list, and this will surprise some folks, the United States of America's 10th largest loanee to our government is the Government of Mexico and investors in Mexico. Mexico, investors have loaned the United States of America $38.2 billion. That's right, the United States of America has borrowed $38.2 billion from Mexico. And that rounds out the top 10 list of the foreign countries that our Nation is borrowing money from.

We believe this is very critical to our Nation's security. That is why we are trying to restore fiscal discipline and common sense to our Nation's government, put an end to these massive debts and massive deficits. Our Nation is borrowing a billion dollars a day, but before we borrow a billion dollars a day, we're going to spend half a billion paying interest on a debt we've already got. And that's a half a billion that can't go for Social Security, it can't go for health care, it can't go for new roads and fixing roads and infrastructure. It can't go for education, it can't go for homeland security, and it cannot go for veterans benefits. Why? Because we are spending that money, a half a billion dollars a day, simply paying interest on the debt we've already got before we increase it a billion dollars today. I think we need that half a bill to invest in the best and most advanced technology out there when it comes to bullet-proof vests to protect our men and women in uniform, to give them the best and most advanced equipment they need.

I've got a father, John Grant, in Hot Springs, Arkansas, that's very concerned about his son going back for a second tour of duty in Iraq and not having the most advanced body armor that's on the market today. A half a billion a day going to pay interest on the national debt, how many modern, state-of-the-art body armor vests could we buy with just the amount of money we're spending today paying interest on the national debt?

I am joined this evening by a number of fellow Blue Dogs, and I am grateful they have come down to spend some time with me on the House floor this evening.

At this time I would like to yield to a fellow Blue Dog, someone that's very active on the Blue Dog Coalition, someone that serves on the Armed Services Committee, among other important committees, and that is my friend from neighboring Oklahoma, DAN BOREN.

Mr. BOREN. Thank you. My colleague from Arkansas, Mr. ROSS, is a great leader for us on the Blue Dog Coalition. I am now in my second term, and I tell you there is no better organization than the Blue Dog Coalition.

When I was elected, and actually when I was running for Congress, I was able to sit down with a lot of the Blue Dog members. We had a lot of common interests, and one of those was fiscal responsibility.

Many of us that serve in Congress are former members of State legislatures. I can tell you, I can remember being a freshman State legislator and dealing with a State budget. When I was elected, we had a $700 million shortfall. That doesn't sound like big numbers here in Washington, DC, but they're big numbers in Oklahoma. And we were able to balance our budget because we basically had an amendment to our State constitution saying you will balance that budget. You're going to have to cut services; you're going to have to do something to rein in that spending. In Washington we don't have that. That's why it is so important that we have groups like the Blue Dogs who are focused on fiscal responsibility.

I can tell you, since this Democratic majority has taken hold, the Blue Dogs have been a key player in making sure that we have things like the PAYGO rules, PAYGO rules that make sure that whenever there is a new government program, we find a way to pay for it. We don't just write a hot check for it. So that is why I am proud to be a member.

My friend from Arkansas has been on this floor many, many times talking about the waste, fraud and abuse. And we will make sure that in this defense authorization bill we cut out any unwarranted spending that is not going to the warfighter. That is something that I have been working very hard with Chairman SKELTON on each and every day, and I appreciate his leadership. We've got many Blue Dogs on the Armed Services Committee, and we are going to keep working to make sure that we spend those tax dollars wisely.

□ 1730

We are joined also by our friend here, a new member who sits actually next to me on the Armed Services Committee, Mr. BRAD ELLSWORTH from Indiana. I would like to turn it over to him for any of his thoughts on the Blue Dogs or what is going on in the defense authorization bill or any other topics he wants to discuss.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, it is an honor for me to join you and the members of the Blue Dog Coalition in their mission to bring fiscal responsibility back to this House.

As my friend from Oklahoma said, I am a new member. I have been up here approximately 5 months now, so it is easy for me to remember what the people of the Eighth District of Indiana said, their marching orders when they sent me here and elected me to the people's House. They told me to stay honest. They told me, don't let Washington change you. They said, in fact, you need to go and change the way Washington works. And they said ''spend my money wisely.''

They have probably seen Mr. ROSS on TV and saw the poster that showed that every person in this country, their portion of the national debt was $29,000, and it recently had to be added to. Over $29,000. Every man, woman, child, living person in this country, owes $29,000 of that debt. That is too much. Why are we strapping our children and grandchildren with that kind of debt?

The people in Indiana are pretty smart. Nobody likes taxes, but they realize that taxes are a necessary, I might go as far and say, evil, if they want the services that the government provides. So they don't mind paying those taxes if they know that their Congress people are spending those taxes wisely.

So when they hear about ''bridges to nowhere'' and fish museums and teapot museums in North Carolina, or maybe more serious than that, things like $38 million worth of weapons in Iraq and Afghanistan that have gone on the missing-in-action list, weapons that probably have fallen into our enemy's hands, or $9 billion in $100 bills on pallets that is gone. It is missing, and our great country, with all of our accounting, cannot account for $9 billion in cash that has gone over there on skids.

That is not what the people of Indiana expect of this Congress. It is not what they expect of me, and I don't think they will tolerate it.

That is why when I came to Congress, when I heard about the Blue Dog Coalition, the Blue Dog Caucus, that it was a pretty easy group to join. When I checked on them, and I assume they checked on me, we had those same values and ideals. We were fiscally conservative. We want to spend the people's money wisely. We weren't going to waste it. We actually worked to balance the budget, that we wouldn't spend money we didn't have.

I have a credit card. Probably most people in the audience here, Madam Speaker, you may have a credit card, I am sure. But I don't run up those totals to the amounts that our country has run up, into foreign countries. My wife and I work hard. We charge things, and then we pay off that card. That is what the people expect us to do here.

So it is going to take tough decisions. It is going to take the tough calls. But we have got that. A group of 43 have that internal fortitude to put those tough decisions on the front. The people understand that. They will let us do that, that we will make wise decisions with their money.

So I stand here tonight, not only in the Armed Services Committee, but in every committee, whether it is Agriculture, Small Business, Armed Services, no matter what the committee is, this Congress, the people's House, has a responsibility to spend their money wisely. I pledge to do that, I know the Blue Dogs pledge to do that, and I think the other 434 Members of Congress need to do that, too.

With that, I yield back to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana, a new

member of the fiscally conservative, Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, Mr. ELLSWORTH, for joining us for the discussion this evening here on the House floor, as we are every Tuesday night, here talking about restoring fiscal sanity to our national government.

Public opinion polls indicate that the American people really aren't concerned about the debt, which is approaching $9 trillion. But I am here to make the case that every one of us in America should be concerned about the national debt, because despite what some people may believe, despite what the Republicans have believed for the past 6 years, money does not grow on trees in Washington, DC, and we have got to begin to run this government the way that I can assure you Holly Ross makes sure that we run the Ross household in Prescott, Arkansas, and that is living within our means.

We cannot continue to borrow $1 billion a day. We cannot continue to spend half a billion dollars a day paying interest on the debt we have already got.

Why should it matter to every American? Look at this chart right here. Interest payments on the debt dwarf other priorities. For example, in the red you can see the amount of money we are spending of your tax money, Madam Speaker, paying interest on the national debt. You compare that to education in the light blue, compare it to homeland security in the green, compare it to veterans benefits in the blue.

You can see where the priorities lay with this administration for the past 6 years. The majority of our money is being spent paying interest on the national debts, not going to educate our children, not going to keep our homeland safe, not going to fund veterans healthcare.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Georgia, a fellow Blue Dog member, Mr. SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much, Mr. ROSS. As always, it is indeed a pleasure to be with you on this occasion.

I want to talk about two areas, the debt, and, of course the big elephant in the room which all of America is concerned about, the situation in Iraq and Iraq accountability.

I happen to serve on the Financial Services Committee and on the Foreign Affairs Committee, so in terms of foreign policy and in terms of our finances, those are the two major critical cross-sections we are in at this point.

Concerning the debt, it is very important that we point out, Mr. ROSS, that the fastest growing area in our budget is the interest that we are paying on this debt, which is more than what we are spending combined for education, the environment and for veterans affairs.

As we segue that into our international situation, when you look at the debt that we have gotten into as a result of the carelessness and the ineffective, inefficient foreign policy as it relates to our debt; for example, under this President and under this previous Republican-controlled Congress, this country has borrowed more money from foreign governments than all of the preceding past Presidents have done since 1789, since the foundation of this country. It has placed us in a very perilous position. And we are fighting this war in Iraq and Afghanistan on borrowed money that our children will have to pay back and the children of our soldiers will have to pay back.

Mr. ROSS, what is on the minds of the American people is accountability in Iraq. It is very important that we mention two major bills that we are moving in that direction. First is our own troop readiness and Iraqi accountability bill that passed this House, the basic framework of which after the President vetoed the first go around is now in the bill we passed last week, and it is in the conference report that we hope we will be sending back. It is important that the American people understand what the Democrats have put forward in this measure.

Our other bill is the Accountability Act, in terms of financial accountability, that we in the Blue Dog Coalition of Democrats have put forward to bring some fiscal responsibility and soundness and transparency to the moneys that we are spending in Iraq and Afghanistan. We know about the Halliburtons, we know about all the war profiteering. We hear about that in the news accounts.

It is our bill that we are pushing forward that will give some transparency and accountability. Two important facts that I think the American people need to know about that bill is that, one, it will require that the Inspector General from both the Defense Department over at the Pentagon, will have to come before this Congress quarterly to explain and to account for the moneys that are spent on that basis, as well as the Inspector General from the rebuilding program in Iraq, where so much loss of funds, unaccountability, outright stealing and theft is going on of the taxpayers' money. So we are bringing accountability to that.

But we also have got to do more, and that is what is contained in the conference report that we are sending to the President. Not only do we have benchmarks, but there must be accountability to the Iraqi people. They have this opportunity and they must step up to the plate to assume their end of the bargain. There is a government in place, and the benchmarks we have put in, there is no better way to do that.

Now, Mr. ROSS, I think much has been said about Congress and the role that we have to play in foreign policy. Unfortunately, this President has said time and time again that he is in control of foreign policy; that he is the Commander in Chief, and that the Congress is just here to do pretty much as he wants us to do. And for 5 years, for the first 5 years, that happened, where this Congress just rolled over and gave the President everything that he wants.

When we had that change in November and the people went to the polls to put Democrats in charge, they wanted to see a change in direction, and the Democrats are giving the change in direction in the bills that we have sent forward to the President.

You talk about fiscal accountability. Yes, indeed, we have that in there. We have put more money in this budget for our troops, $4 billion more, than the President has asked for. But it is so important also that we have accountability when the money gets over, to make sure that the Iraqi people understand, we don't have an endless supply of money to go down over into Iraq, and most certainly we do not have an endless supply of the precious blood and the lives of our soldiers to continually be going down the pike in the Iraqi situation. The American people are saying this situation has to end. We must get our men and women in uniform out of the middle of the crosshairs of what is a civil war.

Madam Speaker, we realize that we are in this because of mistakes. More importantly, Mr. ROSS, when you talk about accountability, it is important that we realize now that not only have mistakes been made, but we got into Iraq based on not just bad intelligence, but warped intelligence, and we got in there on deceit and lies. All of that is there now.

It is very important for us if we want to effectively be able to determine how to get out of Iraq, we must be honest about how we got into Iraq. So it is very important that we do that.

The American patience is running out on those two measures of Iraqi accountability, in terms of the money we are spending, in terms of the benchmarks we have put into this effort, and for the transparency that we put in our bill. We, as Democrats, are being very responsive.

We do have security in that region. We are not going to abandon our troops, but we are going to get them out of the crosshairs of this civil war and get into a position of containment. That is the direction that we have to go in as we formulate a new, much more effective foreign policy in the Middle East.

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his work with the Blue Dog Coalition, 43 of us, fiscally conservative Democrats. I welcome the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. SCOTT, to remain on the floor with me, if time will permit for him, for a discussion more in depth over the next 40 minutes as we talk about restoring not only fiscal sanity, but also accountability to our government, not only here at home but to the money being spent in Iraq.

We all support our troops, Democrats and Republicans alike. Up until now,

the President would have you believe that we are sending $12 million an hour to Iraq, and if you question how any of it is being spent, he would tell you you are unpatriotic.

Well, the Blue Dogs have said enough is enough. It is time to demand accountability for how that money is being spent, to ensure it is being spent to provide the very best equipment and the best of the best for our brave men and women in uniform serving us abroad today, not only in Iraq but also Afghanistan.

I am joined this evening by the gentleman from North Dakota, Mr. EARL POMEROY, and a fellow Blue Dog member. Welcome.

Mr. POMEROY. Thank you very much for allowing me to participate in this Special Order. I want to congratulate you and all who have impacted the national defense authorization bill we will be voting on towards the end of the week.

You know, the principles of sound budgeting have got to apply to the administration of our government, and that means all facets of our government. We have had leadership at the White House that has basically said we can have a war, and we are going to have it off budget. We don't have to account for it in terms of our efforts toward reaching a balanced budget, our efforts in terms of reducing the deficit. We are going to have it off budget.

□ 1745

All it means is our kids are picking up every nickel of this war, as it goes straight on the national debt. That is why I appreciate the principles advanced by the Blue Dogs in H. Res. 97, the Operation Iraqi Freedom Cost Accountability Act, and I applaud you and all who worked so hard to get major portions of it included in the Defense Authorization Act.

The four significant provisions of the bill: transparency in how the war funds are being spent. This isn't a black-box proposition. The money is appropriated; the money flows. Where does it flow?

I believe we have at the rate of $2 billion per-week burn rate, we are entitled to know. We are entitled to know in much greater detail than we have had before. The Blue Dogs would go so far as to have a Truman Commission looking at war profiteering.

If in the depths of World War II, the face-down with Hitler, we could recognize that there were inappropriate funds being spent and worked to get a handle around them, as Senator Truman led with his committee, certainly the same holds true with the war on terror and with Operation Iraqi Freedom.

There is a book that I recommend and bring to your attention, ''Imperial Life in the Emerald City.'' It is an outstanding inside account of the administration of the Green Zone in the early days after the conflict and into this postwar period in Iraq. It will raise in your mind, as it has raised in mine, any number of deep and troubling questions about how this whole matter has been administered, and that goes to war contracting, and that means we need to take a thorough look at all of that.

Part three of H. Res. 97, running the future funding of this war through the regular appropriations process, a principle adopted now both in the budget and the Defense Authorization Act, and the fourth essential component of this bill, moving greater Iraqi responsibility for their policing and security.

Now we have a unanimous vote of the Armed Services Committee with the defense authorization bill, and I believe the Blue Dogs can be very happy that the principle of funding this war through the normal appropriations process and greater transparency in how the funds are spent will be the policy of this House, a policy adopted I am happy to say with bipartisan measures.

The essential management goals for this war will have to be established by the Department of Defense, and the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction will have a much greater say in bringing information on the expenditure of these dollars to this body. There have been efforts, frankly, to hamstring the Inspector General. We make clear in this legislation that the Inspector General's authority goes towards reconstruction funding regardless of the source or the fiscal year. We need to expand our efforts to get a handle on how in the world we have spent to date nearly $400 billion, and the tab flowing just as fast as ever.

I think that this represents an important Blue Dog accomplishment. I look forward to voting on the defense authorization bill. Rather than take further time, I ask that JIM MARSHALL, a member of the Ranger Hall of Fame, a member of the defense authorization committee, be one that might further expand in this area. Obviously, his credentials are extremely well established.

I would just conclude by saying that the Blue Dogs have stood for accounting principles and solid budgeting in the administration of this war, and we have prevailed with the bill coming out of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. ROSS. I thank Mr. POMEROY for his active participation within the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and for his insight this evening.

The gentleman is referring to H. Res. 97, which is the Blue Dog bill providing for Operation Iraqi Freedom Cost Accountability; and today, Chairman SKELTON, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, announced that key provisions of that bill demanding accountability on how your tax money is being spent in Iraq, Madam Speaker, will be included in the defense authorization bill that is scheduled to come to the floor.

A leader within the Armed Services Committee, someone who is a member of the Ranger Hall of Fame, who served our country in the Vietnam War, Mr. MARSHALL, is here, and I yield to you at this time.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. ROSS, you are wonderful to do these hour-long Blue Dog sessions here to give people an idea what Blue Dogs are all about as far as fiscal responsibility is concerned.

I think you and Mr. POMEROY give me a little too much credit. If you label somebody a Ranger, it reminds me of the joke about the Ranger library down in Eglin Air Force Base having burned down. That was the bad news. The good news was that both books were already colored in. We don't expect our Rangers to be particularly good at math or education subjects, but it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out there has been an awful lot of waste in Iraq. It is not just waste on our side; we excessively rely upon contractors. I think we have moved too far in that direction, and we limit our capacity within our own military forces to provide services that ought to be provided by military folks and could be provided by military folks at a much lesser expense to the taxpayer.

Spending less, stretching your dollars means you are going to be more effective at whatever you are doing, and that includes an effort like Iraq. I think we have inappropriately moved too far in the direction of relying upon contractors. That is one thing. The other place where we have seen dramatic waste is on the Iraqi side.

The American taxpayers and the American people with their sons and their daughters who are in this war and in harm's way at risk of being killed or being severely harmed expect that the Iraqi people and the Iraqi Government will step up and do its part. We all know that this is something that cannot be won by an American conventional force. We are not simply going to go in and raze whole villages to force people to comply with us and our view of the way things ought to be.

The local population has to deal with the security situation in Iraq. We can help and we must help or they will be unsuccessful, but we can't succeed without them.

Our Iraq accountability legislation specifically provides that further assistance and support to the Iraqi people should be conditioned upon the Iraqi Government stepping up and meeting its share of the partnership. If the Iraqi people choose to do that, and obviously they have problems among themselves, far greater problems than Democrats and Republicans have here in the United States House of Representatives, and we often have a hard time coming together here in the House of Representatives, so it is not surprising that Sunni and Shiite and Kurds in Iraq are having a similarly difficult time, a more difficult time coming together and reconciling with one another so they can appropriately organize to address the internal security threats that they face. We can't force

them to reconcile. We can't force them to build the institutions that they need to spend their oil money effectively and addressing the security threat. We can't force them to address the security threat.

So in the partnership here in many ways we can help them, but there are things they must be doing. And as part of the financial accountability picture that Blue Dogs feel so strongly about, we have to add accountability of our partners. The Iraqi people are our partners. The Iraqi Government is our partner, and our partners need to be accountable for their side of the deal here or this is not going to come out well for the Iraqi people, the Middle East, or the United States.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinion with regard to that particular issue. I appreciate what the Blue Dogs do as far as debt is concerned and highlighting something our country should be very concerned about.

They say that if there is a moral or ethical obligation one generation has to the next generation, it is to leave the world in at least as good a state as that generation found it when we pass it to the next generation. What we ought to be trying to do is make it a better world; and in so many different ways this generation is failing that ethical or moral responsibility to the next generation, and the amount of debt that we are adding to their shoulders is one of those ways.

Mr. ROSS, I appreciate what you do for the Blue Dogs and for the Congress of the United States.

Mr. ROSS. I appreciate the gentleman and his leadership within the Blue Dog Coalition and his work on the House Armed Services Committee and for his insight this evening.

We all support our troops, Republicans and Democrats alike. As members of the Blue Dog Coalition, we want accountability for how your tax money is being spent. In 2001 and 2002, $2.5 billion was being spent in Iraq. In 2003, $51 billion. In 2004, $77.3 billion. In 2005, $87.3 billion. In 2006, $100.4 billion. And 2007 to date, $60 billion, for a total of $378.5 billion.

We are currently spending about $10 billion a month, about $2.5 billion a week. You do the math. It is about $12 million an hour of your tax money we are sending to Iraq. What are they doing with it? Number one, they ought to be ensuring that our brave men and women in uniform get the best body armor available to them. There are reports out that indicate maybe that is not exactly the case.

This was brought to my attention by John Grant from Pearcy, Arkansas, just outside of Hot Springs, in Garland County. His son is getting ready to go back for a second tour of duty. He visited a National Guard Armory where he actually saw body armor that was stamped ''Fragile, Handle With Care.'' It is time we did right by our brave men and women in uniform and provide them with the resources they need.

The Blue Dogs have written a bill with the help of Captain PATRICK MURPHY, a veteran of the Iraq war and fellow Blue Dog member, and JANE HARMAN, former ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, among others, and our bill demands accountability on how our tax money, your tax money, is being spent in Iraq.

One of the reasons that we decided to do this bill was because of reports like this: Washington Post, Monday, April 30, a story by Dana Hedgpeth, entitled, ''U.S. Rebuilding in Iraq is Missing Key Goals, Report Finds.'' Less than a third of Iraq's 3.5 million students attend class. In the medical field, for example, only 15 of 141 primary health care centers have been completed, and only eight of those are open to the public. The list goes on, and we will talk more about this in a little bit.

At this time I yield to a former cochair of the Blue Dogs and an active member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. Well, I thank my colleague from Arkansas for conducting this Special Order tonight. That list, that article that you just were referring to is not a one-time deal. I think we all have a sense after over 4 years of the Iraqi operation having taken place, I think we have all heard stories, and those news articles seem to come out more and more often where money has been spent and we haven't gotten result in terms of rebuilding the infrastructure. That is a cause of concern and that is one of the motivations behind the Blue Dogs coming together with legislation in this Congress called the Operation Iraqi Freedom Cost Accountability Act.

The Blue Dogs have come up with this bill which has been given the number H. Res. 97, and I want to take a brief moment to walk through what this legislation does.

Now, quite frankly, before we go through the specifics, I should say it puts forth tangible and commonsense proposals to ensure future transparency and the accountability in the funding of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is a first step. There is more we probably need to do, but this is an important first step to make sure that resources are getting to our troops in the field in a reasonable manner.

There are four crucial points in this legislation demanding for fiscal accountability in Iraq.

First, it calls for transparency on how Iraq war funds are spent.

Second, it calls for the creation of a Truman Commission to investigate the awarding of contracts.

And, third, it calls for the need to fund the Iraqi war through the normal appropriations process and not through emergency supplemental appropriations processes.

Fourth, it calls for using American resources to improve the Iraqi assumption of internal policing operations.

Now, the resolution also calls for the Iraqi Government and its people to progress towards full responsibility for internal policing of the country because ultimately that is where we need to go.

Now recently, and I know other speakers have mentioned this, a significant accomplishment took place in terms of the Blue Dogs working with the Armed Services Committee to include key provisions of the Blue Dog accountability legislation in the Department of Defense authorization bill that we are going to be voting on here in the House of Representatives later on this week.

□ 1800

In doing so, I think it's an important first step toward ensuring greater fiscal transparency in the funding of the war in Iraq.

The American people deserve to know that their tax dollars are being spent wisely and that our troops have the resources they need to succeed. The Blue Dogs are committed to passing legislation that accomplishes that goal.

Now, members of the Blue Dog Coalition also believe strongly that funding requests should come through the normal appropriations process, as I said, rather than through these multiple emergency supplemental requests. Let's make it part of our overall budget so we can plan accordingly.

I think that again with the Defense authorization bill coming up this week and with key components of the Blue Dog legislation included in that bill, I think that's a significant step forward for this country. I am proud that the Blue Dogs were able to play an important role in moving this legislation forward.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from Utah, and the gentleman's right, the Blue Dog Coalition, we want to thank Chairman SKELTON for including key provisions of our bill, H. Res. 97, in the Defense authorization bill.

H. Res. 97 was previously introduced by Blue Dog members and calls for transparency in how Iraq War funds are spent. Specifically, the Defense authorization bill addresses the lack of oversight and accountability in the war by requiring that the Government Accountability Office, commonly referred to as the GAO, report every 6 months on the handling of contracts in Iraq.

In addition, Blue Dog members applaud the inclusion of measures in the Defense authorization bill which establish essential management goals for the Department of Defense and expand the authority of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction to include all reconstruction funding, regardless of source or fiscal year.

Again, we're all about providing the funding our troops need. We want to make sure that funding gets to them and that this administration's accountable for it and that the Iraqi people are accountable for how the money is being spent that we send to them.

Mr. Speaker, if you have got any comments or questions or concerns for

us, you can e-mail us at bluedogs@mail.house.gov. Again, that's bluedogs@mail.house.gov.

I yield to my fellow Blue Dog member all the way from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I thank very much Congressman ROSS, the gentleman from Arkansas, who does an excellent job each week in helping convey the message of the Blue Dogs, the fiscally conservative Democrats who are focused on accountability, not just at home but abroad as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to once again echo strong support for the Blue Dog Accountability War Act, and I, too, am pleased that Congressman SKELTON, because of his focus and his desire to see the same sort of accountability that I think all Americans want to see, this is a bipartisan issue, chose to include provisions of the Blue Dog War Accountability Act within the new authorization for Defense.

Four years ago, we all remember very clearly when this war effort was brought to America. We were told that 4 years ago it would cost $60 billion and that the oil revenue from Iraq, which has tremendous reserves, would go to pay for the reconstruction. I think many Americans thought that that might be a reasonable price to pay, notwithstanding the fact that you can never, ever put a price on the cost of American lives that have been lost nor those that have been injured. Nonetheless, we were told that 4 years ago in monetary costs, it would be $60 billion and the oil revenues would go to pay for the reconstruction costs.

Many of you saw the reports this week by a number of press agencies that indicated over the last 2 years billions and billions of dollars have been lost from revenues from the Iraqi oil reserves, but while it was a new story this week, it comes as no surprise to many of us who have been briefed in Congress.

I was in Iraq last May, spent time in Mosul, city of Mosul, with a number of our commanders. As we were getting our briefings, as all congressional delegations receive when you go to Iraq, we were told of the problems of getting the oil from the oil field, from the wellheads to refinery because there's only one, and then getting the refined products to where the Iraqis could use the gasoline and the other oil products. They told us as recently as a year ago that every step of the way from when the oil was taken out of the wellhead, put in the truck, on the truck, mind you, because you can't use pipelines because the insurgents keep blowing the pipelines up, that every step of the way, every province, there is graft, there is corruption, there's other types of lost revenue, and those moneys go too often into the hands of these same insurgents that are battling our troops, making side profits off the revenue that was supposed to go to reconstruction, going to pay for insurgents and for bombs that come in the form of IEDs, that end up killing and maiming so many of our American men and women who are trying to fight this battle on behalf of the Iraqis.

So this is well-known, and yet 2 years as we look at the problems with trying to get this oil out of the ground and to the refineries, we still have made little progress in terms of eliminating that graft and corruption that currently takes place or the profits from that graft and corruption that go into the hands of the insurgents.

And yes, unfortunately, the oil revenues today are still at or below the levels during pre-Saddam Hussein years when, in fact, there were restrictions on the amount of oil they could drill. That's how much progress unfortunately we have not made in the 4 years that we've been engaged in this effort.

The fiscal accountability under the Blue Dog War Act for this effort, as it's being included in other aspects of our budget, are critical. The reforms the Americans expected here at home, they're the reforms that Americans expect on a bipartisan basis as we try to change the direction and the course of this war in Iraq.

Let me conclude by saying that it's important that we keep our eyes focused on the situation at hand. Many of us have had briefings on a weekly basis with the top generals who are engaged in this effort trying to implement this surge. Just last week in speaking with one of those generals, I told him, I said, you know, we're doubtful on the surge, many of us, not because we don't think American men and women are successful; we know that they will do the absolute best job possible, but we're doubtful on the credibility of the leadership of this administration to effectively carry out what they say, and that's a loss of confidence. If this were a parliamentary system, there would be a vote of no confidence after all that has transpired over the last 4 years.

Having said that, I, like most Americans, hope that this surge is successful, for all the right reasons, for all the right reasons, but let me tell you tonight what I told the American general last week. If this surge by this summer is not successful, I hope you will tell the Congress and the American public that it's not working. He responded in the affirmative that he would respond by August on whether or not this was working or not. So I told the general, I said I hope it's successful, but I hope if it's not, you will tell us that it is not and that currently you are engaged in an effort that looks at a plan B. As I told Secretary of State that we needed to be thinking about doing in February of this year, a plan B that would protect our men and women who are at the front lines, look at protecting the borders between Iraq and Iran and Syria, look at redeployment, looking at beefing up our efforts in Afghanistan, in a way that protects our interests in the Middle East but quits trying to convince ourselves that if we want democracy more than the Iraqis it will happen.

At the end of the day, Iraq will have to stand up for itself and indicate that they want to make a success out of this effort of democracy.

So I want to yield back to my colleagues and I thank my friend, the gentleman from Arkansas, for providing this opportunity for fellow Blue Dogs to come and talk about why we are so concerned that, in fact, a new day has come and why we have to make new changes in direction that will fit the accountability of American men and women, that American taxpayers and that most importantly our American soldiers demand and deserve.

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, and as we have been discussing this hour, Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 97 demands accountability for how the money is being spent in Iraq.

We all support our brave men and women in uniform. We all support our troops. We are all Americans first and foremost, but just as when a small town in America receives a grant they must be held accountable for how that grant money is spent, so should the Iraqi government.

Again, Washington Post, Monday, April 30, by Dana Hedgpeth, entitled U.S. Rebuilding in Iraq Is Missing Key Goals, Report Finds. ''Before the U.S.-led invasion, Iraq's power system produced 4,500 megawatts a day with an aging infrastructure in which 85 percent of power plants were at least 20 years old, the report said. Reconstruction officials initially hoped to increase daily output to 6,750 megawatts by the summer of 2004, a target later lowered to 6,000 megawatts. But in the most recent quarter, Iraq generated only 3,832 megawatts a day.''

What does that mean? The story goes on to say, ''The shortage was particularly acute in Baghdad. Before the war, the city received an average of 16 to 24 hours of power a day. Last spring, Baghdad averaged 8 hours of electricity a day.'' That was last spring. ''This year, during the last week of March, the city received only 6.5 hours of electricity a day. The rest of the country, however, received an average of 14 hours of power a day.''

At this time, I yield to the gentleman that helped write H. Res. 97, which is of course the Blue Dog bill, to provide for Operation Iraqi Freedom cost accountability, to provide an accounting for how this $12 million an hour of your tax money is being spent in Iraq, the gentleman who helped white the bill, an active member of the Blue Dog Coalition, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Arkansas, and I thank the gentleman from Arkansas and I appreciate your leadership on this issue.

I don't come to the floor often on Special Orders, but I think today this issue is so critically important not

only for the American taxpayers but for the men and women who are serving so bravely in Iraq, and this is such a long overdue issue, as the gentleman mentioned, I helped write this bill but this came about after two Congresses of my own bill, the Iraq War Funding Accountability Act, that in the last Congress, as you know, was a Blue Dog-endorsed measure. That was an attempt to bring about accountability in Iraq in regard to the moneys that are spent by contractors in the reconstruction areas taking place in Iraq.

Unfortunately, we were not allowed under the last Congress or the last majority to bring this measure forward so we could debate it, so we could discuss it, so we could vote on it. But fortunately, with the new leadership in Congress, this has become an issue that has not only been discussed and debated but an issue that is going to be included in the bill that we have before us this week. And it's just so long overdue on the part of the American taxpayers and the men and women who are serving who, because this money is misspent, misdirected, sometimes lost, are going without the equipment that they need.

Every Member in this House has heard from family members and friends about their loved ones serving in Iraq who require supplies purchased by family members and friends and sent to them, everything from boots to protective gear, to the proper sunglasses, to supplies. It's absolutely inappropriate, and as long as we continue to misappropriate money and allow this to fall into the area of waste, fraud and abuse, and in sometimes criminal neglect or criminal negligence, this issue is only going to be exacerbated and the stories are just far too numerous.

We've heard the little stories that, in fact, some of these contractors are selling soda pop at $45 a case to the men and women who are serving in Iraq to the same contractors who are charging $100 to do a 15-pound bag of laundry, to the bigger issue, such as trucks, trucks that are burned in place because there's minor repair problems needed, to even bigger issues such as pallets of money, I think it was $12 billion that just disappeared in Iraq. And we have been trying to get a handle on this for a long time, and every effort that we have made has been short-stopped in this Congress, and finally, we are going to be able to get it out.

Mr. Speaker, I have here a Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction Report. This is a report that's issued quarterly to Congress.

□ 1815

It tells us very, very little about what's happening. It will tell us by contractor name how much we are obligated to them. It will tell us by contractor name how much they have expended. It will tell us by contractor name the percentage of increase in these expenditures, but it doesn't tell us how the contract was let, why the contract was necessary, and, if, in fact, the work being done was, in fact, completed.

This report represents a snapshot from 30,000 feet, no attempt at all to drill down and find the answers that the taxpayers and the servicemembers deserve. I have another report here about the construction by a contractor of the Baghdad police academy, obviously built in Baghdad. These pictures are worth 1,000 words. They show the fact that the work was done, shoddy workmanship. They show, in fact, that the supplies that were used by these contractors were inappropriate supplies, faulty, substandard supplies. This isn't pointed out in the quarterly report.

These are the things that we need to know, and I am just proud to be a member of the Blue Dogs who exist for one reason and one reason only, the one common thread that runs through the entire Blue Dog organization, and that's fiscal responsibility. It's fiscally irresponsible to continue to ignore these very real problems. It's fiscally improper to adopt this measure, to insist on accountability by those who are being paid just gross sums of money to do, in some instances, inappropriate, ineffective, substandard work.

I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding, and I appreciate your leadership in helping get this measure signed into law and bringing accountability to these outrageous incidents that are taking place in Iraq today.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from California for his work within the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition to write and craft this Iraq war accountability bill known as House Resolution 97.

In the remaining 3 minutes or so we have left, I am going to yield to my friend, fellow Blue Dog member from the State of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. ROSS.

I will try to sum up what we have done this evening. It is very important, as the American people have followed this process, have seen us with the legislative process at work, not only in terms of debating the issue, but they have also witnessed how we are putting this, hopefully, this final piece together that the President will sign.

First of all, just to wrap up, we have made concessions with the President on the issues that he was concerned about. The timelines, have, indeed, been removed. Those were his major objections on it. So we have compromised on that point.

But we also had, then, accountability, and that's what the American people want. They want to make sure that we have accountability in this. Mr. THOMPSON from California has played a very leading role in this, and it was so good to have him on the floor talking about it. Mr. IKE SKELTON, who is the chairman of our Armed Services Committee, has incorporated all of the major points of financial accountability to get out fraud and waste, to bring in the Defense Department's investigators to report to us on each of these areas, on a 6-month basis, to show us how the money is being spent.

All of those things are now in this package, and the benchmarks are in, the benchmarks. So we can hold the Iraqi people to, and say, these are things that must be accomplished, as we go forward. If you don't hold their feet to the fire, if you don't put pressure there, there is no accountability. So we are going to have them on security.

We are going to have them where they are going to reach the deal of how, which is at the bottom of the whole situation, is oil, and how they are to divide the oil revenue between the Kurds, between the Sunnis and between the Shias. We have got this in there for benchmarks.

The other thing we have in there is funds for the troops, the Humvee protection, the body armor production. Never again will they go in Humvees and have to write back to mom and dad to give them the metals. They are over there fighting for the United States of America. It is our constitutional responsibility as the Congress of the United States to raise and support the military. That's in article 1, section 6 of the Constitution for our duty. This Congress is able to do that in this.

Finally, what is so important, we are having in this measure true emergency measures like the children's health program, in which we have $349 million now for that shortfall to help with the SCHIP program, for that lower-income program.

Many of those children, incidentally, Mr. ROSS, are children of some of these servicemen who are serving in Iraq, because their income level falls too low for Medicaid, yet not high enough to be able to afford the regular practice. The money is in here for the veterans to make sure the Walter Reed situation doesn't happen again. That's what's so important. That's what the American people want.

In this measure we have got that, and then plus $2.4 billion more than what the President asks for the troops. But we have got the accountability in, and it's geared to moving us in a way to get us out of the crosshairs of this civil war and in this occupation in Iraq so that we can strengthen our military and put the resources in Afghanistan and Pakistan where we know al Qaeda is and allow the Iraqi people to manifest themselves and solve this civil war among themselves.

Thank you. It has been wonderful being with you and being a part of our Blue Dog coalition this evening.

DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I want to come to the floor tonight and continue on a theme that we were discussing last night, and that theme revolves around delivery of health care in this country.

Some of the discussion last night dealt with the future of medical care in this country, whether we expand the public sector involvement, whether we encourage and continue the private sector involvement in the delivery of health care in this country; and those are extremely important questions, and questions that I suspect that this Congress will be debating at length over the coming 18 months and well into the next Congress, the 111th Congress that convenes in 2009.

If we don't pay attention to the physician workforce that is going to be providing that health care, those discussions may be all for naught. We are obligated, in this Congress, to pay attention to access for our patients, patients in Medicare. You heard reference to the SCHIP program; patients in the SCHIP program are all going to need access to physicians. It doesn't matter whether a patient is a participant in the Medicare system, the SCHIP system, private insurance, pays cash for their care, they need access to a doctor, and that access will be unavailable if we don't preserve and protect our physician workforce going forward.

This really came home to me about a year and a half ago in a conversation with Alan Greenspan. He commented on the concern for the future viability and stability of the Medicare program, of the system as a whole, is it ultimately sustainable. He felt that it would be. But his greater concern was is there going to be anyone there to deliver the services when you require them? Of course, he is talking about our physician workforce, our nursing workforce, the ancillary health care personnel, all of whom we depend upon to deliver health care in this country.

We have an overburgeoning and overregulated governmental system that continues to sort of move along. We have got the other aspect of ever-increasing liability costs. If we have time tonight, I do want to touch on that just a little bit.

But not just the cost of medical liability insurance, but also the aggravation of dealing with a system that, on its face, sets doctors and patients against each other. We do have to deal with that.

The consequence of this is we have physicians who are my age who are leaving the profession early, earlier than the generation before them. It was very common for a physician to practice into their 60s and 70s and not at all uncommon to continue to read about physicians who continue to practice right up until the time that they no longer could.

You don't see that as much any more. Physicians are making plans to leave the practice of medicine at an earlier point now than, I believe, ever before in our Nation's history. At the same time, at the other end, are we having any problems filling our residency programs? The answer is yes.

Are we, in fact, encouraging the young people of this country to look upon health care as a career, as a profession? The answer to that question may not be affirmative either.

So we have got an increasing number of physicians who are making early retirement plans. We are not sure it's difficult to measure the number, but it doesn't seem that the younger generation is showing up in the numbers that we would expect. Both of those pose a significant concern nationally, because we have got a society that's aging. We have a society with the so-called baby boom generation coming up, and the demand for services is going to be ever-increasing during that time.

Suffice it to say, whether it's, again, the Medicare, SCHIP program, Medicaid, private insurance, cash on the barrel head, patients are going to need doctors; and it is incumbent upon this Congress to make certain that we do the things necessary to preserve the physician workforce in this country. The patients who need care, maybe a patient is in a city, or they may be a patient in a rural area, they may be a patient in an area that has been devastated by gulf coast hurricanes in the past couple of years. The reasons are complex, and we debate them at some length up here in Washington in the various ways that we can seek to improve our health care system.

But even as we engage in these issue, our physician workforce is crumbling. In order to keep this scenario from becoming worse, I am proposing a series of physician workforce pieces of legislation that will consist, essentially, of three different parts.

I would just draw your attention to the cover of Texas Medicine. This is a periodical put out by the Texas Medical Association every month. This is the cover of the March issue. The title is, ''Running Out of Doctors: Medical Schools Unable to Keep Residents in Texas.'' This is one of the things that we really do have to focus on.

When you look at the Medicare system, one of the biggest problems we have is the formula under which physicians are paid, and addressing the declining Medicare physician payment issue has almost become an annual rite here in Washington, DC. But every time we do that, we actually make it harder to ultimately reform the system. Every time we come in at the end game, at the end of the year, to try to prevent further cuts to the physician reimbursement system and the Medicare system, we actually make the overall solution to that problem harder and harder. The chance, then, for real reform, the opportunities for real reform, become smaller and smaller with each succeeding year.

The current payment system in the Medicare system, the current payment system rewards ordering labs and performing procedures, necessary or not. In fact, not often are the questions asked, if those services, not even if they are necessary, but are they, perhaps, overvalued. Is Medicare getting its best value for its dollar?

The current system is indifferent to the fact that the procedures or the tests ordered may be questionable or may have significant merit, may, in fact, be critical for a patient's well-being. The fact is that the system doesn't work. It doesn't work for doctors, it doesn't work for patients, and certainly not working for the American taxpayer. Yet, year in and year out, Congress allows it to persist.

Well, if we continue to allow this condition to stagnate, there will be fewer and fewer physicians accepting Medicare payments. This will result in reduced access for beneficiaries and a restriction in the physician workforce pipeline over a period when the demand for medical service is projected to explode.

Fewer students are pursuing a career in medicine. More and more doctors are retiring early. Even fewer will choose primary care fields in their study of medicine, and all of this happens against a backdrop of more and more Americans growing older. As Americans grow older, they do face greater and greater health challenges. So, arguably, our sickest and most complex patients are going to need to rely on an ever-dwindling physician workforce.

Now, if, indeed, we do nothing, the picture I have just painted may, indeed, become a reality.

□ 1830

But again, the three pieces of legislation that I plan to introduce will start with one that will ensure stability of the physician work force by ensuring stability of the payment system within Medicare. There is a formula under which physicians are paid in Medicare, and I'm going to talk about this in a little bit more detail in just a few minutes, but it's called the sustainable growth rate. And the net effect of the sustainable growth rate formula is really anything but growth. It, in fact, results in a reduction over time, 5 to 10 percent reduction in physician payments year in and year out. And that number is brought to us every year by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services out of the Department of Health and Human Services. We'll actually receive data on that, what that number of that percentage cut will be this summer, sometime in July.

The first bill that I'm proposing would, in fact, eliminate that sustainable growth rate formula and replace it with a different formula. It's called the Medicare Economic Index, really not so important what it's called, but it is a cost of living update, if you will, a market basket update based upon the cost of input. What does it cost the doctor to run their office, to run their practice? And if they're going to be

able to sustain that over time, obviously, the Medicare reimbursement rates are going to have to keep up with the cost of living adjustment, or keep up with inflation. It only makes sense. We do it in almost every other aspect of Medicare. And again, I want to discuss that in some detail in just a moment.

One of the other things that happened in 2003 was we reset the SGR baseline to reduce the level of those cuts, and, in fact, that's a budgetary maneuver that may well be available to us again this year and, in fact, is one that I think we should take advantage of.

So this legislation does, in addition to repealing the SGR, it does so in the year 2010. In the 2 years prior to that time, reset the baseline so that the depth of those cuts are not so significant. In order to protect physician practices against a reduction in income and, hence, encouraging physicians to leave the Medicare system, in order to protect during that 2 years time, allow bonus payment of 3 percent for voluntary reporting on quality measures and 3 percent for those practices that choose to increase or improve their health information technology that almost every practice will be relying on with greater and greater need in the years to come.

So in aggregate, those bonus payments are 6 percent. And by resetting the baseline, the reduction in payment will be in the 5 percent range. So the net effect will be either a 0 percent update or possibly even a 1 percent update, which I think would be welcomed by most physicians in practice. And that's a temporary situation.

What is the reason to delay the SGR repeal? Why not just do it straight up? The reason is because of the projected cost by the Congressional Budget Office, and that projected cost makes it almost impossible to do that without making some significant adjustments in other aspects of payments for medical care that, quite frankly, I don't know that Congress has the will to do.

But the reality is, we are saving money year over year in Medicare by providing services in a more timely fashion. The Medicare prescription drug benefit passed in 2003, a case in point. The trustees, the Medicare trustees report released just a few weeks ago said that in 2005 there were 600,000 hospital beds that weren't filled in Medicare. This was a savings to part A in Medicare, which really should accrue to part B and go to offset the cost of repealing the SGR formula.

We are not allowed, under the rules of the Congressional Budget Office, we are not allowed to look ahead and say well, we are going to get savings in this system because of changes that we've made. But what we can do is sequester and aggregate those savings over the next 2 years, and then use those actual dollars to buy down or reduce the amount of dollars that it's going to cost to repeal the SGR.

Again, a small bonus update for beginning in the year 2008 for some health information technology implementation. These measures are in a large part well overdue. And this Congress, the last Congress was unable to come to an agreement, the House and the Senate, over the type of health information technology that we wanted doctors offices to pursue.

But the reality is, delaying that implementation further only tends to cost more money to the system. So we do need to get on about the business of encouraging physicians' offices to do this work. Not only is it necessary, I think, to provide that bonus payment, but it's also necessary to provide some safe harbor provisions in laws that are known as the Stark clause, the anti-kickback, and anti-compete laws that we know in aggregate as Stark 1 and Stark 2.

Additionally, if physicians voluntarily report quality data, that additional bonus payment will be there for them as well. So collect an aggregate. All of that data within the Center for Medicare and Medicaid services, money to save from part A, part C and part D as well. Aggregate, sequester those savings and use that to offset the cost of the ultimate repeal of the SGR.

And in addition to that, there is the Inspector General in Health and Human Services, along with the Department of Justice, have gotten very aggressive about going after areas where health care monies are spent inappropriately, the so-called fraud and abuse that exists within some aspects of the Medicare system.

And a recent newspaper article disclosed a significant amount of money that was recovered by eliminating an episode of fraud and abuse that was occurring I believe in the State of Florida.

Well, those monies need to be, again, reallocated back to the part B part of Medicare again to pay down or buy down the cost of that SGR appeal when the time comes.

Now, one of the issues that was addressed in the Texas Medical Association article is that because of the lack of residency programs within the State of Texas, Texas is doing a good job with, they've expanded medical schools and they're doing a good job with medical instruction, but the doctors that they're educating in Texas are having to leave Texas to get their specialty training or their residency training. And the fact is that most physicians practice within 100 miles of where they did their residency training. So to be able to increase the amount of residency programs that are available in rural areas, in midsize or small urban areas, it is going to take some effort by this Congress for that to happen.

The United States does have good residency programs. They're the envy of the world, and people come from all over the world to participate in our postgraduate education in our academic medical centers. But that's just the point. A lot of residencies do exist in conjunction with large academic medical centers and, as of a consequence, that's in a large urban area.

Again, doctors are more likely to practice close to where they train and in similar environments. So most American trained doctors, as you would imagine, stay in urban areas and practice specialty or subspecialty medicine, which is not a bad thing. And that's not to say that that is necessarily wrong, but we do need more physicians who are going to set up their practices in primary care in more of the generalist theme rather than the specialty theme.

The second bill that would be introduced would be the Physician Work Force and Graduate Education Enhancement Act. And it establishes an interest free loan program for eligible hospitals in rural, small and urban areas to attract residency programs in specialties like family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, emergency medicine, OB/GYN or general surgery. This would require an authorization of $25 million over 10 years from 2008 to 2018. And of course the Secretary of HHS would report back to Congress on how the program is doing with achieving its stated goals.

Well, let me talk for just a moment about the Medicare payment formula, because this is an important point, and it is difficult to understand. It's a program that obviously was created by Congress and Federal agencies and one that is understandable by perhaps very few.

But looking at this graph, the colored bars on this graph represent the years, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, I'm sorry, 2007, 2006 does not appear on this graph because it was actually a 0 percent, 2006 is the blue bar on the graph.

If you look at the four parts of Medicare, the hospitals representing Medicare part A, doctors, Medicare part B, Medicare Advantage, part C, including nursing homes on this graph as well, and you look at the Medicare Advantage plans, the hospitals and the nursing homes, and each of those year over year receive a market basket or a cost of living upgrade year over year. You can see for hospitals, for example, it's ranged about 3 percent a year, sometimes a little bit lower, sometimes a little bit higher. The Medicare Advantage plans have done a little bit better. Nursing homes very similar to hospitals.

But look over at the physician reimbursement. In the year 2002 there was about a 4½ percent reduction in physician reimbursement. Then, in 2003, 2004, 2005, very, very modest, 1.8, 1.7 percent cost of living updates. Lower, I would point out, than hospitals, nursing homes or certainly the Medicare Advantage plans.

In 2005, this was actually part of the Deficit Reduction Act that was passed in 2005 and held physicians at a 0 percent update.

Projection for 2007 was for a significant reduction, but the reality was,

again, we made an adjustment at the end of last year to once again hold that at a 0 percent update.

But you would have to ask yourself, how long, at running a small business, could you continue without any attention being paid to what does it cost to run the business? At some point, if this line stays flat or continues to diminish, at some point you don't have to have an MBA from an elite Eastern institution to figure out that you cannot continue to sustain that. Again, physician offices, in the main, are small businesses and as a consequence, a continued reduction in payment or even a flattening of payment which when everyone else is seeing a cost of living adjustment of between 2 and 4 percent, that's indicative of the inflation rate for medical offices. And they in fact are on a significant downward trajectory, one that ultimately is not likely to be sustainable.

Now, last year, in an attempt to deal with this, I introduced legislation that was a little bit different from the bill that I've introduced this year. It was H.R. 5866, and it was aimed at tackling this problem with the sustainable growth rate formula and replacing it with a cost of living update, a cost of living adjustment update. The primary focus was to ensure that seniors have better access to the health care that they need, that, acknowledging that the SGR reductions of 5 percent every year, year over year, makes it less likely for doctors to continue to see Medicare patients.

The plan then had four main goals. Ensure that physicians receive a full and fair payment for services rendered; secondly, to create quality performance measures to keep consumers informed. Are you, in fact, getting value for your dollar when you purchase medical care. We have well established, in fact, they've been around for 20 years or so, institutions in each State called quality improvement organizations.

Well, I wanted to, in fact, embellish or augment the quality improvement organizations and increase their accountability and flexibility so that they would be able to provide the feedback to physicians and to patients as to how they are doing; are they able to provide the services for a reasonable amount of money? Are they able to provide the services in a timely fashion? Do they provide the services that people in fact want?

Well, the problem with 5866 is that once again there was a significant number of dollars that would need to be identified to offset the cost of going from the sustainable growth rate formula to the cost of living update formula. That figure last year was about $218 billion. And that is a significant amount of money to come up with over 1 year's time. Hence, the reason that this year the trajectory that I have introduced has lengthened that timeline out a little bit longer in order to identify where some of those pay fors may be found.

The other option, following along the lines of 5866 from last year, would just simply be to take the money from other aspects of Medicare and other parts of the Federal payment for health care in this country. The problem is that each of those areas finds great difficulty if indeed a proposal is made to restrict or reduce the Federal expenditures that come their way and, as a consequence, 5866 never enjoyed very widespread support because of the fact that, like so many things here in Washington, DC, you end up having to pick winners and losers.

□ 1845

That is the reason that I have taken the approach that I have for this year to expand out the timeline for the elimination of the SGR, to identify pay-fors in advance that are going to be going on anyway, but we just simply sequester them, collect them, attribute them to the part B part of Medicare. Savings that occur in hospitals, if you fill 600,000 hospital beds a year fewer than was intended, that is going to be a significant savings to the part A part of Medicare. But the reality is that savings occurs because of work that is done in part B. More doctors doing more procedures in their offices, doctors treating disease in a timely fashion so that fewer hospitalizations are required, doctors doing procedures in ambulatory care centers so that the high expense item of a hospital expenditure is, therefore, avoided. But all of those expenses come back to part B. It is only fair, then, that the savings that result to the system, the integrated Medicare system, those savings that come to the Medicare system, need to be attributed to the part B, especially when we have got this large price tag for repealing the SGR that confronts us.

Well, again, this year I want to approach things a little differently. But, again, first and foremost if you are talking about preserving the physician workforce, you have got to protect those men and women who are on the ground, in the trenches, delivering care right now. If they get dispirited and walk off the job or say, I am no longer going to care for Medicare patients or I am going to restrict Medicare patients from my practice or begin restricting the procedures that I offer to Medicare patients, we don't get good value for our dollar that way.

So getting that Medicare payment policy right has to be the first aspect of this physicians workforce consortium that will preserve our medical workforce for the future. Paying physicians fairly will extend the careers of many doctors who otherwise will simply opt out of the Medicare program or seek early retirement.

The principles of the new bill: Again, eliminate the SGR. It is critical that the SGR be eliminated, and we can't lose sight of that fact. The problem is right now I don't think there is the savings identified to eliminate the SGR nor am I convinced that the will in Congress is to eliminate the SGR in one chunk. So extend that timeline out a little bit and allow that price tag to be reduced because of the lengthening of the timeline. But eliminating the SGR is the fundamental principle that has to be followed, and the bill that I am going to introduce will eliminate the SGR in the year 2010 and in the meantime provide incentive payments based on quality reporting, technology improvement that could total as much as 6 percent to protect the physicians over these next 2 years where the cuts in the SGR arguably will be about 5 percent.

In both 2008 and 2009, physicians' practices can opt to take advantages of those bonuses and may, in fact, be returning value back to their businesses, and this would be a good thing. If you expand the ability to monitor patient care through health information technology, that is not just for your Medicare patients. That is going to be for all patients. So there would be a general improvement that would permeate throughout a physician's practice. Most physicians in this country don't just see Medicare or don't just see Medicaid. In fact, they see a mix of patients, some Medicare and some Medicaid, some private insurance; but all patients under a doctor's care would benefit from the advances in health information technology.

Let me digress for just a moment and talk a little bit about health information technology because I was a late arrival to the concept of the necessity of improving health information technology, but it really came home to me in October of 2005 when I took a trip to New Orleans. I was invited by several of the hospitals down there to come down to see how their doctors were coping with the after effects of the storm, see what had happened to some of the physical infrastructure. We spent part of the afternoon in Charity Hospital in downtown New Orleans. Charity Hospital, one of the venerable old training hospitals that has been around for generations. In fact, most of my professors at Parkland Hospital had trained a generation before at Charity Hospital in New Orleans.

And here is a picture of the medical records department in Charity Hospital in October of 2005. Katrina, as you recall, came through right at the end of August of 2005. It doesn't show up well, but there is still probably three or four inches of water on the floor. Like many hospitals, Charity's medical records department was in their basement.

The lights that you see overhead were actually pretty dim. I was able to get a good photograph because of a television crew that was following along behind us with their very bright lights. But look at the medical records, and you can see the black mold that has grown on these because of, again, the water on the floor and probably 110 percent humidity in this hot, damp basement. The records had been flooded.

And then after the water had been mostly evacuated, of course, the water damage has already happened and now you have the growth of the black mold on the records. And, really, I don't think anyone would be too interested in handling those records.

And even if you just look at the overall arrangement of this medical records department, you can see some records stuffed in on their sides up there. Some others have fallen down over there. It just makes you wonder about how good this paper system is if everything goes well. And if things go badly, as you can see, they can go very badly indeed.

Well, another aspect that clarified in my mind the importance in upgrades of health information technology, a couple of months ago, of course, when all of the newspaper stories were going on out at Walter Reed Hospital, I took a trip out there to visit with the soldiers and see for myself firsthand what the situation was in Building 18. And, correct, Building 18 was an old building and it really wasn't that nice. And I think we are all better served by the fact that our soldiers who are on medical hold are no longer being housed in Building 18.

But the bigger problem, Master Sergeant Blade was kind enough to explain to me what he saw as a greater degree of difficulty for our soldiers who were on medical hold waiting to see if they could rejoin their units or if they were going to be discharged from the service on a disability. And you see this rather large stack of papers that he has in front of him. That is his medical record. He is going through it with a yellow highlighter to make his case in regards to a particular disability claim. And his largest concern was, after spending hour after hour after hour going through his medical record and documenting the points that he thought were critical for him to receive the proper consideration from the Disability Board, he said it wasn't uncommon for that medical record to go sit on someone's desk for a couple of weeks and then ultimately be lost. So he was advising the men in his unit. In fact, I think it was either the second or third copy of his medical record that he was marking up in this manner so that he wouldn't run the risk of putting all his time and effort into documenting the issues surrounding his disability only to have the medical record disappear because the system really wasn't well suited to handle that.

And that really brought home for me the fact that, well, of course, the VA system has a relatively forward thinking electronic medical record, but the problem is the record produced by the Department of Defense doesn't talk to the VA record system, and as a consequence, the poor soldier in the middle has to spend the time and the effort going through their individual record to make certain that, again, their case gets the proper disability consideration that it deserves.

So just two reasons why I have become a believer in the past couple years that improving the information technology aspect of medical practice, true in hospitals but also true in physicians' offices as well, why I have become a believer that that is, indeed, something we do need to be devoting time and resources to. There are certainly problems with some of the systems that are out there, but ultimately the payoff is going to be that we will be able to deliver care faster, cheaper, smarter, and as a consequence, deliver more care and more value for our patients.

One of the other things that again I think is important in this endeavor and the reason I have included part of the bonus payment for quality reporting is that you can't change a system if you don't know what is going on within the system. Now, again, I would stress that this would be voluntary quality reporting, that no physician or physician's office would be required to provide quality reporting. The risk to run there is that the SGR reduction would affect that physician's bottom line in 2008 and 2009. But if a physician or medical practice opted not to do quality reporting or improvements of health information technology, beginning in the year 2010, they would indeed see a repeal of the SGR, replacing that with the Medicare Economic Index. So beginning a series of positive updates of about 2 to 2½ percent in the year 2010, but, again, to forestall the pain that would go on in the years 2008 and 2009, reset that SGR baseline so the cuts are not so deep, and then provide protection for voluntary reporting measures on quality, voluntary improvements in an office's health information technology, and make these things so that they are generally available, which CMS would be tasked with making the quality reporting measures generally available, and really sort of zero in on the top 10 conditions or diagnoses where the bulk of the money is spent in the Medicare system. Not so much to emphasize quality reporting measures for esoteric diseases or diseases that are encountered once in a career but those things that are encountered over and over and over again: hypertension, diabetes, congestive heart failure. These are the types of things where the concentration of dollars is going to be located, and these are the areas where the quality reporting really needs to be focused.

The part of the issue there is that the quality reporting measures do have to be generally available to physicians in all specialties and all practices. We certainly don't want to see someone who is not able to participate because their particular specialty does not have an identified quality reporting mechanism. CMS and some of the specialty organizations are already pretty far down the road on this, and really at this point it has not been identified to me that there is a problem or would be a problem for a particular specialty with not having a mechanism to report quality.

Well, dealing with the other aspects of the physician workforce, the other two aspects of the three pieces of legislation, one would deal with physicians in residency and one would deal with those individuals who are looking to become physicians or those individuals who are in medical school.

The Physician Workforce Graduate Medical Education Enhancement Act of 2007 would acknowledge that it is costly to educate medical students and it is costly to get medical students through a residency program. The big programs are in more heavily populated areas that tend to attract more residencies, but we need to get the physicians out into the smaller and rural communities where the medically underserved populations actually exist and get them out there in high-needs specialties. So developing a program that would permit hospitals that do not traditionally operate a residency training program would be the second aspect of establishing and protecting the future physician workforce. So this bill would create a loan fund available to hospitals to create residency training programs where none have operated in the past. And, again, that is a critical aspect to this. This is not something that is to go in and layer on top of existing programs, but this would be to create residency programs where none has existed previously. Communities like the community of Denton, Texas, that I represent, a community like the community of Lewisville, Texas, that I represent, smaller community hospitals, 150 to 200 beds, no residency program has ever existed in those communities. These would be the types of targeted communities that perhaps we could look to for establishing residencies in primary care, OB/GYN, pediatrics, general surgery.

□ 1900

On average, it cost $100,000 a year to train a resident, and that cost for some institutions can be prohibitive. In addition, the Balanced Budget amendment, passed 10 years ago in this Congress, has a residency cap that limits resources to hospitals, such as smaller community hospitals. The loan amounts available under this bill would not exceed $1 million, and the loan would constitute start-up funding, again, for new residency programs.

The start-up money is essential. Since medical graduate, medical education funding can be obtained only once a residency program is established, the cost to start a training program for a smaller, more rural and/or small urban hospital can be cost prohibitive because these hospitals do operate on much narrower margins.

Identifying high-need physician specialties and getting young people to consider medical school, to getting young medical students to consider going into a primary care specialty, to going into one of those medically underserved areas, again, going back to the Texas Medical Association article,

the Texas Medicine article, most physicians practice close by where they did their residency. And as a consequence, there are areas in the country that do lack medical care by trained professionals. So the third aspect of this three-part health workforce, physician workforce trio of bills, the third part would ensure the availability of the adequacy of the future physician workforce in providing medical students with incentives and assistance to practice in shortage areas and shortage specialties in those shortage areas.

So the third bill would be to establish a mix of scholarships, loan repayment funds, and tax incentives to entice more students into medical school in the first place, and then create incentives for those students, those newly minted doctors, to become the family physicians, the general surgeons, the OB/GYNs, the pediatricians, the gerontologists, to become those practitioners of the future that are going to more likely stay in shortage areas, such as rural and small urban areas.

There is no question that the issues in front of us as far as the physician workforce are serious, they are significant. But the feeling is that once you have established measures that will allow the medical workforce of the future, then you can begin to refine other aspects of the health care system. And, again, as I stressed last night, we are going to have that tension between what is public and what is private. What is paid for by the government, what is paid for by insurance, what is paid for by people who wish to pay cash. Is it better to have a health savings account or rely on SCHIP or Medicaid? Those arguments we are going to have, but those arguments are going to diminish in importance if we don't do the things necessary to create and retain the physician workforce that is going to be necessary to take care of people in the future.

One of the greatest frustrations that I hear all the time from medical professionals, and since we are on the subject of medical professionals and how to keep physicians engaged in practicing medicine and how to get more people to consider health care as a career, obviously medical liability plays a big part in that. My home State of Texas has done an excellent job of dealing with the medical liability issue. We, on the floor of this House in Congress, in fact for the last two Congresses over the previous 4 years have passed several medical liability bills that have had at their heart a cap on noneconomic damages patterned after the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act of 1975 out in California that has been so effective in keeping the cost of providing liability insurance within reason.

Now, my home State of Texas, the year that I ran for Congress the first time in 2002, was in a crisis situation. We were losing insurers from the State liability. Insurers were leaving Texas because the climate was so pernicious. Rates were going up for physicians. For those companies that stayed behind, their rates were going up, doubling and sometimes tripling.

The State of Texas and the State legislature passed a bill in the summer of 2003 that actually again was patterned after that Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act of 1975 out in California that capped noneconomic damages. The Texas approach was a little different from the approach that we took in Congress. The approach we took in Congress had a $250,000 flat cap for noneconomic damages. The Texas solution actually took that cap and spread it out three ways; a $250,000 cap for the physician, a $250,000 cap for the hospital and a $250,000 cap for a nursing home or a second hospital, if indeed there was a second hospital involved. That required a constitutional amendment in order to become law. And that constitutional amendment was passed in September of 2003. It was not passed by a very large margin. It was essentially the grass-roots efforts of physicians, their families and their patients that got the constitutional amendment passed that allowed the Texas law to take effect.

But the effect of the Texas law over the ensuing 3 or 4 years has been significant. Medical liability premiums have now fallen 20–22 percent. My last insurer of record, Texas Liability Trust, has reduced insurance rates by 20 to 22 percent, depending upon the length of time that the doctor has been with the company.

More importantly, insurance companies have come back, liability carriers have come back to the State of Texas. We diminished from about 17 carriers to 2 in 2002. Now there are 13 or 14 carriers back in the State. And most importantly, they have come back to the State without an overall increase in their premiums.

One of the big beneficiaries of the law that was passed in Texas has been the smaller community-based not-for-profit hospital. The money that they were previously having to—these hospitals largely self-insured and the dollars that they were having to put in escrow against possible claims was significant. And now these hospitals have been able to put more of that capital back to work for them: capital expansions, hiring nurses, paying nurses' salaries. Exactly the kinds of things you would want your smaller community hospitals to be able to do they have now been able to do under the legislation passed in Texas.

Well, if Texas is in such good shape from its liability reform, is it still important to consider passing a law at this level, at the Federal level, to deal with our medical justice system? And the answer still is yes. Legislation in draft form that I had scored by the Congressional Budget Office right before we did our Republican budget a few months ago, at the request of the Budget Committee ranking member, we put forth that legislation, the Congressional Budget Office scored it as savings of $3 billion over 5 years. Well, we are already talking about other areas in the Federal expenditure of health care funds where that money is needed. And that $3 billion, in fact, it's wrong, it is unconscionable to leave that money on the table and not provide that money to other areas of the Federal expenditure for health care where it might come in handy.

And the bigger aspect for me, the more important aspect for me in dealing with the problem of the medical justice system at the Federal level is the dollars that are spent on defensive medicine in the Medicare system, in the Medicaid system. A study from 1996, so that is 10 years ago, over 10 years ago, out in Stanford, California, estimated the cost of defensive medicine in the Medicare system, just in the Medicare system, not in the entire health care system, but just in the Medicare system, amounted to about $28 billion a year. Again, that is money we can scarcely afford to leave on the table. If those savings are available to us, indeed, we do need to be getting those dollars back.

But it is not just a dollars-and-cents issue. Nome, Alaska. I happened to be through there in the summer of 2003, stopping in Nome, Alaska, with a group of other Congressmen. You can imagine the Chamber of Commerce wanted to have a big lunch, so they invited us all there. And of course being a physician who was also a Member of Congress, about the entire medical staff from their hospital, all 19 physicians turned out to talk to me during the course of our stopover in Nome, Alaska. And one of the points that they wanted made was that they needed help because they couldn't afford the medical liability cost for having an anesthesiologist in their hospital. And the doctor who was telling me this story, I asked, well, what is your specialty, sir? And he said, well, I am an OB/GYN doctor just like you. And I said wait a minute, you're an OB/GYN doctor and you work in a hospital that doesn't provide anesthesia services. How do you do that? Ignore for a moment the woman who may need an epidural during child birth, what do you do if you're faced with having to do a C-section? He said, well, we get that patient and put her on an airplane and take her to Anchorage. Anchorage, probably 3 hours away. I am given to understand that they sometimes have bad weather in Nome, Alaska. It just makes no sense that we would allow a system like that to continue. We are doing nothing to enhance patient safety; we are doing nothing to enhance the ability to deliver care by allowing a system like that to continue.

Again, we are talking about the workforce issues. Talking to a residency director from one of the large residencies up in New York City a couple of years ago, I asked her what effect the medical liability problem was

having on attracting young physicians into their residency program. And she replied to me that we are now taking people into our residency program that 5 years ago we wouldn't even have interviewed. So these are our children's doctors. We are driving away some of the best and brightest from the desirability of the practice of health care, and we need to do better.

So once again I would add that, while the three bills that will establish and encourage and protect and preserve and defend the existing physician workforce and the physician workforce of the future in this country, we also need to pay attention to the medical justice system in this country.

We have had a number of hearings in my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and our health subcommittee on this issue. There are some other suggestions out there in addition to or instead of the caps on noneconomic damages. I am willing to listen to other philosophies, but the reality is in my home State of Texas. Caps on noneconomic damages again are working. They are delivering lower premium rates for physicians. They are delivering on the promise of more flexibility for capital expenditures for small community-size hospitals because of the dollars they don't have to tie up in escrow because of the way their self-insurance plans are constructed.

And, again, we've seen the insurance companies come back to Texas. And I do from time to time hear people say, well, it's just the insurance companies wanting to make more money. The reality is, my old insurer in Texas was a physician-owned company, a physician-run company. It was essentially a company where all of the profits were returned back to the insurance company. We have several of those in Texas. So I don't believe it is all just a question of a profit-driven motive from the liability insurer.

One of the things that I think we lose sight of, and there was an article in one of the papers today that talked about the fact that America was not the premier as far as the delivery of health care. We can have a lot of arguments around that thought, around that philosophy. The American health care system in general, and certainly the Medicare program in particular, has no shortage of critics here at home and certainly abroad. But it is the American system that stands at the forefront of innovation and new technology, precisely the types of system-wide changes that are going to be necessary to efficiently and effectively provide care for Americans, and particularly for America's seniors in the future.

There was an article, and please don't tell anyone back in my home State of Texas that I read the New York Times, but there was a New York Times article published last October, October 5, by Tyler Cowan who writes: When it comes to medical innovation, the United States is the world leader. In the past 10 years, for instance, 12 Nobel Prizes in medicine have gone to American-born scientists working in the United States, three have gone to foreign-born scientists working in the United States, and seven have gone to researchers outside of the country.

□ 1915

He goes on to point out that five of the six most important medical innovations in the past 25 years have been developed within and because of the American system.

The fact is the United States is not Europe. American patients are accustomed to wide choices when it comes to hospitals, wide choices when it comes to physicians, and choices in their pharmaceuticals. Because our experience is unique and different from other countries, this difference should be acknowledged and certainly expanded when reforming either the public or the private aspect of healthcare delivery in this country.

Mr. Speaker, in the time that I have remaining, let me just recap again the three aspects of physician workforce that I am going to be introducing.

This will be a bill to repeal the so-called sustainable growth rate expenditure and replace that with a Medicare Economic Index or cost of living index for physicians beginning in the year 2010; protections in the year 2008 and 2009 for voluntary reporting and voluntary compliance with improvements in health information technology.

The second bill will deal with the physician workforce and graduate medical education. This will establish an interest-free loan program for eligible hospitals in rural and small urban areas to establish residency training programs for primary care, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, emergency medicine, general surgeon and OB/GYN. The authorization for this will be $25 million over 10 years, those 10 years being 2008 through 2018 inclusive. Of course, the Secretary of HHS will report to Congress on the efficacy of the programs and how they are going about achieving their stated goals.

Finally, and interestingly enough, we voted on a bill on the floor of this House just a few hours ago that would be a loan forgiveness package for lawyers who graduate from law school with large student loans and are willing to practice as prosecutors in high need areas. This would be a very similar structured bill that would establish a scholarship program for physicians who are wanting to practice in primary care in high need areas to alleviate shortages in the fields of family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, emergency medicine, general surgeon and OB/GYN, again the so-called generalist physicians.

This authorization would be for $5 million for each of 5 years, fiscal year 2008 through 2015, a $25 million total authorization that would establish a loan repayment program for generalist physicians who agree to serve in medically underserved areas. A second authorization for an additional $25 million total would make grants to States to provide financial aid to physicians agreeing to serve in medically underserved areas and to support patient-centered coordinated care in qualified medical homes.

There would be additional authorizations to make grants for board certified entities to establish or expand geriatric program fellowships in rural, suburban or medically underserved communities, and, finally, a report to Congress on the efficacy of the program.

Then lastly, but certainly not least, amend the Internal Revenue Code so that gross income does not include compensation received by a physician from a local government for a qualified medical service that is performed in a medically underserved community and under contract with the local government for 4 years. This compensation will be taken into account as wages and must still be reported, but it just won't count toward that individual's adjusted gross income.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the time allotted to me this evening. These are important issues. Again, whether one comes down on the side of increased governmental control of medical care or continuation of some aspect of the private practice of medicine in this country, the critical thing is that we have the doctors there who are willing and able and trained to provide the services that we all want.

Additionally, for those individuals who would say expansion of the government program, the government-funded side of medical care is the only way to adequately cover people in this country, I think we have to look at how good a job we are doing right now with about the 50 percent that is devoted to the public sector in the practice of medicine. About 50 cents out of every health care dollar spent in this country has as part of its origin the United States Congress at some point or other.

So we have to ask ourselves, are we doing a good enough job there? And I would suggest, particularly when you look at things like the sustainable growth rate formula under which physicians are paid, I think the answer to that question would have to be no, we can do a better job with that.

So certainly before any consideration for expanding any part of the public part of paying for medical care in this country, we have got to be sure that we have our figures straight. We have to be certain that we are willing to tackle the tough problems of paying for those things, and certainly the SGR formula needs to be sunsetted and needs to be no longer part of the parlance and discussion on the floor of this House of Representatives.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING EXPORT OF CERTAIN ITEMS TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110–34)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1512 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–261), I hereby certify that the export to the People's Republic of China of the following items is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, and that the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that could be derived from such exports, will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China:

A four-axis filament winding machine for production of spare parts for China's water purification and treatment industries;

A computer control system upgrade to a three-axis filament winding machine for production of spare parts for China's water purification and treatment industries;

An isostatic press for manufacturing automotive spare parts; and

A four-axis filament winding machine to be used in production of graphite or glass composite golf clubs.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *May 15, 2007.*

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET AND COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Foreign Affairs:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 15, 2007.

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

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: In light of my election to the Committee on Financial Services through passage of H. Res. 393 and pursuant to House Republican Conference rules regarding service on certain standing committees, I am compelled to and do hereby resign from service on the following committees: Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Sincerely,

THADDEUS G. MCCOTTER,
Member of Congress.

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

There was no objection.

VOTE BY HOUSE ON WHETHER TO GO TO WAR WITH IRAN IS NEEDED NOW

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we need a vote on whether this country is going to go to war with Iran. We have talked to the Speaker about it. She has promised it. But the time is getting short. Every day that we wait, we allow people down at the White House to continue to talk about this.

The vote we gave in 2002 to allow the President to deal with the problems of 9/11 was not a blank check to attack any country in the world. This war on terror began with some sense in Afghanistan, and then moved to Iraq to the absolute chaos we have today. It is a quagmire from which we can't get ourselves. And, unfortunately, the President and his Vice President are leading us, it appears, toward a war with Iran.

Ask why the urgency? Why do you want to come out here and talk about that tonight? Well, there was an article that appeared today in the Al-Quds Al-Arabi, which is an Arabic paper published in London. It is a very respectable paper, and it is one that most people in this body, in fact most people in this country, never heard of, nor do they understand and will never know about it because our press won't pick it up.

But I read the Middle Eastern press every day. I have some in my office who read Arabic, and they translate it for me, and I get a summary every day in my office of what is going on. This article I think deserves to be quoted a little bit, because people may not get the Congressional Quarterly or the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and read it.

The article says this: ''Vice President Dick Cheney yesterday ended his tour of the Arab world that started with Iraq and ended in the capitals of four other Arab countries, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. High ranking Arab diplomatic sources close to the talks with Cheney confirmed to the newspaper that the probability of war became more likely than peace in the region.''

This is Arabs listening to the Vice President of the United States talk.

''The same sources indicated that Cheney was talking to Gulf leaders he met in a very confident and self-assured way, stressing that the involvement of this country in Iraq does not mean it is in a weak situation and cannot launch another war.''

Think about that. The Vice President is telling the Arab leaders, because we are in this mess in Iraq, just ignore that. We still can go to Iran and have a war.

Cheney went and talked to soldiers and sailors on one of the aircraft carriers, ''announcing to them,'' and this again is a quote, ''in a decisive manner that the U.S. will not allow Iran to possess nuclear weapons and that the option of a military attack is not excluded.''

Now, he said, again quoting, ''Cheney expressed his conviction that striking Iran may be the best solution for the situation in Iraq.''

Think about it. We are going to solve our problems in Iraq by attacking Iran. He says, ''because Tehran,'' the capital of Iran, ''has the biggest influence in the country and is the source of the arms of the militia.''

Now, this is from a man who sent to Iraq a guy named Bremer who took down all the guards and all the barriers at the border between Iran and Iraq, and Iran, of course, has been coming into Iraq. This administration set it up, or else they were ignorant. You can take your choice on that.

He said, ''They do not expect that there will be any retaliation by Iraq's Shiite militias. Quite the contrary, the Sunni groups and militias will take the opportunity to settle accounts with the ruling government in Baghdad under American support.''

So what he is saying is that the United States is shifting its support from the Maliki government, which is Shiite, and they are now over there telling people, well, we are going to now be supporting the Sunni elements so that they can get—Mr. Speaker, I include the translation of the Al-Quds Al-Arabi article for the RECORD.

Vice-President Dick Cheney yesterday ended his tour of the Arab world that started with Iraq and included the capitals of four other Arab countries, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, amidst a war of words with the Iranian President Ahamdi Nijad, who launched a diplomatic counter-attack in the form of two sudden visits to the Emirates and to Oman.

High-ranking Arab diplomatic sources close to the talks with Cheney confirmed to Al-Quds Al-Arabi that the probability of war became more likely than peace in the region after the round of meetings of the vice-president, and that the expected meetings between the Iranian and American sides in Baghdad might be the last chance to avoid military confrontation.

The same sources indicated that Cheney was talking to Gulf leaders he met in a very confident and self-assured tone, stressing that the involvement of his country in Iraq does not mean that it is in a weak situation and cannot launch another war, against Iran. Cheney, who visited the troops of his country in Iraq and the Gulf during his last round, made sure that he met American soldiers on an airplane carrier announcing to them in a decisive manner that the US will not allow Iran to possess nuclear weapons, and that the option of a military attack is not excluded. The Iranian President replied against that with severe threats in a press conference in Abu Dhabi, assuring that if they (Americans) make that mistake, the reply of Iran will be very strong and they will regret it. [Amedinejad said] ''All the world knows that they cannot beat us and Iran is capable of defending herself, and that the superpowers cannot stop us from possessing nuclear energy.''

It was observed that Gulf states have begun searching for alternatives to the Gulf straits to export their oil abroad. There were suggestions to build pipelines to the Red Sea

or the Arab Sea across Yemen, due to fears of closing the Strait of Hormuz through which 18 million barrels pass daily. Western analysts expect that Iranian retaliation will include closing the Strait of Hormuz, bombing American bases, and burning down oil wells in the Gulf, in addition to bombing Israel with rockets from Iran directly, through Hezbollah in Lebanon or both.

Cheney expressed his conviction that striking Iran may be the best solution for the situation in Iraq, because Tehran has the biggest influence in the country and is the source of arms for militias. The source added that American estimates do not expect Iraqi Shiite retaliation against American troops in case war breaks out. Quite the contrary, the Sunni groups and militias will take the opportunity to settle accounts with the ruling government in Baghdad under America's support and protection. The same source indicated that Cheney asked his allies (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates) to reassure Sunni groups in Iraq and win them to the American side, passing a message that the U.S. has lost confidence completely in Al-Maliki government because of its failure to control the security situation and to achieve national reconciliation, including giving the Sunnis a bigger role in the decision-making process.

Cheney assured Gulf leaders that the Iranian nuclear reactor of Bushahr that lies on the other side of the Gulf will not be a target for strikes because it has no value and due to the presence of Russian experts at the reactor, and that even if it became a target of strikes, it would not cause pollution to the Gulf waters because it does not have depleted plutonium. Gulf states that obtain 90% of their water from treatment stations on the Gulf shores expressed to American officials their concerns and fears in the face of a water crisis which would be caused if a nuclear leak pollutes the Gulf waters in case of war with Iran.

The same source also confirmed that Cheney's talks in the four capitals focused on Iraq and Iran only and never dealt with the Arab-Israeli conflict. This was explained by a change of roles between Cheney and Rice, with the latter's role confined to the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

In Abu Dhabi, there are currently rumors about Mr. Nijad's asking the Emirates for mediation with Washington in the current nuclear crisis, and that he brought forth new ideas that an Emirate delegation will present to Washington in the next 2 days. The delegation is headed by crown-price and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Sheikh Muhammad bin Zaid. The delegation left for Washington, D.C. already and has among its members the foreign minister of the Emirates.

□ 1930

IMPORTANT STEP TAKEN ON ISSUE OF DOMESTIC NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, we still hope to bring a 30-something hour to the floor this evening, but we may have to wait for another evening, Mr. Speaker.

I wanted to briefly rise for a few minutes, potentially in replacement of our normal 30-something hour this evening, to talk about what I think is a very important step forward that this Congress took today when it comes to the issue of domestic national security.

We hear a lot and have heard a lot from our President and from this Congress over the past several months about trying to change our course in Iraq, trying to do the right thing to make sure that our troops, that our soldiers there are not put in harm's way in the middle of a religious civil war.

For those of us who have been calling for a new direction in Iraq, we do so in part based on what our own intelligence community has told us, through the National Intelligence Estimate, that the war in Iraq, which has become what they call a cause celeb for the terrorist communities, is in fact making this country less safe, not more safe, by creating a breeding ground, a training ground for terrorists and in fact by growing the undeserved derision for this country across the world.

It points us to, I think, a misplaced allocation of resources. While we have been fighting a misguided and bungled war in Iraq, we have been leaving our own borders, leaving our own homeland unsecured.

We know that the National Guard and the Reserve troops are stretched to their limit. I have a GAO report from January of this year stating the high use of National Guard for Federal overseas missions has reduced equipment available for its State-led domestic missions.

Governor after Governor is telling us that their National Guards are not ready to respond to the national emergencies that may confront States. The Governor of North Carolina says, ''We rely on the National Guard to respond to natural disasters, a pandemic or terrorist attack. Currently, we do not have the manpower or the equipment to perform that dual role,'' of responding to both State and Federal needs.

We know that our National Guard is stretched thin. We also know that over a period of time our local law enforcement personnel have been stretched thin as well.

For those of us that watched from State legislatures or from our place in the private citizenry, we were very proud of this Congress in conjunction with former President Clinton when they instituted the COPS program. Over 117,000 additional community police officers were put on the streets of this country. Every State of the Union was a beneficiary of this program.

That program was put by the wayside by this Republican Congress and this President. Today a lot of Republicans got up and spoke in favor of the bill today which basically reinvigorated that community policing program. But it was a Republican Congress that cut that program to the bone.

During the Clinton administration during the 1990s, the COPS program was funded at $1 billion a year. By 2003, the Republican-led Congress had scaled back COPS to $198 million. And by 2005, to $10 million. By 2006, the Congress had completely eliminated COPS funding.

Boots on the street, community police officers on the ground, you want to talk about the first defense against the next terrorist attack on this Nation, it is the community police officers, our law enforcement personnel on the ground.

Today, we made an historic investment in community policing. For my district alone, it means a 50 percent increase in the number of COPS-supported personnel on the ground.

We are going to set a new course in Iraq, and I believe that is going to make this country safer. We are going to put our National Guard and Reserve troops protecting their States. That will make us safer.

But today, this Democratic Congress showed that things changed by investing once again in community policing and the COPS program.

A lot of people wonder whether things really are changing in Washington or whether it is just talk. Today, by making an historic investment in community policing, we did the right thing for our brave law enforcement personnel and national security.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be before the House of Representatives once again with the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) to share with the American people and our colleagues some of the issues that are facing the United States of America today, and that I think will have ramifications for the future of this country.

The past few weeks here have been very exciting as we continue to try to press the President of the United States to find his way in Iraq and begin the withdrawal of our troops.

I think it is important for the American people to recognize the position of the majority party in the House of Representatives and the position of the majority in the United States Senate represented by Speaker PELOSI and Senate majority leader HARRY REID in which we are trying to begin the process of winding down the war in Iraq and expanding the global war on terrorism.

The war in Iraq does not have anything to do with the war on terrorism, and we hear from the President consistently that if we don't fight them over there, we are going to have to fight them over here. I think it is important for us to recognize that only 2 to 3 percent of the people fighting in Iraq are al Qaeda. We are in the middle of a civil war in a country that 70 percent of the citizens of that country in

Iraq believe it is okay to shoot American soldiers. That is where we are in the middle of this civil war, a religious civil war between religious groups and ethnic factions in which Americans in many instances are the targets of this civil war now.

We have seen in the last 4 months, Mr. Speaker, the deaths of more Americans in that 4-month period than any other 4-month period during the war. It is getting worse by the day. Many of us continue to talk to soldiers who come back and go back and forth, and they are very discrete with us and they share with us information that they are maybe not willing to say publicly. But if I have heard it from one soldier, I have heard it from 15 or 20 from my district and around the country who I have talked with. And they inevitably say: What is winning? What is winning this war?

We ask the President time and time again: What does winning mean? We are beginning to try the process that the President keeps vetoing of winding this war down.

When you have a scenario where you have a couple thousand or 3,000 or 4,000 U.S. and Iraqi soldiers in cities of over 100,000 trying to secure and trying to find out who these insurgents are when they all dress in civilian clothes, they all drive civilian cars. No one has a uniform on. No one is driving a tank. This is a guerrilla war that we are in the middle of. It is becoming very, very difficult for us to secure it. I believe we have missed the opportunity to secure that country because we lack troops.

I don't want to take all of the time up tonight. I know Mr. MURPHY is such a courteous New Englander that he would probably let me, but I think it is important that the citizens of this country know that the Democratic Party is trying to end this war. We want timetables. We want accountability, and the one thing that we are saying to the President of the United States, two things, this is not going to be an open-ended war and you are not getting a blank check.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you, Mr. RYAN. I am nothing if not a fan of New England etiquette. I would let the gentleman speak for as long as he wishes, but he makes great points.

The American people sent this new Congress in order to set a new direction. They didn't imagine on election day that new direction was putting more troops in harm's way in the middle of a civil war. The word ''escalation'' was not in their vocabulary when they conceived of what that new direction would be.

They believed it was about time to start listening to the bipartisan foreign policy community as represented by the Iraq Study Group Report, of the record number of generals coming back and telling us we needed to start setting a new course. They believed that new direction was about redeploying our forces and bringing the National Guard home.

I hope tonight we will talk about how stressed the National Guard is, bringing the troops back home to protect ourselves on our homefront, and being able to respond to the natural disasters and emergencies that are all too frequent on our own shore, and begin to focus on places where we can still win.

Afghanistan, a fight that is taking it right to the insurgency that attacked this country, taking it right to the training ground of al Qaeda, the place where Osama bin Laden trained and prepared his forces to attack this country. Certainly we can win there, but it is time we start recognizing what that new direction has to be.

It was amazing when I listened to the Republican leader say a week or so ago, and I am paraphrasing, but the thought was that the Republicans were willing to hear out the President's plan to escalate the war for a period of time. But, say, by the fall or later this year if it wasn't working, it was time for the President to propose plan B.

I am not sure how anyone who has been watching this play out for the last 4 years could still believe we are on plan A. We are not plan A or B, we are on like plan triple R right now. We have tried everything. And guess what, every new strategy, every new approach that we take based solely on military might alone, which has been essentially our practice so far, has made the situation even more chaotic and has plunged Baghdad and its environs into greatest chaos.

Why? Guess what, because the rest of us, the American public and the Democratic Caucus, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, retired generals from every stripe, have realized that we cannot win this conflict. And everyone's definition of win is different, I understand, but we cannot prove victorious there on the force of our military might alone.

I got to spend a couple of days on the ground in Baghdad with those soldiers. If anyone can fulfill the mission they have been given, it is the men and women in the Armed Forces that we have put on the ground. They are the bravest and most capable people I have ever been around. But the fact is that we have given them a mission which is nearly impossible.

We are forcing them one day to be soldiers, the next day to be diplomats, and the next day to be civil engineers. The reason why plan A through Z has not worked yet is because it doesn't recognize the very fact that if we can solve this, if we can somehow bring some resolution to Iraq, it will be through diplomatic and political might, not sheer military force.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Just to think about the lack of planning and details for the whole deal, as these Iraqi troops are supposed to stand up, we are supposed to stand down. That is why in our supplemental we said let's work something out. There was no exact formula, but as one brigade of Iraqi troops are trained to the level the President certifies, we bring one home.

If the whole premise of the President's policy was as they stand up, we stand down, he has been saying that for such a long time, and that was in our supplemental bill that we passed a couple of weeks ago.

I know our good friend Steve Israel from New York and Ike Skelton have been promoting this idea for a long time, and that was in there. That is the kind of thing that the Democrats are doing.

But to focus on the lack of planning, not to beat a dead horse, but we now have soldiers over there who are in charge of two, three, 400 Iraqi soldiers. One person that I know who is in charge of 400 Iraqi soldiers, do you know how many interpreters he has to communicate with?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. How many?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. One. He has one interpreter to help him communicate with 400 Iraqi soldiers.

Now these are all of the things that were not accounted for before we went into this place. That's what we are saying. There is a time and a place for military action. Afghanistan is the one we all cite, where they were harboring the al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

But now we have put these soldiers in a position where they are losing their friends. They are in dangerous situations. They don't know how long they are going to be there. Their tours keep getting extended, and you can't keep doing this to our soldiers.

And then you have a natural disaster in the United States and you don't have enough Guardsmen and -women to address the local problem.

□ 1945

Let's fix this. Let's work together to fix this problem and let's work with the President. Let's work with the members of the minority party in the House and the Senate to say let's start winding this thing down. That's what we want to do, and that's how I think we are going to begin to regain some credibility in the world. We are actually going to be pro-troop, pro-soldier by getting them out of a position that they can't survive in. We see the death tolls going up and we see what's happening at Walter Reed, and when you look at what we were able to do, immediate funding for the troops for the next 60 to 90 days and an evaluation of how we are doing, is that too much to ask?

I yield to my good friend.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, we have been in this fight over timetables, and so many of us believe that we have got to start setting a deadline on when the Iraqis are going to have to stand up for themselves. Okay, so we passed that, and the President vetoed, and we came back and said, all right, let's talk about something a little bit less than that. Let's talk about what you outlined.

Let's give you all the money you want and more for the next several

months for the conduct of this war, and then after that's done, let's see if it's working. That's a revolutionary concept here. Before we authorize the next round of several dozen billion dollars for the conduct of this war, let's just ask some questions. Is it working? Are the Iraqis doing what they need to do to achieve a political settlement? And guess what, the message is to that idea as well, that's not acceptable either; it is going to get a veto just like the first one.

There was a word that was just lost here for a long time. You and the 30-somethings talked about it night after night, but it was a foreign phrase to people and it is accountability. It is accountability.

Guess why the Iraqis consider going home for the summer? Why the parliament thinks it is okay to stand down? Because they know they have a crutch to rely on. They know that the Americans will be there as long as they continue to refuse to stand their military up, to stand their political institutions up, to stand up their ministries.

They know that, in fact, we're going to reward their incompetence. Enough is enough.

I got to spend a couple of days there, and in addition to spending some time with the troops you get to spend a little bit of time with the Iraqi military, and you can see that there's potential there. You can see that they are ready to do this mission but you can also see that there's no incentive there to do it right now.

And so that word ''accountability'' which has been lost here for so long is I think a large reason for why Congress looks a little bit different now, why you have a whole bunch of new Members who were sent here, not just to wrap up this war, not just to bring our troops home but to also instill in this government a sense that if we are going to spend taxpayer dollars, we better have some accounting for how it is done.

The two bills that we have passed, both the first bill that set a timetable to wrap up this war; the second bill, frankly, is as reasonable as you can get in trying to provide some benchmarks for success, they are both about that missing word missing here for a long time. It is accountability.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Absolutely. We have another thing to add to the list of the promises that were made that we rehashed here many, many times. When you look at we are going to be greeted as liberators, we only need $50 billion, we can use the oil for reconstruction, you know, all of these things that were told to us before the war that ended up not being true, we have something that we can add as we have seen this week, May 12 edition of the news, and comparing it to this statement that the President made on the Iraqi government, New York Times, January 28, 2005, ''But asked if, as a matter of principle, the United States would pull out of Iraq at the request of a new (Iraqi) government, he said,'' the President said, '''Absolutely. This is a sovereign government.'''

May 12, 2007, fast forward, majority of Iraq lawmakers seek timetable for U.S. exit. Majority of Iraq's parliament members signed a petition for a timetable governing withdrawal of American troops. The American people want us out. The Iraqi parliament wants us out. Seventy percent of the Iraqi citizens think it is okay to shoot an American soldier. This President is the only one in the world who thinks it's a good idea for us to stay there, and it's the same person who told us this slew of inaccurate data, information, tactic, strategy 5 years ago.

So we are trying to fix this problem, and we are having a heck of a time getting past this President. And he is the President and he does have the veto power, but he needs to recognize we want accountability. He's not getting a blank check, and this is not going to be an open-ended war.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. We talk about the enormous and unconscionable level of American casualties there, and the number that we focus on are the number of men and women who don't come back, and not enough focus gets put on the number of American soldiers who come back with grave, crippling injuries. But we don't talk at all about the number of Iraqis who have been killed, the immense civilian casualties that mount not by the two or three or four a day but mount by the dozens every day.

And so when you see what we are seeing now, which is an Iraqi parliament standing up and saying enough is enough, we need the Americans to go home, what you're hearing is a bunch of people who are realizing that the best way to keep their own people safe is to have the Americans stand down because, on more days than not, we are drawing additional fire into the chaos there.

We went over and asked the generals there, we said, listen, tell us how much of the fire that you are seeing in and around Baghdad is a result of Shia and Sunni violence and tell us how much of the fire is directed at American forces. And the stat was pretty amazing. Ninety percent of the fire there is fire directed from one religious civil group to the next, from one sect to the other. Ten percent of it is directed at American forces. It's an inexcusable 10 percent, but to think that we are asking our men and women to stand in the middle and be a human shield between Shia and Sunni fighting each other, in fact sometimes Shia and Shia, Sunni and Sunni fighting each other, is a miserable way to conduct foreign policy.

And I asked one of those soldiers, I said, you know, you're being asked one day to try to negotiate some political settlement between religious groups, when the day before they were shooting at each other; how on earth do you tell who's shooting at who? And the soldier looked at me inquisitively, sort of shocked that I would ask the question. He said, we don't know who's shooting at us; if they are shooting at us, we shoot back. That's their job. That's their job, to protect them, to protect the people around them.

But as you said, the fact is when you can't tell who it is that's doing the shooting how on earth the next day are you going to be expected to sit down and try to mend the fences that gave rise to that violence in the first place?

Like I said, if anybody can do it, I think that these guys and women can do it. They are the most amazing, capable people that I have ever met in my life, but the fact is that if you don't know who's perpetuating the violence, it's very hard to heal those wounds the next day.

And to my mind, if the Iraqis are telling us that what they believe is necessary to make their country safe is a precipitous withdrawal of American forces, if our own intelligence community is telling us that we are less safe because of what's going on there, the Iraq Study Group, retired generals, American public, Iraqi parliament, intelligence community, there's a wall around Pennsylvania Avenue right now, and none of that seems to be going in there. And if we don't change course sooner or later, we're going to do damage that is not going to be even reversible by this Democratic Congress.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Let's look at what we are just trying to do. All we're saying is we're going to give the President, he wants $100 billion and we're saying we want to give you $30-some billion, and then D.C. lingo, fence the rest of the money in, the other $50 or $60 billion, until he comes back, the President comes back to us in July and is able to articulate to the United States Congress and the American people and the world what exactly the progress has been. And if you have progress, then you will be willing to come and make that argument to us here. And then we will have another vote, and we will decide if we are going to release the rest of the money or do something else, begin winding it down even quicker.

But I find it very disturbing, Mr. Speaker, that the President of the United States is not willing to come to the United States Congress, created by Article I, section 1 of the Constitution, the people's House, and articulate why our soldiers are still in Iraq, why we're not having success, why benchmarks aren't being met, why the Iraqi soldiers aren't being trained. You come back to the United States Congress and you tell us what the situation is, and then we control the money, and if there's progress we will give you more. If it continues like it's been going, we're going to give you enough to get these kids back home.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. This place has been a one-horse show for a real long time. You talk about the Constitution. It's kind of been a document

that's been dead and buried for a long time. People say the United States Congress here is to be an equal branch of the United States Government, to be able to operate within a structure that recognizes that not every single decision gets made by one man sitting in a house up the street; that people go out to elections in record numbers like they did last November and they should think, rightfully so, that what they say and the votes they cast are going to have some impact on what happens down there.

And I understand that the President's version of working together is us agreeing with whatever he asks us to agree with, but that's not what the American people sent us here to do. I certainly didn't get sent here to do this as a new Member, and the sooner that we recognize that you have a Congress for the first time in a long time that is going to stand up and speak for the people that sent us here, the sooner that happens the better.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate it, and you're absolutely right.

And we have got an obligation to do that, and the ramifications of this war are being felt all over. And one of the regrets that we have had is that we continue to run up this huge budget deficit in order to pay for the war. And it's time for us to start challenging those people who have been doing well, those people that this primarily has been the burden of this war, has primarily been the responsibility of those families and those soldiers who have been fighting in it, and the burden that they have faced has been much greater than anyone had anticipated. And so I think it's important for us to also recognize in our supplemental bill what we have been able to do and what we have tried to do with some of this additional money.

Almost $2 billion for defense health care for those soldiers who are serving their country currently, that we put an extra couple billion dollars in there above the President's request to deal with the health care issue for those who are serving their country right now in this most dangerous time.

We also added an almost additional $2 billion for veterans health care and made sure that we are taking care of our veterans when they come back. We are going to see a tremendous surge in veterans health care when these soldiers get back home, and we want to make sure that they have the resources necessary to do that.

We don't want this to be a country that promises you before you go to war all kinds of Cadillac coverage and then when you get back you're left on your own. The Democratic Party had attempted to fix that through the supplemental process, and again, that bill was vetoed.

$500 million in there for post-traumatic stress disorder, which is going to be a huge problem given the kind of environment that these kids are fighting in.

$500 million in there for brain injuries, again a major problem with those soldiers who are coming back injured.

We're trying to take care of our veterans, and we're doing a good job, but we keep getting this process and these bills vetoed by the President of the United States, and it is very important that we begin to recognize that this can no longer be a stumbling block.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the Democratic-led Congress, in our budget authorization bill several weeks ago, put in there the largest increase for veterans spending in the history of the veterans administration. We are trying to take care of our veterans, and we are doing it in spite of what the President is trying to do by consistently vetoing our bills.

□ 2000

We are putting the money forward, we are asking for some accountability, we are taking care of our veterans, we are taking care of our soldiers, we are making sure that they don't leave to go over to Iraq without the proper body armor, the proper Humvee, up-armored Humvees, and the proper amount of rest.

Our soldiers are getting worn out by continuously extending their tours, by sending them back second, third, fourth tours, their families are having problems, high divorce rates. We are seeing it all over. It's time for us to refocus.

Then, when you look at who else is being affected by this situation that we have in Iraq, you are also seeing the issue with the National Guard readiness. We have seen, unfortunately, over the last couple of weeks, because of the natural disasters and the tornados, especially in places like Kansas, where the National Guard does not have the equipment, in many instances they don't have the manpower to try to deal with the issues that they are facing in their own State. There are so many issues that are being affected.

Let me just share with you some of these problems that we have and what we are trying to do to address that. We put in, in the last supplemental bill, $2 billion not requested by the President for a new strategic reserve readiness fund, of which $1 billion is for Army National Guard equipment shortfalls. We are trying to address it.

The President vetoed that too. So bad enough you are vetoing health care for our soldiers, you are vetoing health care for our veterans to the tune of $2 billion; you are vetoing veterans health care for post-traumatic stress disorder; you are vetoing health care for those soldiers who come back with brain injuries. You are also vetoing an extra $1 billion for Army National Guard equipment.

I mean, come on. We are trying to move this process forward. You know, it's a typical D.C. move, that if it's not your idea, we are against it. You know, if I didn't come up with it, I'm against it. That has been the President's attitude. We can't have it, because it's not us that is suffering; we are in air conditioned quarters. We got offices, cars, nice meals, you know. Our families are here with us.

It's the soldiers who are suffering, and their families who are suffering, bearing the brunt of this war.

This is Lieutenant General Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau: ''The Governors are rightly concerned that while the personnel part of the Guard has never been better, never been more ready, the equipment piece to the National Guard back here at home has never been less ready, and they are trying to resolve that obvious disconnect. The message is clear what we have, and the budget does not produce the level of readiness that they feel comfortable with.''

Just being admitted. That's being admitted by the chief of the National Guard Bureau. This is the Government Accountability Office report from 2007, just a couple of months ago in January. This is a nonpartisan bureau that we have here: ''The high use of the National Guard for Federal overseas missions has reduced equipment available for its State-led domestic missions. At the same time it faces an expanded array of threats at home.''

Reduced equipment available for our National Guard; our soldiers, not having the proper body armor; our Humvees not properly up-armored; our soldiers not getting the proper rest; our veterans not getting the kind of health care that they deserve; our defense, our soldiers in the Defense Department, not getting the level of health care and attention that they need and that they deserve; and an American public that wants this war to be over. Sixty percent say that it was a mistake to go in the first place.

We have an obligation to respectfully and orderly wind this war down and begin a surge of diplomacy in the Middle East, asking our neighbors in the Middle East, asking the United Nations to take part in a peace-keeping effort in Iraq, making sure that our soldiers are there and the periphery, a certain number, to make sure that we are still in the region to a certain extent to protect against some kind of Iranian influence.

I yield to my good friend, who I know has been very busy tonight. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to honor your commitments.

I yield to my good friend from Florida.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, it's always good to be on the floor with you. It's like old times, like the 108th Congress, TIM RYAN from Niles, Ohio, and KENDRICK MEEK from Miami/Liberty City, Florida.

The good thing I like about doing the work, we are working not only with new Members that appeared in the last Congress, but we have a level of consistency, even in the majority. Mr. RYAN serves on the very powerful Appropriations Committee. I serve on a

committee called the Ways and Means Committee and Armed Services. These are just committees that have an awful lot of work, and there is a lot to do.

But we are here tonight because it's very, very important to the country. I don't have a family member in Iraq. I don't have a family member on their way to Iraq, but I do have constituents that fall within that circle of individuals.

As we move this conference report, hopefully, it will go through the conference session that's going on to the President, and that the President doesn't veto this bill. Now, I am going to say this, because one may say politically, you probably wanted the President to do it, because he will go down further in the polls. It's not about polls, as far as I am concerned. It's about accountability to the men and women in harm's way.

One may think, well, this has nothing really to do with me. We have a volunteer Armed Forces, and they have signed up and they knew full well, some of them knew full well they would be deployed. We have Reservists signed up. Some of them knew this threat would come one day that they would have to be deployed on a third and fourth tour. You have National Guard men and women that signed up, they were going to be federalized. They had to know they would be federalized at some point to go out and fight on behalf of the country.

I just would like to make this point that if one may feel that this has nothing to do with your immediate family, you have to think about what the war in Iraq is doing to our country right now, our financial standing, our financial security. We have an administration in the last Congress, which was the rubber stamp Republican Congress, that passed everything that the Bush White House called for and asked for. Billionaires received tax cuts that they didn't even see coming, but it was a gift to them from the Bush administration.

Now, we have borrowed more from foreign nations than we ever borrowed in the history of the Republic. I am from Florida. For those of you who are Members from Gulf States and along the eastern seaboard, this is your issue. Even those from the Midwest or even from the west coast, this is your issue, making sure that we have the benchmarks in place, making sure that we have the accountability in place, when you look at the dollars we are spending, how about the billions of dollars, trillions of dollars we are spending on this war. It's your issue. To the small-town mayor, to the big-city mayor, to the county commissioner, or parish or State legislature, this is your issue.

Some folks said, well, in Washington, you all talk about Iraq, Iraq and Iraq again, and then that other issue, Iraq. The reason why on this floor Iraq is uttered every day, almost once an hour, two or three times an hour, is how can we deal with a national health care plan for children? How can we deal with an issue as it relates to helping small businesses? How can we prepare ourselves to take on the wave of veteran affairs that we have to take responsibility for, because we promise our veterans that we will stand with them because they stood with us?

How can we do all of those things when we are carrying on the back an Iraqi Government that I must add is looking at going on a 2-month vacation, and the majority members of the Iraqi Parliament have already said they want a timeline on when U.S. troops are going to be out of Iraq.

When you hear things about building a wall in Iraq, when you hear the reports over the weekend, Mother's Day weekend, as we were celebrating Mother's Day weekend, including myself, on honoring our mothers, my mother and my wife and all, we have to hear the report about our men and women on patrol in Iraq hit by an improvised explosive device as they patrolled at 4-something in the morning, and an Iraqi response team from our military showed up, 40 minutes after that event, and come to find a burning Humvee, burning, and those that died in that explosion, and three of our men that we are still combing the streets of Iraq for right now, along with coalition forces.

These are the very things that we talk about in this bill. We talk about not only the human loss, and, since when I always come to the floor, I just want to say that as of May 15 at 10 a.m., which is the latest, 10 a.m. report, death toll is up 3,393; wounded in action and returned to duty is 13,975; wounded in action and not returned to duty is 11,270. That number continues to go up.

It's very, very important. We pay very close attention to this. So when we have the legislation to make sure the troops have what they need, make sure that our veterans have what they need, making sure we respond to the work that was not done in the last two Congresses, we deal with what happened in the Gulf States in Katrina, doing right by them, doing right by their children, that their health insurance is about to expire, the very children of our country.

Just today I was on the steps talking to an elementary school, Phyllis Ruth Miller Elementary School, in my district. I was talking to over 100 kids that are elementary kids and some of their teachers. They were asking about Iraq, and they were asking about the war. They were concerned, and one of the young men asked, well, Congressman, do you believe when I get of the age that, you know, I would love to be a member, I would love to be a soldier, a member of the Army, do you think I will be deployed to Iraq?

I had to have a discussion with him about how we are trying to work in a diplomatic way. We want a surge in diplomacy. We want a surge as it relates to an escalation and other countries taking part in what we are doing.

If it's about, you know, dropping bombs and all of that, we can do that better than anyone else on the face of the Earth. But when you start putting our men and women into responsibilities when a country should take responsibilities for themselves, then we are talking about another thing.

I think it's also important for us to note that the bouncing ball as it relates to what the President says and what he means are two different things. One minute we listen to the commanders in the field. The next minute we know what's good for the commanders. One minute we say that if the Iraqi Government, and I just happened, I asked staff to pull this up, when the President was asked, and he said, But asked if, as a matter of principle, the United States would pull out of Iraq at the request of a new (Iraqi) Government,'' he said, this is a question that was posed to him, '' Absolutely. This is a sovereign government.''

The elected Parliament, a majority of the elected Parliament have said they want a timeline. Now, in Congress we are saying we want a timeline, and we want benchmarks. The President is saying, I am not going to allow you to do it. We have a Republican minority saying we are standing next to the President. Then we had 11 Members of the Republican side go talk to the President and say, hey, you know something, we can only stand in for so long.

Now, if I was thinking in political terms and thinking about serving on the committees I am serving on and staying in the majority and being a part of leadership meetings and so on and so on, I would say, fine. Let the Republican minority stick with the President. Let the President, let's just sit back, let's be quiet. Let's just let the President talk because as far as I am concerned politically, the gain is going to be to Democrats in Washington, D.C.

But if it wasn't war, if it wasn't the future of our children and our children's children, if it wasn't the amount of debt that has been accumulated with two wars going on and tax cuts that no one asked for, and the super, super wealthy are getting tax cuts, subsidies, the oil companies that Mr. RYAN tried to address in the first wave of alternative energy and alternative fuel.

I am a little glad to see the President talk about an energy plan yesterday, and take our dependency off of foreign oil or energy and focus on America. I am so glad that the President has caught up with the American people and the Democratic Congress and moving in that direction. We have already done that.

So the real issue here is if we just pay attention to what people are saying, I think that we can figure out why they are doing what they are doing. The President, yes, he is going to be President, his term will be up in 2008. We want to support the Commander in Chief as far as we can.

But as a democracy, as a Congress, we owe it to the people of the United States of America to continue to get good and accurate information out to them and to make sure that every Member of Congress knows exactly what he or she is voting on or not voting on.

You heard me say before, it's important that Members of the Congress on both sides of the aisle, that we go see the wizard, that we get a little leadership, get a little courage, okay? Go to the President and say, hey, listen, this is the way it's going to be. This is not going away. The American people are on the side of what's good for America. They are not necessarily saying, you know, we love Democrats or we love Republicans. They just want good government, and good government is making sure we have responsibilities.

Mayors come and speak with me. I had a city commissioner come talk with me today. She was sharing with me about, you know, all of the things that she has to go through to get a Federal grant.

□ 2015

Well, I don't hear the Iraqi Government talking about all the things and the loopholes and accountability measures they have to go through to get the taxpayer dollar. And I think it's important that we pay very, very close attention to that as we move through.

Let me just speak one more second, Mr. RYAN, not one more second, but several seconds.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Take your time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, sir.

I mentioned earlier, I'm from Florida. June 1 is a very important date to those of us that are in Hurricane Alley. June 1 is the beginning of hurricane season. Hurricane season will be, this hurricane season has been predicted, Mr. Speaker, to be one of the most active seasons in recent time. And Florida is probably the most prepared State as it relates to response because we've gone through it so much. And the reason why we're able to respond to a number of natural disasters and hurricanes, which we have a number of wild fires that are going on right now in Florida, is that we have one of the best National Guard units on the face of the Earth, period. But 53 percent of the diesel or used equipment that they had to respond to storms, because they're the first responders, they're already staging outside of the hurricane zone to respond as first responders. They don't even have the equipment that they need to respond.

In Kansas, Mr. RYAN, the Governor of Kansas said, you know, our emergency management plan called for a response from the National Guard. Those that are still left in the State of Kansas, but, they're having to use their personal vehicles. They're having to do other things to make up for the equipment that's jammed with sand over in Iraq.

We must have accountability now. We must have benchmarks now. It's almost saying to school age children that it's okay, you can go to school, we won't grade you on anything. There'll never be a test. You just, you know, do your time and everything will work out.

Everything that we strive for to be successful in, even in business or in government, you have to have benchmarks. You have to have accountability. And what the President and some of the Members of the minority side of the aisle, some of them, not all of them, I must add because I know that there are a number of my Republican colleagues that are saying we're headed down the right track and they have voted in the affirmative, in a bipartisan vote to send that message to the White House.

And what the President hasn't come to grips with, including some members of his Cabinet, that this is a democracy, and guess what, the whole cake and ice cream thing, you write it, we just follow you kind of thing is over. It's over. The people of America voted for accountability. They voted for standards. They voted for transparency, and they're going to get it as long as we have the majority here in this Congress to give the American people what they ask for. That's what their vote is all about.

I think it's also important for us to realize that when you look at these States, and this is just Florida, the National Guard was down 500 Humvees, 600 trucks, short 4,000 pair of night vision goggles, and needed 30 more wreckers. This is from Colonel Ron Title, who is brass in our Florida National Guard. He's not talking on behalf of the Democratic Party or Republican Party. Here's a man that said, I'm going to serve in the Florida National Guard, and I'm just talking about preparedness. I'm talking about our ability to be able to respond to a natural disaster.

What are we going to do, turn around and call Georgia? I'm pretty sure Georgia has some of the same issues.

Turn around and call Alabama? Alabama, last I checked, there are a lot of National Guard men and women there, and I guarantee you their equipment, if not more in Iraq, they don't have the ability to come to Florida.

And so when you look at these other States and the response of the National Guard, then you have to get active duty troops involved and you have to fly things in and carry on. If we had accountability in place, and we had proper planning in place, that's what this bill calls for.

Mr. RYAN, this is the last money for Iraq and Afghanistan that will not go through the regular budget process because, Mr. Speaker, when that happens, accountability is paramount. Transparency hearings, everything is accounted for. Not just giving a checkbook to someone in Iraq and say, well, in the early days, giving them cash and just say go to work. That's not good accounting practices and should not be encouraged.

And so the old saying, if we know better, we'll do better, well, you know, by now, 5 years in the war, we should all know better. And we're trying to do better.

We have a majority in place right now, Mr. RYAN and Members, that are willing to do better, have the will and the desire to do it. The good thing that I like about, I was listening to what you were saying before I was recognized. Mr. RYAN, I remember the days that we were on the floor and we used to talk about if we had the opportunity, this is what we'll do. We'll make sure that veterans have what they need to have when they return back, and those that have served in past wars, that we honor their commitment by honoring them, making sure that they have a VA health care system they can be proud of.

We said that we would work to make sure that children have health care in this country, and we've already taken action on that.

We said that we would implement the 9/11 Commission recommendations. We have already done that. Waiting on the President's signature.

We said that we would put rules in place within the House rules to bring about ethics and have an active ethics committee, which has already happened, Mr. Speaker. It's not something that we said, well, if we get around to it. It's already happened.

So when we talk about the functions of good government, those principles are already in place. And so now we just need the help of the President of the United States to work with the Congress and not dictate to the Congress about what we should be doing, how we should be doing it. He's had 5 years. He's had 5 years to say, this is the way it's going to be. So shall it be written, so shall it be done.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and being a Member of the past two Congresses, serving, Mr. RYAN and I served on the Armed Services Committee. We don't want to leave our men and women without equipment and the things that they need. And supplementals in the past, I didn't like a lot of the language in it, but I voted for it for the greater good, for the greater good.

And we counted on the Defense Department to be accountable with the money. We counted on all of the things that we're being told about the equipment being on the ground when the men and women get there. Now we find out that some of that was not true, a lot of that was not true. And there's been so many things that have been told and so many apologies that have been sent out in press releases.

Those days are over. We must have accountability in place. So when the President, if the President follows through on his threat, Mr. RYAN, to veto it, I'm glad that you talked about the things that he will veto; that he's going to deny the men and women in harm's way. He's going to deny children to have health care. He's going to

deny veterans from getting the veterans services that they deserve, and he's going to deny us being able to hold our head up.

But I'm going to hold my head up because I'm doing my part and I'm doing my part right now on Memorial Day when we commemorate those that paid the ultimate sacrifice. And vetoing the largest increase in the VA history.

I'm just talking about a few things, leave alone the accountability measures at the Department of Defense. They already had the rules in place. They just weren't honoring those rules. We put it in the supplemental, this emergency supplemental. So now, within this law and within the dollars that will be flowing into the field and throughout America, they're going to have accountability measures in it.

So I'm not talking about what the Republican Congress did not do or what they call themselves doing, or what the President did not do or called himself doing. I'm just talking about what we're doing now and the opportunity that's presented before us. And I'm so happy, Mr. RYAN, that we are moving in that direction. I yield back to you, sir.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, I appreciate you coming down and articulating that. And it's been consistent since we've gotten in with the first 100 hours as to what we're doing now, what we plan on doing, what we've passed out of this House, what we've passed out of this House sometimes on several different occasions.

And if you look at the two major supplemental votes, you look at, you know, what did we do in the first one is we put timelines in there, deadlines in there, date certain we're going to get out of there.

And you stated, I think, so articulately, that the Iraqi soldiers, if they know we're going to be there, then they're going to continue to rely on us. And if you leave the training wheels on the bike, you're never going to learn how to ride on two wheels. And it's time to take the training wheels off, Mr. MEEK.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, I don't remember the last story of a state that continued to receive money, have not been accountable to Federal dollars, I mean, haven't been accountable in spending those Federal dollars. News report comes out that it actually took place, and then we turn around and say, oh, well, we know you didn't spend the last billions of dollars we gave you. We're going to give you some more. As a matter of fact, we're going to come down and help you spend this money, and we're going to come down and be a part of this lack of accountability by your government. And then we're going to reward you with another emergency supplemental that has no strings attached.

You can't reward bad behavior or lack thereof. You cannot say, well, it's okay, Governor. It's okay, mayor. It's okay, county commission or city commission. If you're not accountable with the dollars, we're going to continue to send it to you.

I don't know a police department that received Federal assistance from FEMA, okay, who did not do, did not follow the plan of hiring and training and making sure that they can patrol their own streets, and we sent Federal law enforcement individuals down there to do the everyday calls for service. That doesn't happen in America. It should not happen in Iraq as long as our taxpayer dollars are being spent, and dollars that we've borrowed, Mr. RYAN, I must add, from foreign nations.

This country is in a financial situation as it relates to borrowing from foreign nations unlike any other time in the history of the Republic. So as we move in this majority body here to correct those issues, this is a wonderful opportunity for this government to correct itself on the legislative branch and the executive branch, to do the right thing, to be accountable for the taxpayer dollars, and, Mr. RYAN, the dollars that we've borrowed from other countries, that we have to figure out how we're going to pay them back, and at the same time continue to maintain some sort of financial standing within the world.

Mr. RYAN, it's always a pleasure, sir, coming to the floor and working with you and other members of the 30-something Working Group. I know we'll be back a couple of other times this week before we finish on Friday.

But we have to stay the course. I'm going to use one of the administration's words; stay the course on behalf of those who stood for us to be able to talk here in this air conditioned Chamber, saluting one flag. We have to stand up for those who have sent us here to represent them. And there are people who can vote. There are people who cannot vote. They're Republican. They're Democrats. They're independents. The individuals that are watching what happens now, because as we look back 20 years from now, folks are going to ask, who stood up? Who stood up for them? Who stood up for their children? Who stood up for their grandchildren?

It's not about my family. It's about all of our families. If you want to talk about family values, then let's start doing things on behalf of the American people, and let's make sure that future generations have a better opportunity than we have.

When that kid asked me on the steps of the Capitol, Mr. Congressman, I want to join the Army; I want to be a soldier. Am I going to war? That answer shouldn't have been diplomacy and all that. It should have been, we're doing our job and working with the international community and keeping America safe and, yes, if you want to go into the Army, you should go into the Army and serve our country like so many others have done.

But it's a sad commentary when we're here debating the obvious of what we have to do. Accountability with the taxpayer dollars and accountability to those who woke up hearing mortar, hearing improvised explosive devices going off, looking at these vehicles towed in from the streets of Baghdad because we're doing the job that the Iraqi Government should be doing. And we have to stay the course, and making sure that we stand up for those that don't have the opportunity to walk through this door and put their voting card in these machines and vote on behalf of their future and their families.

□ 2030

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate it.

Use www.Speaker.Gov to access our Web site. E-mail 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov.

Mr. MEEK, as always, it is an honor, a pleasure, and a privilege to just share this floor with you, my friend.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2117

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. CASTOR) at 9 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1585, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–151) on the resolution (H. Res. 403) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1427, FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–152) on the resolution (H. Res. 404) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1427) to reform the regulation of certain housing-related Government-sponsored enterprises, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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. WELCH of Vermont) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MICHAUD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HARE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KAGEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WESTMORELAND) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 16, 2007, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1752. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual status report of the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program (CDP) as of September 30, 2006, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1521(g); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1753. 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.

1754. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's quarterly report as of March 31, 2007, entitled, ''Acceptance of contributions for defense programs, projects and activities; Defense Cooperation Account,'' pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2608; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1755. A letter from the Secretary of the Air Force, Department of Defense, transmitting Notice of the decision to initiate a multi-function standard competition of the Communications-Information Support Flight at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2461; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1756. A letter from the Principal Deputy 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 major general accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1757. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Defense, transmitting a copy of legislative proposals as part of the National Defense Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 2008; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1758. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to India pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1759. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting a legislative proposal that would amend two sections of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1760. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting a letter to propose legislation to implement the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage adopted in Vienna on September 12, 1997, by a diplomatic conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to which the Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification on August 3, 2006; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1761. A letter from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's report entitled, ''Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences: Fiscal Year 2006,'' pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5848; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1762. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed manufacturing license agreement for the manufacture of significant military equipment in the Government of United Kingdom (Transmittal No. DDTC 002-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1763. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Denmark (Transmittal No. DDTC 007-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1764. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Turkey (Transmittal No. DDTC 024-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1765. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a proposal to extend the authorization of appropriations for the 1998 Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA) through fiscal year 2010; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1766. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Syria that was declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1767. A letter from the Chairman, International Fund for Ireland, transmitting a copy of the 2006 Annual Report of the Fund; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1768. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting a copy of the inventories of commercial and inherently governmental positions in the Department of Transportation, as required by the Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1769. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a copy of a draft bill to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (CRCA); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1770. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting a copy of a draft bill entitled, ''National Park Centennial Challenge Fund Act''; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1771. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2004-19755; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-23-AD; Amendment 39-15003; AD 2007-07-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1772. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Hartzell Propeller Inc. Model HC-E4A-3( )/E10950( ) Propellers [Docket No. FAA-2007-27552; Directorate Identifier 2007-NE-11-AD; Amendment 39-15019; AD 2007-08-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1773. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF34-1A, -3A, -3A1, -3A2, -3B, and -3B1 Turbofan Engines [Docket No. FAA-2007-27687; Directorate Identifier 2000-NE-42-AD; Amendment 39-15012; AD 2007-07-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1774. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Raytheon Aircraft Company Beech Models 45 (YT-34), A45 (T-34A, B-45), and D45 (T-34B) Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-25105; Directorate Identifier 2006-CE-33-AD; Amendment 39-15016; AD 2007-06-01 R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1775. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace LP Model Galaxy Airplanes and Model Gulfstream 200 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27757; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-030-AD; Amendment 39-15014; AD 2007-07-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1776. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Honeywell Flight Management Systems (FMSs) Served by Honeywell NZ-2000 Navigation Computers Approved Under

Technical Standard Order (TSO) TSO-C115a, and IC-800 Integrated Avionics Computers Approved Under TSOs C9c, C52a, and C115a; as Installed on Various Transport Category Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27735; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-027-AD; Amendment 39-15009; AD 2007-07-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1777. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace LP Model Gulfstream 200 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27737; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-029-AD; Amendment 39-15008; AD 2007-07-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1778. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27736; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-001-AD; Amendment 39-15010; AD 2007-07-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1779. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Columbia Aircraft Manufacturing (Previously The Lancair Company) Models LC40-550FG, LC41-550FG, and LC42-550FG Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27628; Directorate Identifier 2007-CE-025-AD; Amendment 39-15011; AD 2007-07-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1780. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R Series Airplanes, and Model C4-605R Variant F Airplanes (Collectively Called A300-600 Series Airplanes) [Docket No. FAA-2006-26250; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-104-AD; Amendment 39-15001; AD 2007-07-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1781. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-300, -400, -500, -600, -700, -800 and -900 Series Airplanes; and Model 757-200 and -300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-25336; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-070-AD; Amendment 39-15002; AD 2007-07-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1782. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model MD-11 and -11F Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-25850; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-128-AD; Amendment 39-15004; AD 2007-07-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1783. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model DHC-8-102, -103, and -106 Airplanes and Model DHC-8-200 and DHC-8-300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26725; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-161-AD; Amendment 39-15000; AD 2007-06-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1784. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co KG (formerly Rolls-Royce plc) Dart 528, 529, 532, 535, 542, and 552 Series Turboprop Engines [Docket No. FAA-2006-25272; Directorate Identifier 2006-NE-16-AD; Amendment 39-14924; AD 2007-03-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1785. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model CL-600-2B16 (CL-604) Airplanes and Model CL-600-2B19 (Regional Jet Series 100 & 440) Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26378; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-230-AD; Amendment 39-14972; AD 2007-05-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1786. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; REIMS AVIATION S.A. Model F406 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26693 Directorate Identifier 2006-CE-90-AD; Amendment 39-14970; AD 2007-05-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1787. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; McDonnell Douglas Model 717-200 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26048; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-191-AD; Amendment 39-14967; AD 2007-05-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1788. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Model F.28 Mark 1000, 2000, 3000, and 4000 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26044; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-098-AD; Amendment 39-14960; AD 2007-04-27] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1789. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Model F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26709; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-202-AD; Amendment 39-14968; AD 2007-05-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1790. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 and A340 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26684; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-193-AD; Amendment 39-14969; AD 2007-05-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1791. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26324; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-214-AD; Amendment 39-14993; AD 2007-60-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1792. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 737-600, -700, -700C, and -800 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-24369; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-001-AD; Amendment 39-14990; AD 2007-06-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1793. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, and Climate Change Science Program Acting Director, U.S. Climate Change Science Program, transmitting the annual report of the program entitled, ''Our Changing Planet: The U.S. Climate Change Science Program for Fiscal Year 2007,'' pursuant to Public Law 101-606, section 102; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

1794. A letter from the Administrator, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Annual Report on Minority Small Business and Capital Ownership Development for Fiscal Year 2006; to the Committee on Small Business.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. CASTOR: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 403. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–151). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. WELCH: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 404. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1427) to reform the regulation of certain housing-related government-sponsored enterprises, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–152). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CANTOR (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BLUNT):

H.R. 2312. A bill to make permanent the individual income tax rates for capital gains and dividends; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. HOOLEY:

H.R. 2313. A bill to establish research, development, demonstration, and commercial application programs for marine renewable energy technologies; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

By Mr. WELLER:

H.R. 2314. A bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to increase payments to States for expenditures for short term training of staff of certain child welfare agencies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POMEROY (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. PETRI, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. SALAZAR):

H.R. 2315. A bill to enhance the State inspection of meat and poultry in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HALL

of New York, Mr. KAGEN, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H.R. 2316. A bill to provide more rigorous requirements with respect to disclosure and enforcement of lobbying laws and regulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and House Administration, 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. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. WAXMAN):

H.R. 2317. A bill to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require registered lobbyists to file quarterly reports on contributions bundled for certain recipients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ANDREWS (for himself and Mr. LOBIONDO):

H.R. 2318. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction for State and local income and property taxes under the alternative minimum tax; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 2319. A bill to establish a Mail-Order Pharmacy Pilot Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 2320. A bill to restore the jurisdiction of the Consumer Product Safety Commission over amusement park rides which are at a fixed site, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARDOZA (for himself, Mr. RADANOVICH, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. NUNES):

H.R. 2321. A bill to authorize the designation of the facility under development by the Stanislaus Ag Center Foundation, in Stanislaus County, California, as the National Ag Science Center; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. DAVIS of Alabama:

H.R. 2322. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the 35-mile drive requirement for designations of critical access hospitals to 30 miles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HOYER:

H.R. 2323. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants for the support of full-service community schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. DUNCAN (for himself, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. CONAWAY):

H.R. 2324. A bill to require each Federal agency to include its address and phone number on any agency stationery; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GOHMERT (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. FORBES):

H.R. 2325. A bill to provide adequate penalties for crimes committed against United States judges and Federal law enforcement officers, to provide appropriate security for judges and law enforcement officers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HELLER:

H.R. 2326. A bill to approve the settlement of the water rights claims of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Nevada, to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the settlement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. INSLEE (for himself, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. DICKS):

H.R. 2327. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to strengthen polar bear conservation efforts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. SHAYS):

H.R. 2328. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to exempt certain local restrictions from review under the airport noise and access restriction review program; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York (for herself, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. TERRY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. WU, and Mr. PAUL):

H.R. 2329. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for the purchase of hearing aids; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCOTTER (for himself, Mr. CARTER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. RENZI, Mr. PORTER, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. PAUL, and Mrs. MYRICK):

H.R. 2330. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers a credit against income tax for hiring veterans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MELANCON (for himself and Mr. PICKERING):

H.R. 2331. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to support efforts by local or regional television or radio broadcasters to provide essential public information programming in the event of a major disaster, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. PENCE, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MACK, Mr. POE, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. TIBERI, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. TERRY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. LINDER, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, and Mr. MCHUGH):

H.R. 2332. A bill to strengthen sanctions against the Government of Syria, to enhance multilateral commitment to address the Government of Syria's threatening policies, to establish a program to support a transition to a democratically-elected government in Syria, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Financial Services, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STUPAK (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WAXMAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WYNN, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 2333. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expedite the prompt return of the remains of deceased members of the Armed Forces to their loved ones for burial; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mrs. MUSGRAVE):

H.R. 2334. A bill to designate as wilderness certain land within the Rocky Mountain National Park and to adjust the boundaries of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and the Arapaho National Recreation Area of the Arapaho National Forest in the State of Colorado; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico:

H.R. 2335. A bill to prohibit price gouging in the sale of gasoline, diesel fuel, crude oil, and home heating oil, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida (for himself, Mr. MACK, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. REYES, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. KELLER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. WICKER, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BOYD of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MEEK of Florida, and Mr. BONNER):

H. Res. 402. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Hurricane Preparedness Week; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SPACE, and Mr. SARBANES):

H. Res. 405. A resolution expressing the strong support of the House of Representatives for implementation of the July 8, 2006, United Nations-brokered agreement between President of the Republic of Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat relating to the reunification of Cyprus; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. BEAN, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BERMAN, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mrs. BONO, Mr. BOSWELL, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CARSON, Ms. CASTOR, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HARE, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HODES, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KAGEN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MAHONEY of

Florida, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MICA, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. OLVER, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REYES, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SKELTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. STARK, Ms. SUTTON, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WATSON, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WU, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H. Res. 406. A resolution celebrating the accomplishments of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, also known as the Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act, and recognizing the need to continue pursuing the goal of educational opportunities for women and girls; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. SPACE):

H. Res. 407. A resolution expressing the strong support of the House of Representatives for the positive actions by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus aimed at opening additional crossing points along the cease-fire line, thereby contributing to efforts for the reunification of the island; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. WELCH of Vermont:

H. Res. 408. A resolution recognizing and honoring the Cathedral Square Corporation on its 30th anniversary; to the Committee on Financial Services.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 36: Mr. SHULER.

H.R. 37: Mr. SHULER.

H.R. 67: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 78: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 111: Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. CANNON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARTER, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 154: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 197: Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. OLVER, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 370: Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee.

H.R. 406: Mr. FARR, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. SNYDER.

H.R. 451: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MEEKS of New York, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.

H.R. 503: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 506: Mr. WALSH OF NEW YORK.

H.R. 507: Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PORTER, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WALSH of New York, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 522: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 524: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 549: Mr. BAKER.

H.R. 550: Mr. WALBERG, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. WELDON of Florida, and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 583: Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CLAY, Mr. SHULER, and Mr. DICKS.

H.R. 620: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 698: Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 741: Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 782: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 829: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico and Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 897: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 926: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. KUHL of New York.

H.R. 969: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. EMANUEL.

H.R. 971: Mr. ELLSWORTH, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. CARTER, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. CHANDLER, and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1023: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. PLATTS, and Ms. WATSON.

H.R. 1042: Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. PEARCE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. PENCE, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. AKIN, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. CARTER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

H.R. 1064: Mr. KAGEN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. TANNER, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. ELLSWORTH, and Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 1072: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1078: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1108: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. POMEROY.

H.R. 1142: Mr. SPACE, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MARSHALL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mrs. TAUSCHER.

H.R. 1154: Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 1192: Mr. GALLEGLY and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1225: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. JEFFERSON.

H.R. 1232: Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 1236: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. ROTHMAN, and Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 1239: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1247: Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 1261: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 1264: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1283: Mr. SHAYS.

H.R. 1293: Mr. PLATTS, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 1304: Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. HILL, Mr. HAYES, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 1330: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1343: Mr. SPRATT, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. GORDON, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. HODES, and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 1354: Ms. KILPATRICK and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 1369: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1385: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1386: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1391: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 1399: Mr. HERGER, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1420: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. DELAHUNT.

H.R. 1439: Ms. CLARKE and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 1461: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1512: Mr. ISSA, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SPACE, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CLEAVER, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1532: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. PLATTS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1537: Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 1561: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 1600: Ms. NORTON, Mr. INSLEE, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1618: Mr. KIRK.

H.R. 1623: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1627: Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.R. 1636: Mr. PUTNAM.

H.R. 1645: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 1647: Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1655: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 1673: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1688: Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Ms. CARSON.

H.R. 1705: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. HODES.

H.R. 1732: Mr. SOUDER.

H.R. 1735: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 1756: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.R. 1774: Mr. CAMP of Michigan, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 1776: Mr. SIRES, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 1819: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1820: Mr. SIRES, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1823: Mr. RAHALL and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 1851: Mr. DELAHUNT and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1853: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

H.R. 1881: Mr. REYES, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1932: Mr. WYNN and Mr. JINDAL.

H.R. 1947: Mr. ROTHMAN.

H.R. 1954: Mr. MOORE of Kansas and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 1957: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. MCNULTY, and Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1965: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. PAUL, Mr. GORDON, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1975: Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 1992: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Mr. KAGEN.

H.R. 2017: Mr. RAHALL and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 2036: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 2038: Mr. COSTA and Mr. CARDOZA.

H.R. 2042: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 2060: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. KIND, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 2084: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 2086: Mr. ELLSWORTH.

H.R. 2095: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. FILNER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. RAHALL, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2104: Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, and Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee.

H.R. 2108: Mr. KAGEN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 2109: Mr. POE.

H.R. 2116: Mr. SPACE, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. RAMSTAD.

H.R. 2125: Mr. REHBERG.

H.R. 2126: Ms. HIRONO.

H.R. 2140: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 2144: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 2163: Mr. PENCE and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 2183: Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 2187: Mr. BAKER and Mr. JINDAL.

H.R. 2189: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 2210: Mr. STARK, Mr. REYES, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CLAY, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. ETHERIDGE.

H.R. 2214: Mr. NADLER and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2225: Ms. HARMAN.

H.R. 2266: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 2287: Mr. COHEN, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. DENT.

H.R. 2292: Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. HILL, and Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 2295: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. HAYES.

H.R. 2302: Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee.

H.R. 2303: Mr. HILL and Mr. BOOZMAN.

H. J. Res. 6: Mr. KNOLLENBERG.

H. Con. Res. 21: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H. Con. Res. 77: Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida.

H. Con. Res. 108: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois.

H. Con. Res. 115: Mr. MCNULTY.

H. Con. Res. 135: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 142: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H. Res. 111: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H. Res. 123: Mr. PAYNE.

H. Res. 128: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H. Res. 146: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H. Res. 226: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.

H. Res. 231: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. MACK, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, and Mr. BLUNT.

H. Res. 233: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. CROWLEY.

H. Res. 235: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. ROTHMAN.

H. Res. 258: Ms. DELAURO.

H. Res. 295: Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.

H. Res. 341: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 343: Mr. SESSIONS.

H. Res. 351: Mr. JONES of North Carolina and Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H. Res. 362: Mr. BAKER, Mr. JINDAL, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. SHULER, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. CARSON, and Mr. KUHL of New York.

H. Res. 386: Ms. BORDALLO.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 1427

OFFERED BY: MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 2: Page 140, line 3, before the semicolon insert the following: ''and a program of financial literacy and education to promote an understanding of consumer, economic, and personal finance issues and concepts, including saving for retirement, managing credit, long-term care, and estate planning and education on predatory lending, identity theft, and financial abuse schemes, that is approved by the Director''.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2007 No. 80

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Thank you, dear God, for new opportunities. We are grateful that the best is yet to be, that our labors are moving us closer to the desired destination. Thank You for landmarks past and new vistas opening ahead. Thank You for time to mend broken relationships, to form fresh alliances, and to build new bridges. Thank You for Senators with new hopes, new desires, new inspiration, and new determination to serve You with greater faithfulness. Lord, thank You for another day to abide with You so that we can reap the bountiful harvest found only in You.

And, Lord, today as we honor the law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty, comfort and bless their families and loved ones. Use the 26th annual National Peace Officers Memorial Service to remind us of the sacrifices our law enforcement people make each day to protect our freedom. We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 15, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TESTER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second portion.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the water resources legislation. Several amendments were offered to this bill yesterday, and this morning one of those amendments—the one offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, No. 1090—will be debated until 11:45, and then a vote will occur with respect to that amendment.

The Senate will recess, as usual, from 12:30 to 2:15 for the party conferences. Other votes with respect to amendments to the water resources legislation will occur this afternoon.

As the majority leader mentioned yesterday, a lot of work needs to be done prior to the Memorial Day recess, so Members should plan accordingly.

The majority leader has offered two amendments on the issue of Iraq, and cloture votes will occur on those amendments on Wednesday.

Additionally, cloture was filed on the motion to proceed to the immigration legislation. That vote will occur at a time to be determined on Wednesday.

I am certain every Member of the Senate is conscious of the fact that we have a Memorial Day recess fast approaching at the end of next week. We have an ambitious goal we hope to reach by that time. We hope to deal with these outstanding pieces of legislation and to, of course, provide supplemental appropriations for the war in Iraq.

At the outset, I will say that the Water Resources Development Act, which Senator BOXER of California and Senator INHOFE of Oklahoma will bring to the floor in a few moments, is a bill that has been pending before the Congress for, I believe, 7 years—at least 6 years. Our failure to enact this bill has delayed the construction of critical infrastructure across America for 6 or 7 years. This is infrastructure that is important to every part of America—in the Midwest, dams on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, which are vital arteries when it comes to agribusiness and other uses to create profitability and employment. All of these are in a state of disrepair, and we want to address the modernization and safety measures for these locks and dams and many other projects.

For 6 or 7 years, the debate has gone on unresolved. The House passed overwhelmingly the Water Resources Development Act. The Senate has the same opportunity, but we need to do it on a timely basis.

I thank the Senator from Oklahoma, who is offering an amendment this morning. I am told by the manager of the bill, Senator BOXER, that he has been cooperative in terms of reducing the debate time, giving enough time to explain his amendment, for others to speak to it, and bring it to a vote.

I urge every other Senator that this is the day; if you have an amendment to the Water Resources Development Act, bring it to the floor today. After 2:15, bring your amendments to the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Printed on recycled paper.

floor. Let's have the debate and have the vote. By the end of the day, let's have all of the relevant amendments considered to this legislation. I think we owe it to the people who have worked so hard to bring us to this moment, and now individual Senators should know that, to delay this, there is no excuse. Bring the Water Resources Development Act amendments to the floor.

In addition, the majority leader filed two amendments relative to the war in Iraq, which will be considered on a procedural basis to this Water Resources Development Act. It is a way to measure the sentiment of the Senate on two different approaches to resolving our difficulties between the White House and Congress on the funding in Iraq. There will be a cloture vote on those amendments tomorrow. That is an opportunity for Members to express their feelings.

As everybody knows, it takes 60 votes to invoke cloture. We hope we will have a strong bipartisan vote for one of those two approaches. I urge my colleagues to understand this is a very important and timely matter. We have little time left to deal with the requirements of funding our troops before the Memorial Day recess. The Democratic majority, as well as the Republican side, has made it clear we will fund our troops. At the end of the day, our troops will not go without the resources they need to provide for their own safety and a safe return home.

Also, we hope this week to initiate a conversation on the immigration bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be now a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority and the second half of the time under the control of the Republicans.

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is obvious to most Americans our immigration system is broken. There are 12 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States today, and hundreds of thousands are arriving each year. In America today, unscrupulous employers hire undocumented immigrants because they can pay them less than American workers and force them to work in conditions that Americans would not tolerate. Employers can do this with impunity because our Government doesn't enforce immigration laws that prohibit hiring undocumented immigrants.

Immigration is a complicated issue that ignites strong passions. Some would rather avoid this issue because it is so sensitive. But Congress has an obligation to fix our broken immigration system. We need a comprehensive approach, one that is tough but fair. We need, first, to improve border security by increasing manpower and deploying new technology. We need to enforce the law against employers who are hiring millions of undocumented workers. We need a realistic approach to the 12 million undocumented workers who live and work in our country.

I commend our majority leader, Senator REID of Nevada. He is not afraid of tackling tough issues, including immigration reform. He knows it is an important national priority. Last week, Senator REID introduced immigration reform legislation that the Senate will begin debating this week. Senator REID did a reasonable thing. He said we should begin the debate where it ended last year, with the bipartisan Kennedy-McCain, Hagel-Martinez bill.

This bill, sponsored by Republican Senators CHUCK HAGEL, MEL MARTINEZ, ARLEN SPECTER, JOHN MCCAIN, SAM BROWNBACK, and LINDSEY GRAHAM, and many Democrats, passed the Senate last year on a bipartisan vote of 62 to 36.

Of course, that Hagel-Martinez bill was only the starting point for the Senate's debate. Senator REID has set aside 2 full weeks to complete that debate. Members will have ample opportunity to offer amendments. This is the right place to start.

This is not a perfect bill. I voted for it, realizing there were real imperfections, but it reflects the culmination of months of work last year, including hearings and marathon markups in the Judiciary Committee, on which I serve, and over 30 rollcall votes on the floor of the Senate.

The bill is flawed, but it is comprehensive. It includes provisions to secure our borders, strengthen enforcement of our immigration laws, and addresses undocumented immigrants living in our country.

I am confident that over the next 2 weeks, through the amendment process, we can improve this bill and pass legislation that will be an important step in fixing our broken immigration system.

Unfortunately, there has been a hue and cry from the other side of the aisle. Some object to debating this bill. It is ironic, to say the least, that those on the other side who don't want to debate bipartisan legislation are objecting to a bill written, in large part, by their own side of the aisle—a bill that was passed when the Republican side of the aisle controlled the Senate last year. It is hard to understand how 21 Members of the Senate who voted for this bill last year now object to even proceeding to it now as the base bill for our debate. They understand, as we do, that this bill is going to change once it comes to the floor. If they object to even bringing the measure to the floor—the same bill they voted for last year—one has to question whether they are committed to comprehensive immigration reform.

Some on the Republican side argue that backroom negotiations between the White House and Republican and Democratic Senators are close to a deal and that starting debate on immigration before that deal is reached is premature. I don't think that is a legitimate argument. I have been in many of these negotiations, and I will say a great amount of effort has been expended to move this bill forward. Some parts of it are very positive. An agreement between the White House and the Senate is a step forward. There are some parts that are very controversial.

Human nature and political nature are interesting. People will not move toward a goal unless they face a deadline. How many people wait until the last minute to file their tax returns or wait too long for the checkup at the dentist? When we know we are facing a deadline and time is running out, we make important decisions. The same will be true for the immigration debate. Bringing last year's bill to the floor, which passed with an overwhelming bipartisan rollcall vote, as the base bill is going to move those negotiators in that room to a conclusion more quickly. To leave this open-ended and say that at some time in the future we will get back to it is an invitation for talks to break down and for the participants to disappear.

We don't want that to happen. We cannot afford to wait. The Senate's calendar is full this year. There are so many things we need to do to make sure this congressional session is much more productive than those in the past, not the least of which is passing important appropriation bills, which now must be accomplished in order to fund the Government. We don't want to fall into the same circumstance as the previous Republican Congress, when they failed to pass appropriation bills and tried to play catchup and failed, leaving it to the new Congress, the Democratic Congress—an awesome responsibility—to fund the Government for the remainder of this fiscal year.

There are some who feel it is now or never for immigration. What the majority leader has done is to tell the negotiators this is the time to wrap things up. This is the time to reach an agreement. This is the time to decide who at that table is there in good faith and who is there to stop the process. If they reach an agreement, it can be considered on the floor of the Senate as an amendment to the bipartisan Kennedy-McCain, Hagel-Martinez bill, which is being offered as the starting point of this debate. If there is no agreement, these differences can be debated and voted on over the next 2 weeks.

I understand negotiations continue as I speak. I hope they reach an agreement that is comprehensive, tough but fair, and one every Member can seriously consider supporting. But these negotiations are no excuse for avoiding public debate.

At some point, you have to move beyond the closed doors of the rooms in the Capitol and into the bright lights of the Senate Chamber and let Members speak to their wishes and their intentions on this important legislation.

I disagree with some of the ideas being proposed by those on the other side of the aisle. I am sure they disagree with some of my approaches. I respect their views, and I hope they will look at this as a constructive opportunity.

Should the Senate tomorrow fail to invoke cloture and to move forward on the immigration bill, it will be a lost opportunity. If the 21 Senators who voted for comprehensive immigration reform will not even allow us to bring the matter to the floor at this moment, it will be difficult to explain. They will have their chance to amend. They will have their chance to make changes they think are important. They will have their chance to act as Senators considering important measures.

There has been a lot of criticism of Congress for good reason. When we look at the list of issues the American people think are important, very seldom do we find those issues being debated on the floor of the Senate. We need to change that situation. One of the issues on which most Americans agree is that our immigration system cannot be sustained. There are too many undocumented workers in this country living in fear, being exploited in the workplace, uncertain of their future. There are too many still streaming across our borders, borders that are too porous. There are ways to deal with those issues and ways this bill will address them.

The Senate can offer, debate, and vote on amendments on all these issues. That is how the Senate is supposed to work. Some of my colleagues have suggested they will block this debate from taking place by filibustering this bipartisan bill which passed over the past year. I hope they don't. It reaches the point where we need to be held accountable. I hope that point will be this week and next, as Senator REID, the majority leader, has set aside a reasonable amount of time to debate it. The American people deserve more than closed-door, backdoor negotiations. The time has come for Congress to fix our broken immigration system.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, time is running out to fund the troops. There are many of us who believe the policy in Iraq is a failed policy. The numbers we are given every week are stark and frightening: Over 3,370 American soldiers have now lost their lives in the war in Iraq. Another five were killed yesterday. Over the weekend, three American soldiers were kidnapped. There is a manhunt underway to try to find them and rescue them as quickly as possible. And to all those involved, they have our prayers and our wishes for Godspeed.

But we understand the reality of this war, a war where almost 30,000 Americans have been killed or disabled, a war where many soldiers have returned home with injuries that they will have to cope with for a lifetime. This war has cost us over $500 billion, $500 billion that could have been spent in America for many issues important to us—improving our schools and education, making certain every American has basic health insurance, making sure our children all across America have the kind of health care and attention they need at an early age to be healthy through the rest of their life, money that could have been spent at the National Institutes of Health looking for new cures for diseases and illnesses from which we suffer in America. There are so many programs in which we could have invested that money.

Instead, we have invested that money in a war with no end, a war that is now in its fifth year. The war in Iraq has lasted longer than the Korean war, has lasted longer than World War II. It is the most expensive war in the history of the United States, save World War II, which was, in fact, a world war where the United States made a total national commitment. But we now find that second in rank in terms of cost is this war in Iraq.

There are many of us who understand that Americans across the board may have supported the initial invasion but had second thoughts. I was one of 23 who voted against this war at the outset in October 2002. There were colleagues on both sides of the aisle who in good faith thought the President should have the authority to deal with Saddam Hussein. They were misled, as the American people were misled by intelligence estimates that were just wrong, intelligence estimates that said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and threatened the United States, fear of nuclear holocaust, fear of mushroom-shaped clouds. All of these images were paraded before the American people a short time after we had gone through the tragedy of 9/11. It is understandable the American people were concerned and fearful, and they supported the idea of invading Iraq in the hopes of keeping America safe.

We learned that in so many ways the information given to the American people before the invasion of Iraq was wrong. There were no weapons of mass destruction, there were no nuclear weapons, there was no connection between Saddam Hussein and the events of 9/11 that were sponsored by al-Qaida. But the invasion took place.

Many of us felt that once our soldiers were in the field, it was time to close ranks behind them, stop the debate. They volunteered, they are serving our country, they didn't write this policy. They are risking their lives right now, and we should stand behind them. So many of us, even those who opposed this war and voted against it from the outset, voted year after year for the emergency appropriations President Bush sent to Congress, money for our troops in the field. Now we are in the fifth year, and there is no end in sight.

We have been told by our military leaders that even the best military in the world in the United States cannot save Iraq. Only the Iraqis can save Iraq. It has to be the Iraqi people through their Government who decide to move forward toward stability. We cannot police a civil war. We cannot contain the violence in Iraq even with 20,000, 30,000, 40,000 more American soldiers. That is a reality and one we should face. Regardless, the President concluded a few months ago that he would escalate this war and send even more American soldiers into harm's way. I think that was a mistake. I think the President was moving in the wrong direction. As I said, I don't believe our military, though it be the best in the world, can really contain the violence of the civil war in Iraq. I certainly don't believe our military, as good as it is, can give spine to Iraqis leaders who can't seem to reach conclusions and decisions on timetables about their future.

So the war continues. The President asked for more money, $80 billion, $90 billion at a time to continue this war in Iraq. Many of us believe we should do two things: fund the troops, make sure they have all that they need, but change the policy, start bringing American soldiers home. Tell the Iraqis once and for all that we will not be there indefinitely. We are not going to stay until you work up the political courage to make decisions to govern your country. We are going to start coming home. As we come home, these Iraqi soldiers whom we have spent millions of dollars to train and equip need to stand up and defend their country. The Iraqi Parliamentarians and leaders of their Government need to stand up and make the hard political decisions.

That is the reality of Iraq today. It is a reality we are reminded of every morning with the newscasts that tell us of the suffering and death which takes place in that country.

I wish to say a word, too, about the Iraqi people. I was reminded over the weekend when I was home in Illinois—and a good reminder it was—that when we speak about the loss of life in Iraq, don't forget the innocent Iraqis who have lost their lives as well. We don't even know what that number is today. We know that close to 3,500 American soldiers have lost their lives, and we know the coalition forces who have lost their lives. We don't know how many innocent Iraqis have lost their lives as victims in the civil war or even of our invasion.

Mr. President, ''60 Minutes'' on Sunday night had a gripping story about a youngster, 12-year-old, who, during the bombing of our invasion of Iraq, lost both his arms. This young boy, whose name is Ali, came to the attention of people across the world and was given a chance to go to England, where he goes to school now. He was really inspiring when he talked about how he was going to make something of his life even though he lost both his arms. He is just an innocent victim of this war who lost family and friends in a bombing, a tragic incident we wished never occurred.

Keep in mind that these innocent Iraqis are part of this calculation about the future of Iraq as well. If this civil war is to come to an end, we not only need to start bringing American troops home, we need for the Iraqi Government to start making decisions to protect their people and project their future in a positive way.

I sincerely hope that at the end of next week when we present to the President the money necessary for the troops, we will also make it clear that we are taking a step forward to correct this failed policy in Iraq.

I might also add that if we are not successful in changing the policy with this bill, it is not the end of the debate. We are 4 months into this new Congress, 4 months since the Democratic majority took control of the House and Senate. In a little over 4 months, we have seen a dramatic change in the national debate on the war in Iraq. For the last 4 years, we have been sleepwalking through this policy in this war in Iraq with few challenges from Capitol Hill. The legislative branch of our Federal Government did little or nothing to meet its constitutional responsibility, to challenge the Executive when it came to policy and execution of that policy.

Now things have changed. Now, with a Democratic majority in the House and the Senate, the debate is underway, as it should be, a debate on policy. I think most Americans would agree that over the last 4 months with this new Congress, we have had a more active and vigorous debate on Iraq than any time since this war started. That is the way it should be. The American people believe Iraq is the primary issue on which we should focus, and we have, and we will continue to focus on Iraq. Even beyond the supplemental appropriations bill, we will move to a Defense authorization bill and a Defense appropriations bill, giving ample opportunity for Members on both sides of the aisle to come up with alternatives to deal with this failed policy.

In conclusion, there is one key to changing the failed policy in Iraq. The key to changing the failed policy in Iraq is 11 Republican Senators. When 11 Republican Senators reach the point that they want this policy changed, it will happen. We have 49 Democratic Senators who have voted repeatedly to change that policy. Two Republican Senators—the Senator from Oregon, Mr. SMITH, and the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL—have stepped forward and joined us on the Democratic side. We need nine more. With nine more Republican Senators, the failed policy in Iraq will change. Why does it take so many? It takes 60 votes in the Senate to move forward a significant and controversial measure such as a change of policy in the war in Iraq.

I was heartened to learn last week that some Republican House Members met with the President. There were press reports afterward that they told him point blank that they can no longer continue to support his policies. Change has to take place. The President needed to hear that. I hope Republican Senators who feel the same way will step forward.

It is not enough for them to say we will come up with 11 different ideas and vote one at a time for each of them. That isn't the way this works. We have to put our minds together and try to find compromise and cooperation so that we can serve the best needs of America—not only our national security needs but the needs of our troops in the field and the needs of the Iraqi people. If 11 Republican Senators will join the 49 Democrats, this policy can change. We will give them that opportunity tomorrow with two cloture votes and then beyond that some votes I am sure next week on a conference report when we reach that stage in the proceedings, and then in subsequent legislation.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the spirit of compromise and cooperation to try to find ways that we can end this war in an honorable way, bring our troops home to the heroes' welcome they deserve, and say to the Iraqi people: The Americans have given you more than any nation could ever ask for. We have given you over 3,300 American lives of the best and bravest soldiers in the world. We have given you 25,000 injured soldiers, some with serious injuries they will carry for a lifetime. We have spent $500 billion. We have stood behind your country as you deposed your dictator, put him on trial, and executed him. We have stood behind your country when you wrote your Constitution and held your elections. We have been there for more than 4 years. Now it is your turn. Now it is the turn of the Iraqis to step forward and guide their nation forward.

We need to understand that we won't have a change in policy unless the President agrees to change—and it is unlikely he will—or this Congress forces a change. The only way that occurs is when 11 Republican Senators join 49 Democrats to make it happen and make it a reality.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of the time for the majority in morning business. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time on the Republican side be equally divided among myself, Senator CORNYN, and Senator GREGG.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUSH TAX CUTS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, we celebrate anniversaries around here. We find times to look back. Today happens to be the fourth anniversary of the Senate passage of the last of the Bush tax cuts. We have heard a lot of rhetoric around here about those tax cuts. We heard it in advance, we heard it as they have gone along, we continue to hear it.

I thought on the fourth anniversary of the Senate passage of the tax cuts it might be a wise idea to spend some time with some facts.

Our former colleague, Senator Gramm of Texas, always used to say: I tell my children never argue about the facts. Facts are things you can look up. Argue about what the facts might mean, but don't argue about the facts.

We don't take his advice as much as I think we should. We spend too much time arguing about the facts. Let's look them up.

One of the things we are told constantly is that since the passage of the tax cuts, the rich have gotten richer, the tax burden has shifted from the rich to the poor, and that this is terrible and we need to reverse that trend. Well, let's look at a few facts. Let's go back to the 8 years prior to the time of the Bush administration and see what happened in terms of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

While President Clinton was the President, dividing into five quintiles, which is what economists do, we see what happened to pretax income. During the Clinton years, in the lowest 20 percent, the bottom quintile, pretax income went down. In the second quintile, the pretax income went down. The red bars are prior to Clinton and the blue bars are after. In the middle 20th percentile, the pretax income went down. In the second highest quintile, pretax income went down. In the top quintile, pretax income went up between the time when Clinton was elected and the end of the Clinton administration.

Our source for this is the Congressional Budget Office. These are the facts.

What has happened since President Bush has been in office? Let's take a look at the same areas and look with the new data plugged in. It is very interesting.

Since Bush has been elected, the lowest quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The second lowest quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The middle quintile has seen their pretax income go up. The second highest quintile has seen their pretax income go up, but the top quintile, the

top 20 percent, has seen their pretax income come down.

Once again, the source for these facts is the Congressional Budget Office. On this side of the chart, we see the share of pretax income. This is the number of people to focus on.

The share of income is very high for the top 20 percent and low for the bottom 20 percent. So we look at share and ignore the trend if we want to make the case that the tax cuts have been bad for people at the bottom. In fact, since Bush has been President, we see things have gotten better for people at the bottom.

This comes as somewhat of a surprise to those who were advising us when we passed the Bush tax cuts. I would like to quote from the Brookings Institution. They viewed the tax cuts, as they were proposed, and they had this cogent statement to make about the future, and I quote:

> Our findings suggest that the tax bill will reduce the size of the future economy, raise interest rates, make taxes more regressive, increase tax complexity, and prove fiscally unsustainable. These conclusions question the wisdom and affordability of the tax cut and suggest that Congress reconsider the legislation, especially in light of the economic downturn and terrorist attacks that have occurred last summer.

Very interesting. Reduce the size of the future economy? Since Bush has been President, the U.S. economy has grown more than the entire Chinese economy. Under the Bush Presidency, the U.S. economy has grown $2.7 trillion in GDP. The total Chinese economy is $2.3 trillion. They missed that one.

Raise interest rates? No. Make taxes more regressive? Well, let's look at that one in another chart. Increase tax complexity? I will grant them that. Congress increases tax complexity every time we pass a law. That is an easy prediction to make. And prove fiscally unsustainable? I don't think so.

Here is the relative income tax burden by income group, taking the specific prophecy made by the people at the Brookings Institute. The people in the lowest quintile were receiving that much earned income tax credit. In other words, their tax payments were negative. They received money in transfers. Now, since the passage of the tax cut, the amount of money they have received has been greater. The second lowest quintile used to pay a little taxes; now they receive transfer payments. The middle quintile paid that much taxes; now they pay less. The second highest quintile, virtually identical, but the trend line is down. Who has paid the most taxes? Who has had the greatest increase in taxes? It is the top 20 percent.

At the end of the Clinton administration, this is where it was, and at the end of the Bush term, this is where it is. Brookings was wrong on virtually every point, except their prediction that we would make the tax law more complex. That, as I say, is a prediction one can always make and always be sure of.

What about fiscal sustainability? I remember when I ran for reelection in 2004, right after the tax cuts, my opponents said, we have to bring down the deficit. The deficit is too high. I said: Not only is it going to come down, it is coming down. We see year after year, since the passage of the tax cuts, that the deficit has shrunk. It has shrunk in absolute dollars and it has shrunk as a percentage of GDP. We have the same word out of the Congressional Budget Office and OMB at the end of the first quarter.

Why would we get a shrinking deficit when we have cut tax rates? The answer lies in the dynamism of the American economy, and we look back again on this anniversary date to see what has happened to people's predictions. The red bars are the predictions that the Congressional Budget Office made of the amount of revenue we would receive from capital gains. They predicted that the capital gains revenue would stay flat or barely increase as a result of the reduction in capital gains tax rates.

We reduced the capital gains tax rates, and guess what happened. That is shown in the blue lines. The capital gains realizations—that is the money that came in—went up in 2003, higher than the CBO projection. It went up in 2004 even higher. It went up in 2005 even higher. In 2006, it knocks your socks off. They had predicted $54 billion in realizations, and the fact is, it was $103 billion. The actual capital gains tax receipts were substantially higher than projected by CBO.

Well, how can that be? If we cut the tax rates, how can we get more revenue? The answer to that, of course, is a reality that we so often forget around here, and that is the economy is not static. The economy is not a sum zero game that says: All right, if you cut it here, then you have to see it rise there. If we cut tax rates, we have to see the deficit go up.

We have seen exactly the opposite. We have cut tax rates, and we have seen the deficit go down. Why? Because people respond to economic incentives. When they have an economic incentive to form a new business, create a new opportunity, modernize a plant—because they would not have to pay so much in taxes as they previously had to pay—the new business, the new opportunity, the modernized new plant will create new jobs and creates new income and, therefore, more taxes, more tax revenue, even as the tax rates come down.

We have seen this historical fact again and again for decades, yet we continue to ignore it. The computers at the Congressional Budget Office are programmed not to take into account the growth in the economy and not to predict this kind of result.

So on this anniversary date, I thought I would simply share with the Senate a few facts that demonstrate that the tax cuts have been good for America.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to join the distinguished Senator from Utah, Mr. BENNETT, who gives, to my mind, one of the most cogent and understandable explanations for the economy given around here, and I wish to add a few comments about the fourth anniversary of the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003.

While we have a lot of people trained in a lot of disciplines who make their way to the Senate, I daresay there are not very many of us who have a background in economics or accounting or the type of disciplines that would help them make good economic decisions. The good news is that I think the fundamentals are pretty clear when it comes to what provides people an incentive to work hard and save, and what Government policies—particularly tax increases—make it harder for people to save their hard-earned money and invest it as they see fit—whether it is spending it on their family, investing in their children's college education or perhaps buying things that they would prefer—rather than having Uncle Sam stick his hand in their pocket and spend it on things the Federal Government wants.

It is important to go back and highlight some of the challenges our economy was facing when the Senate first passed this protaxpayer legislation 4 years ago. The economy was hit with not just a one-two punch but with a one-two-three punch. We were dealing with the fallout from the corporate accounting scandals of the late 1990s, the bursting tech bubble and, of course, the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001. All these events combined would have knocked out any other economy in the world. But because we acted with well-timed tax relief that put money back in the pockets of working men and women, small businesses and entrepreneurs, our economy bounced back. Indeed, our economy has roared back.

The 2003 act accelerated a number of individual and small business tax relief provisions Congress passed 2 years earlier. We allowed parents to take the $1,000 tax credit sooner. We accelerated relief from higher marginal tax rates—the marriage tax penalty and the alternative minimum tax. This legislation, passed 4 years ago, provided capital gains and dividends tax relief, which has helped increase economic activity and fill the Federal Government's coffers.

How could it be that Federal revenue has seen historic highs even as we cut taxes 4 years ago? Well, it is for all the obvious reasons: People respond to financial incentives when they know they are going to be able to keep more of what they earn. They work harder, risk takers and entrepreneurs invest in ventures that generate revenue not only for them—and create new jobs—but generate a lot more revenue for

Uncle Sam as well. That is exactly what happened here.

Since 2004, Government revenues have outpaced projections by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, and the deficit this year could tumble to $150 billion, or about 1 percent of our Nation's gross domestic product. Things such as bonus depreciation and the $100,000 expensing provision have allowed entrepreneurs and small businesses to grow and create jobs. This tax relief has helped produce 22 straight quarters of growth, with 7.8 million new jobs over the past 44 consecutive months. That is an outstanding accomplishment, which makes America the envy of the world, and it is a trend we must continue as we face significant fiscal challenges ahead.

We can and we should take great pride in the economy's performance and look with optimism toward the future. As we move forward, the last thing we should consider is reversing the policies that have generated this kind of beneficial economic activity and created so many jobs in America. Unfortunately, this tax relief will soon expire, resulting in a tax increase for all taxpayers without a single vote on the floor of the Senate.

The other side is now pushing a budget that will result in a $736 billion tax hike for taxpayers over the next 5 years. This, unless it is reversed, will not only jeopardize future economic growth but also the financial well-being of millions of Americans—families, small businesses, and seniors. If Congress fails to make this tax relief permanent, the fourth anniversary of which we are celebrating today, every American taxpayer will see their taxes go up. For instance, a family of four with two children, making $50,000 in annual income, would see an increase of $2,092 a year in their tax bill, or a 132-percent hike.

Four years ago, many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle argued that the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 would not only not benefit our economy, they actually said it would endanger the economy. For example, the now-majority whip said:

> The Republicans who push this tax plan have to face stubborn facts, and facts can be stubborn. The last time they got a tax cut through, the American economy fell backwards. We did not make progress. We lost jobs. We lost opportunity. We lost a lot of hope in this country.

There is one thing I agree with the distinguished majority whip about, and that is facts are, indeed, stubborn things. Four years ago, the Senate voted for hope and against fear. It voted for progress and against stagnation. It voted for the entrepreneurial spirit and against command and control out of Washington, DC.

I think 4 years later we all have seen and can celebrate tremendous results as an outcome of this important legislation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, first I thank the Senator from Texas for his elegant statement and accurate statement. I want to pick up where the Senator has left off.

The Senator talks about the facts—and this is a fact—that revenues to the Federal Government have jumped dramatically in the last 3 years. In fact, in the last 3 years we have seen more revenues flowing into the Federal Government than ever in history, and the percentage of increase in those revenues has also been historic. As this chart clearly shows, we are now seeing revenues to the Federal Government which actually exceed the historic revenues to this Government. Historically, the Federal Government has gotten about 18.2 percent of the gross national product in revenue. Today we are up around 18.5 percent. We are headed towards 18.7 percent. That is a significant increase in revenues to the Federal Government.

What effect does that have? As the Senator from Texas said, it has had a dramatic effect on the deficit. Because we have gotten all this additional revenue, it has caused the deficit to drop dramatically.

The other side of the aisle argues: So what. Taxes are still too low on Americans. We should raise the taxes on Americans. So they brought out a budget which is going to increase taxes on Americans by about $700 billion. It is the largest tax increase in the history of the country, should that budget actually come to fruition—and it looks like it is going to pass, and I assume they are going to follow up on it. They mean what they say, on the other side of the aisle.

What will that do to Federal revenues, that dramatic increase in taxes? What will that do to the economy? We are not sure, but we suspect it will slow the economy dramatically. Some of these great gains that we have seen in the economy, the 22 months of expansion, the 7.4 million new jobs, may be significantly impacted by that type of a tax increase.

We also know it will create a Tax Code that is taking a lot more money out of Americans who work hard. We happen to believe, on our side of the aisle, we should let Americans keep the money they earn as much as possible, have a fair tax system, and as a result generate a benefit to working Americans by saying: Listen, if you are going to work hard, we are going to give you more money. We are also going to get more revenues, which is the way this has worked out.

Why have we gotten more revenues even though we reduced the tax burden on the American people? The answer is pretty simple. It is called human nature. When you set tax levels at a fair level—which is what we have today—people are willing to go out and invest. They are willing to go out and take risks. They are willing to work harder because they know they are going to get to keep more of what they earn. What does that do? That creates a stronger economy which puts more people to work, and that is what we want, more jobs for people and, of course, the more jobs you have the more tax revenues you end up getting.

In addition, especially in the area of capital gains, if you have a fair capital gains rate, which is what we have today, it causes people to go out and sell an investment which they might otherwise hold on to. If a person has an asset, say, a home or small business or stock, they don't want to sell that asset when they are going to have to pay 30 percent or 25 percent in taxes on that sale because they don't want to have to pay all those taxes for that asset they spent their whole life building up, trying to make ends meet, trying to create a nest egg for themselves. When you put a fair capital gains rate on that sale, which is today 15 percent—which is the fair rate which was put into place by President Bush's proposals—then people are willing to go out and sell that asset.

When they sell that asset, what happens? Two things which are very good for the Federal Government happen. No. 1, capital gains occur so we get revenues; otherwise, we would not get those revenues because people would just sit on those assets; they are not going to sell them and pay the high tax rate. When you have a fair tax rate, they sell them, the Federal Government gets the revenues, and the second thing that happens is they take that new money they have from the sale of that asset and reinvest it. By human nature, they reinvest it in something that is more productive. So you have a more productive society, where capital assets are being used more effectively, and as a result you get this great job creation and this economic growth.

In fact, in the area of capital gains, we have seen a dramatic increase in revenues. Capital gains have increased over what the projection was by CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, by 47 percent. It is a huge jump in revenues we didn't expect—or at least the Congressional Budget Office didn't expect—but which we received because human nature kicked in and people were willing to sell assets, take that money and reinvest it in things that are productive, create jobs, and as a result we got those revenues. That is why today the Federal Government is actually getting more in revenues than it got under the old tax law where the rates were a lot higher. That is why we have gotten more economic expansion, more jobs. That is the good news.

From the other side of the aisle we hear this constant patter: The rich are not paying enough taxes, and these tax laws are disproportionate in their application. I think we need to talk about that a little bit because let's see what has happened as a result of reducing these tax rates.

Basically, what has happened is that even with the lower tax rates today, wealthy people are paying more in revenues to the Federal Government than at any time in history. Today the top 20 percent of people in this country who have income are paying about 85 percent of the tax burden.

Let me restate that. The top 20 percent of people with income in this country are paying 85 percent of the Federal tax burden. Under the Clinton years, the top 20 percent of people with income paid 81 percent of the Federal tax burden. So even though we have cut rates, we have actually created more revenues from high-income individuals.

Again, you are going to say: How does that happen? Again, it is called human nature. If you have a high-income situation, individuals with a high income, they could either invest in opportunities which are going to produce taxable events or not produce taxable events. They have the position to do that. So if you have a fair tax rate they will take the risk. They will make the decision. They will be the entrepreneurs who create the job. As a result, they will make an investment which is taxable. But if you have a tax rate that is too high, which is what the other side of the aisle likes to have, then you basically create an atmosphere where these folks are going to go out and invest a fair amount of their money in things that are tax avoidance, legal tax avoidance but tax avoidance. They are going to invest in nontaxable events, stocks and bonds that do not generate income to them that is taxable.

What we have done is we have created a tax law where essentially high-income people are willing to go out and take risks and do it in a taxable way that generates revenue back to the United States. As a result, we have the top 20 percent of American income earners pay more in taxes today, significantly more than they did under the Clinton years.

The alternative is also fairly interesting. At the low end of the income scale, the bottom 40 percent of people who have income do not basically pay income taxes. Obviously, they pay withholding taxes, but as a practical matter that segment of our society pays virtually nothing in income taxes. They get money back, in fact, on the earned-income tax credit and other benefits the Federal Government puts in place.

Under the law today, under President Bush's law, those bottom 40 percent of income earners are now getting about twice as much back from the Federal Government as they did under the Clinton years. So what is the combined effect of these two facts, of these two things? The tax law—even though we are generating a lot more revenue for the Federal Government, even though we are well over that mean number of 18.2 percent of gross national product, even though we have had jumps in revenue of 11 percent, 9 percent, 15 percent—we actually have a tax law today that is generating more revenue but is also more progressive. High-income individuals are paying more of the tax burden. Low-income people are getting more money back from the Federal Government.

There is another factor that needs to be pointed out, and that is what is happening to senior citizens. Senior citizens disproportionately benefit from a low dividend tax rate. Why? It is logical, obviously. Most seniors are retired. If they have income, it is going to be Social Security, some pension program, or dividends, and most pension programs also involve dividends. So senior citizens are really the people who are benefiting the most from a low dividend tax rate. Yet the folks on the other side of the aisle have just passed a budget where they want to jump the tax rate on dividends by 100 percent. They want to go from a 15-percent tax rate to a 30-percent tax rate on dividends. Who are they going to hit? They are going to hit senior citizens, primarily. That is the people they are going to hit.

If you look at the proposals from the other side of the aisle, they come out of a 1930s philosophy of economics, which was pretty soundly rejected in the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s, but they are still attracted to it.

It is a theory that says you just raise taxes. The Federal Government will get more money, and we will spend it for you. In other words, there is a theory that says we are smarter than you. We have been elected to the Senate. We are good members of the Democratic Party. We know more than you know. Therefore, we should take your money and we should spend it for you and we can spend it more effectively than you can spend it.

That is a philosophy that should and has been rejected as we move toward a much more market-oriented economy. It is also a philosophy that presumes the higher taxes always generate more revenue to the Federal Government, which is not true. Higher taxes, actually, in many instances reduce revenues to the Federal Government because they reduce economic activity. They certainly reduce expansion of the economy, and they reduce the creation of jobs.

Three Presidents have proved beyond any reasonable doubt when you lower income tax rates, you generate economic expansion because people are just people. They just have common sense. If they know they are going to be able to keep more of their money, they are willing to go out and work harder to get more money. But they also know if the Federal Government is going to take more of their money, and a disproportionate amount of their money, they are not going to work quite so hard. They are not going to take that risk. They are not going to create that restaurant or open that little small business, create those jobs, because they don't want to have to pay all of their money to the Federal Government.

President Kennedy knew that and that is why he cut income tax rates and was successful in generating revenue to the Federal Government. President Reagan knew that and he cut income tax rates. As a result, the revenue to the Federal Government jumped and the economy expanded. President Bush has shown it once again: Cut income tax rates, expand the economy, and as a result get a fair tax level and human nature kicks in and revenues flow into the Federal Treasury.

What is unique about President Bush's initiatives is that at the same time he has cut rates, he created this much more progressive system which I just outlined. The fact that high-income taxpayers are now paying so much more of the Federal share of income taxes than they did under the Clinton years, and lower income individuals are getting much more back than they did under the Clinton years, makes for a more progressive system. It also disproportionately benefits senior citizens, people on fixed incomes, because of the dividend rate.

Unfortunately, though, we now have the Democrats presenting to us a budget which wants to take us to the French path, which essentially is going to dramatically increase the cost to the Federal Government, to Americans, and as a result dramatically increase the tax level on Americans. We will go down that path that France has gone down.

I have to tell you, it doesn't work in France. Productivity is not up in France. Jobs are not being created in France. People don't want to go out and work harder in France. And they certainly do not have a more progressive or effective economic system than we have in the United States.

I think we should reject the Democratic approach under their budget of raising taxes and stay with this tax law that is raising so much new revenue and is so progressive and has such a strong benefit for senior citizens.

I yield the floor.

I make a point of order a quorum is not present.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1495, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1495) to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Boxer/Inhofe amendment No. 1065, in the nature of a substitute.

Boxer (for Feingold) amendment No. 1086 (to amendment No. 1065), to establish a Water Resources Commission to prioritize water resources projects in the United States.

Reid (for Levin/Reid) amendment No. 1097 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1065), to provide for military readiness and benchmarks relative to Iraq.

Reid amendment No. 1098 (to amendment No. 1097), to provide for a transition of the Iraq mission.

Coburn amendment No. 1089 (to amendment No. 1065), to prioritize Federal spending to ensure the needs of Louisiana residents who lost their homes as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are met before spending money to design or construct a nonessential visitors center.

Coburn amendment No. 1090 (to amendment No. 1065), to prioritize Federal spending to ensure the residents of the city of Sacramento are protected from the threat of floods before spending money to add sand to beaches in San Diego.

AMENDMENT NO. 1090

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:45 a.m. shall be equally divided for debate with respect to amendment No. 1090 between the Senator from California and the Senator from Oklahoma or their designees.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I have a parliamentary inquiry because I don't know when my ranking member will be here. Do I understand the Chair correctly that I would have 15 minutes and he would have 15 minutes, so I should conclude my remarks after such time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California has 13 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. Will the Presiding Officer please let me know when that time has come?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 is on the floor of the Senate and that Members on both sides of the aisle are very supportive of this legislation. This legislation authorizes the projects and policies of the Civil Works Program of the Army Corps of Engineers. Again, it has very strong support across party lines.

I think it is important for the Senate to know, as well as the American people, that this bill is long overdue. Seven years ago, we passed the last WRDA bill. What does that mean? It means that very important flood control projects, wetlands restoration, environmental projects, clean water projects—so many of these projects have been delayed. When we are talking about the Nation's economy and public safety and the environment, these are things we all want to address. We address them in this bill. The beauty of it is that although Senator INHOFE and I have some deep differences on issues, this is one bill we both strongly support, and across the board we see support.

Every day I have come to the floor to talk about WRDA. I have stressed the strong support in the country for this legislation. I read yesterday from various letters of support. I want to call to Senators' attention—when they arrive to vote on the first amendment, which I hope we will all be opposing, or at least the vast majority of us—on their desks they will find, due to the good work of our pages, the letters of support I referred to yesterday. We have an amazing coalition. We have the National Association of Manufacturers supporting this bill. We have the American Farm Bureau Federation supporting this legislation, with a direct letter. We have a letter from the National Waterways Conference supporting this bill. We have the Audubon Society supporting this legislation. For those who may not be aware, it is a society of more than 1 million members and supporters who work very hard to restore America's natural resources. We have them supporting this bill. We have the American Society of Civil Engineers supporting this bill. We have the National Construction Alliance, which is made up of the Laborers International Union, the International Union of Operating Engineers, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. This is about as broad a coalition as we can have. It concludes with a letter from the Associated General Contractors of America. We have a bill that, as the National Construction Alliance says, is a $13.9 billion authorization of Corps projects which is a necessary first step in addressing our country's serious backlog of water projects, from harbor improvement, to flood protection, to lock and dam construction, dredging, and environmental infrastructure.

That is what we address in this very important bill.

We certainly have many contentious debates on the floor of this Senate. We are going to have one again on Iraq. It tugs at the heartstrings. It is very difficult. But this is one piece of legislation which should not be difficult for us. Senator INHOFE and I share a commitment to shoring up our Nation's infrastructure, including our water resources. We have a true partnership on this issue. I hope colleagues will join with us, as we work through the amendments. There will be some amendments we can support, but we have made a pact that even if there are some amendments each of us individually supports, if the four top members of the Environment and Public Works Committee have not agreed on them, we will be forced to vote no. This is not a pleasant situation for either of us. We think it is the way to maintain the delicate balance of the legislation, because the bill is a product of bipartisanship.

I mentioned the other two members of the committee who have worked so hard, Senators BAUCUS and ISAKSON. I thank them.

The whole country is looking to see what we do to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina and what we do to move forward so that we don't see another tragedy as we witnessed recently. About 25 percent of this bill is directed at Louisiana. We have gone very far to meet their needs. We do understand we haven't done 100 percent of what they need, but there will be other WRDAs, and there may well be a couple of amendments on which we can move forward. We don't know at this particular point.

We have waited 7 long years for this bill. We are going to be having a vote at a quarter of 12.

Before I yield to my good friend and colleague, the ranking member of the committee, for his comments, I hope everyone will join in voting no on the Coburn amendment. What he does in his amendment is, he has decided—and he is here in the Chamber now—that one of the projects in California should wait until another project in California is totally funded.

I call this amendment the Russian roulette amendment because the project he wants to delay is an important project in the San Diego area. It is the city of Imperial Beach. There is a very important project the Corps is recommending where the local match will be paid—the initial stages, 30 percent; the final stages, 50 percent. We are talking about protecting 2,083 businesses. There are 812 nonrental property businesses and 1,271 rental properties. We are talking about 22 retail businesses, 217 businesses located along the beachfront, 195 are rental, and 19 businesses near the shoreline. What we are talking about doing is a project that is so cost-effective, it has met every criteria. It has gone through every phase. We received a letter from the mayor which clearly states they will be picking up their share.

This is a project which needs to move forward. You don't say to somebody in the southern part of a State: You don't deserve this flood protection until someone in the northern part of the State gets flood protection. We have to do it all. This is the United States of America. California, if we were a nation, would be the fifth largest economy in the world.

All Members have a right to their opinion and a right to offer amendments. I support my colleague's right to do so. But it is absolutely wrong. He will present it as some kind of a beach project. He makes it sound as if what we are doing is protecting a beach.

Nothing could be further from the truth. We are using the replenishment in this project as a way to absorb the floodwaters.

I will speak for a minute on this later. I hope we will have a resounding ''no'' vote. Every Member has a right to say what he or she thinks belongs in this bill. But this bill has gone through a rigorous process. We don't have anything in here that doesn't meet the criteria. Senator INHOFE was very strong on that. I agreed with him completely.

With my time waning, I yield the floor and look forward to a strong ''no'' vote on the Coburn amendment in 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I yield myself such time as I may consume. As I understand, we are now dividing time equally between the junior Senator from Oklahoma and the committee; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. INHOFE. How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California has 3 minutes 20 seconds remaining.

Mr. INHOFE. We have a total of 3 minutes left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California has 3 minutes 20 seconds. The junior Senator from Oklahoma has 13 minutes. The time is divided between Senator COBURN and Senator BOXER. Senator COBURN has 13 minutes.

Mr. INHOFE. The main thing I want to get across, I can't get across in 3 minutes. But I can tell you right now—and by the way, the reason I wasn't here earlier is that I have been, in the last 3 days, in Iraq. And by the way, good things are happening there in spite of what the press will tell you.

I came back somewhat shocked to see some of these amendments because, quite frankly, a lot of people don't understand the process. I don't want anyone out there watching what we are doing today saying that we are killing some useless project. It has nothing to do with that. This is an authorization bill. I will make this clear, but I can't do it in this time unless the Senator from Oklahoma would like to yield 5 minutes of his time.

Mr. COBURN. Sure.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Senator.

The amendment we will be talking about is the Imperial Beach amendment. I have to remind my colleagues, as I did in the steering committee last Thursday, this is not an appropriations bill. What we are doing here today is not going to change anything at all in terms of money. I don't want anyone thinking we will have some useless project or spend money on it. We are not doing it with this bill today. We may be doing it in the future. We may be doing it when the appropriations bills come up. I may be opposing it at that time.

But all we are doing through the WRDA bill is we allow ourselves the opportunity to make sure there is some level of discipline in putting projects forward that people will eventually be voting on. They are not going to be voting on them today. This is the authorization process.

Now, we have criteria. We have to have an engineer's report from the Corps of Engineers. It has to say it is economically feasible, it takes care of the environmental problems—all these things—and it ensures there is cost sharing.

Let me tell you what would happen if we did not do this. If we did not do it, and we had everyone coming up, swapping out their deals, and saying: I have a project over here; it is my sweetheart project; the Corps of Engineers has never been there. We don't care. No one has ever evaluated it, but this is my humble opinion, since we are here in Washington making all these decisions in violation of what people back home want. Then we will have a project.

That is the alternative. This is the same as the transportation authorization bill. There we had criteria where we would talk about the qualifications of various projects, and they would have to be in that criteria. Then we would bring it up later on and decide whether we were going to fund these things.

Now, on the project that is going to take place at Imperial Beach, it was authorized. The Corps recommended this storm damage reduction project because it is technically sound, economically justified, environmentally acceptable, and it will have the local cost share.

I have a letter from the mayor of Imperial Beach saying this is what they want out there. It may not be what they want in Washington, but this is what they want.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH, CA
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR,
July 18, 2002.

Colonel RICHARD G. THOMPSON,
Los Angeles District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles, CA.

DEAR COLONEL THOMPSON: This letter should serve as a formal indication of interest and intent by the City of Imperial Beach to proceed with the recommended project indicated in the Silver Strand Shoreline, Imperial Beach, California Draft General Reevaluation Report dated, June 2002.

The City of Imperial Beach is willing and able to provide all non-Federal requirements of the project including 36% of the cost to construct the initial project and 50% of the construction costs for each renourishment cycle.

It is anticipated that funds for the local share of initial construction will come from $4.2 million currently earmarked for this project in the California State Department of Boating and Waterways FY 2002/2003 budget.

We thank you for your continued interest in this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

DIANE ROSE,
Mayor.

Mr. INHOFE. Hopefully, when we get down toward the end of the debate, after I hear what my colleague says about this issue, I will use more time.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today with Senator BOXER in opposition to the Coburn amendment. This amendment limits our ability to appropriate funding to projects in our State, and I would ask all Senators to vote against the amendment.

My colleagues may remember that during consideration of the fiscal year 2006 emergency supplemental, we had an extended debate over flood control projects in the bill for California because Senator COBURN offered an amendment to strip them out of the bill. I understand that yesterday, Senator COBURN acknowledged that he made a mistake in opposing the Sacramento River Bank project, which he now believes was legitimate emergency funding. However, he has now offered another amendment affecting California and this same project.

Senator COBURN's amendment would require that the Army Corps complete its work on the Sacramento riverbank flood control project before it can begin any work on the Imperial Beach replenishment project. These two projects are separated by 500 miles and have no relation to each other, except that both protect homes and families.

I would like to briefly discuss these two projects. The Sacramento river bank flood protection project is a long-term levee restoration project. The project area is along 210 miles of the Sacramento River that is constantly at risk of erosion. Areas protected by the levees comprise over 1 million acres, 50 communities, $38 billion worth of improvements, and approximately 2.3 million people.

The Corps of Engineers is dangerously close to the ceiling set in the current authorization, with many more projects to be done. Senator BOXER and I support language in this bill to increase the Corps' authorization by another 80,000 linear feet. It will be several years before the Corps will reach that threshold if we are able to fund the project at full capability annually.

Yesterday, Senator COBURN referred to our discussion last year and that I had said that life and property lay in the balance with the restoration of these levees. I would say to my colleagues that statement also holds true on other projects to protect homes in a different part of my State that Senator COBURN will inhibit with this amendment.

Imperial Beach is a small city adjacent to the U.S./Mexico border and just south of San Diego Bay and the naval installations on Coronado. Its beach, the Silver Strand, is losing 100,000 cubic yards of sand per year, corresponding to a loss of 6.6 feet of beach.

So much shoreline has been lost that there is no longer dry beach at high tide, leaving only a small embankment between the ocean and homes. At the current retreat rate, the shoreline could reach homes within the year. A high-tide storm event in Imperial Beach could affect 3,000 homes within 3 blocks of the coast. Already these homes have experienced flooding and structural damage and the soil is highly erosive and receding—the problem in Imperial Beach is now, and we cannot wait years to address it.

The problem is that the beach is no longer the recipient of sand from its natural sources. First, there is a lack of sediment transfer from the Tijuana River because of three dams, two on the American side and one on the Mexican side, which have stopped the historical flow of sediment to the shoreline. Second, the Army Corps-built jetty that protects San Diego harbor also disrupts the flow of sand.

Yesterday, Senator COBURN stated that he believes the replenishment of this beach is a State responsibility. As we all know, all of these projects are cost-shared with the State or localities involved. The State of California already has $4.2 million on the table for this project as soon as it is authorized. So the State's commitment is there.

The residents and local government are also doing their fair share to shoulder the costs. The Army Corps of Engineers has determined that every dollar spent avoiding storm damage through beach nourishment will save taxpayers close to $2.00. The total net benefit this project provides due to annual costs from structural damage due to erosion, wave attack, or inundation costs, utility relocation costs, land loss, cleanup costs and other items related to the loss of sand will be at least $1.8 million.

There are hundreds of very important projects authorized in this bill, and many States have multiple projects. This amendment would set the dangerous precedent of requiring vital projects to wait until other projects in the same State are completed. Not only does this have the potential to increase Federal costs if we have to respond to disasters that could have been prevented, but it removes our discretion to evaluate projects independently, regardless of where they are located.

Senator COBURN has now decided that securing levees in my State is a high priority. It certainly is. However, I do not agree with him that homes and families behind river levees are more important than homes and families behind an ocean beach. I hope that my colleagues will join with us to oppose this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, to make sure everybody understands, this is not an amendment that eliminates this project. As I complimented the Senator from California and the Senator from Oklahoma yesterday, the idea behind this amendment is to make priorities.

What do we know? We know the Corps has a $58 billion backlog right now. That is 27½ years of work at the way the Corps is funded now. All this amendment says is, if you are in a family and you need a new roof, and you want to build a swimming pool, probably most American families are going to put the roof on before they build the swimming pool.

Sacramento has 1.8 million people. It is the largest city in this country at risk for flood damage. The canals and levees up there need to be reworked. All this amendment says is before we restore beaches—by the way, let me give a little background. The last time there was any flood damage at Imperial Beach was 1988. The total damage was $500,000 in 1988.

What we do know is, when you restore the sand, one winter storm will wipe it all out. That is why this is a 50-year project. This is planned to restore sand after sand after sand after sand for the next 50 years. It may be the right thing to do, but in terms of making a choice about priorities, wouldn't we think that before we restore sand that is going to be washed away by the next winter storm, maybe we ought to ensure ourselves that the people in Sacramento are safe. So this does not eliminate this project.

I also go back to the history on this project. What is the Corps' No. 1 way of fixing this project? It is not to continue to pump sand onto the beach. It is to have an extended growing out until the beach redevelops and replenishes itself, which was proposed and never finalized before they completed the environmental impact statement on it. That is the way to restore the sand to the beach in a natural way.

So what we have is we are going to take a low-priority item—very high-priority item for some of the people of Imperial Beach, CA, not all of them—we were submitted a letter yesterday by a large group of people who oppose this—and we are going to say that is as important in terms of authorization as fixing the levee system in Sacramento. It is not.

All this amendment says is before you start spending money on restoring sand that is going to be washed away by the next winter storm, you ought to fix the levees where you have 1.8 million people at real risk for flood. It is the largest city in the United States at risk. It has a greater risk of flood than New Orleans. It has an 85-year risk compared to a 250-year risk in New Orleans.

By this amendment, we are not saying do not do this. We are saying, let's add some priorities. Let's fix what is wrong in a major levee system first. Let's have, in this bill, that we are going to choose a priority rather than to send all this to the Corps, which is 27 years behind right now on their projects—will be another 7½ to 8 years after this bill passes—and say, on the way of priorities, the priority that ought to go first is fixing the levee system in Sacramento. It is not to degrade that this is not needed. I am not saying it is not needed. I am saying, with limited funds, we ought to have a priority.

Many people will argue they will make that decision at the Appropriations Committee. The authorizing bill right now is on the floor. I support many of the projects in this bill. But I think a case can be made, and the American people would demand, we cannot quit ducking priorities. It is easy to say to do everything, as the Senator from California said yesterday. The only problem with that is, we cannot do everything. We cannot do everything, so we have to make a choice. We ought to do those things that will protect the most people, solve the biggest problems first, and then work to the smaller problems.

In 1988 was the last time we ever had any storm damage at Imperial Beach, CA. It was in the midst of storm damage that was less than $500,000. We are going to be talking about in excess of $20 million for this beach at the same time we have levees that need to be reworked and reaffirmed in Sacramento.

This amendment is common sense. Let's do what is most important first, and when we have done that, then go do this. Let's do not do them both at the same time, quite frankly, because it will never happen at the same time, because we only have $2 billion a year for the Corps now and there are hundreds of projects in this country that should be done before this project.

With that, Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, there has been some misinformation. The last flooding and very bad winter storm was in 2004, and we have all that documented—in the hundreds of thousands of dollars—in this area. I understand Senator COBURN wants to substitute his opinion for the opinion of the Corps, but I want to go through, with my colleagues who might be listening to this debate, how many steps this project has already been through, as have all the projects we have agreed to fund.

So the WRDA bill is 7 years in the making.

Mr. President, will you tell me when I have 1 minute remaining because I want to yield that minute to Senator INHOFE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are at 1:10 now.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, 1:10 remaining? I thought I had 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator INHOFE used a minute of that.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we be given an additional 3 minutes, and the same for Senator COBURN, if he wishes to respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. I am going to take 2 minutes, and then we will see if Senator COBURN wants to respond, and then we will give the last minute to Senator INHOFE.

There is a lot of misinformation about the flooding here. There is also the implication that this is not an important project, when I have already pointed out how many businesses are at risk, how many residences.

This project has gone through so many steps. First, the local people said: We want to step forward and pay toward solving this problem. Then, the Corps said: You are right. Let's do a cost-benefit study and see if it makes sense for Federal dollars to go into the mix. Well, it came back: Absolutely. Then they said: What is the best type of project? Should we build walls? What should we do? No. They said: The best type of project is to utilize the sand as a natural barrier to these floods.

What we are desperately trying to do is complete this project because we are very concerned we could have even a worse problem than we had in 2004.

As much as I respect my colleague, I feel his judgment is not something I can accept. I cannot look in the eyes of the people who have been fighting for this project since 2003 and say to them they do not deserve to get any attention paid to their problem until Sacramento is taken care of.

I have to say to my friend, in going after this project the way he is, it seems to me he is picking one project out of a hat, which is extremely disturbing.

Mr. President, I know there are those who need to go over to the White House, so I will stop my discussion. I think I have enough information in the RECORD to have colleagues join with me.

I say, if Senator COBURN has anything to add at this time, I will reserve the minute for Senator INHOFE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I am not going after the project. The project stays. I think the Senator from California misses the point. This beach had restoration done by the city last year. It washed away. The sand they put up there will wash away. It is a temporary fix to a long-term program. That is why they have a 50-year authorization for restoring this beach, because it is going to continue to wash away because they are not fixing it in the way the Corps originally recommended it be fixed.

It is not about picking on this project. It is about, again, shouldn't we have priorities? Isn't it more important to fix Sacramento and the levee system there than this particular project, which has been repaired of late by the city with their own funds? I am not saying we should eliminate it; I am saying we should not do this until we have done the other things that are higher priority on the Corps' list, which No. 1 in my mind, besides what we need to do in Louisiana, is to restore the levee system in Sacramento.

With that, Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, is the Senator yielding back time?

All right. In deference to some other things that are going on right now, I will go ahead and yield back my time at this moment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 1090.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from Ohio, (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Arizona, (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) would have voted ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 12, nays 77, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 163 Leg.]

YEAS—12

Bunning	Ensign	Lugar
Burr	Feingold	Sessions
Chambliss	Gregg	Smith
Coburn	Lott	Sununu

NAYS—77

Akaka	Crapo	Levin
Alexander	Dodd	Lieberman
Allard	Domenici	Lincoln
Baucus	Dorgan	Martinez
Bayh	Durbin	McCaskill
Bennett	Enzi	McConnell
Bingaman	Feinstein	Menendez
Bond	Grassley	Mikulski
Boxer	Hagel	Murkowski
Byrd	Harkin	Murray
Cantwell	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Cardin	Hutchison	Nelson (NE)
Carper	Inhofe	Pryor
Casey	Inouye	Reed
Clinton	Kennedy	Reid
Cochran	Kerry	Roberts
Coleman	Klobuchar	Salazar
Collins	Kohl	Sanders
Conrad	Kyl	Schumer
Corker	Landrieu	Shelby
Cornyn	Lautenberg	Snowe
Craig	Leahy	Specter
Stabenow	Thune	Webb
Stevens	Vitter	Whitehouse
Tester	Voinovich	Wyden
Thomas	Warner	

NOT VOTING—11

Biden	Dole	McCain
Brown	Graham	Obama
Brownback	Isakson	Rockefeller
DeMint	Johnson	

The amendment (No. 1090) was rejected.

Mrs. BOXER. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DURBIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for that overwhelming vote. I view it as a vote that basically says this bill is a good bill. Let's not tinker with this bill unless there is pretty quick agreement on both sides that it is the right kind of amendment. This wasn't the right kind of amendment. We appreciate this vote.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:15 p.m. today, Senator CARDIN be recognized to call up amendment No. 1072; that once the amendment is reported by number, there be 5 minutes under the control of Senator CARDIN, and that upon the use or yielding back of time, the amendment be withdrawn; that the Senate then resume consideration of the Coburn amendment No. 1089, and there be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the amendment; that upon disposition of the Coburn amendment No. 1089, the Senate consider the Feingold amendment No. 1086, and there be 5 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to the amendment, with all debate time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that prior to a vote in relation to the amendments covered in this agreement, no intervening amendments be in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Members be recognized to speak as in morning business: Senators DODD, INOUYE, ALEXANDER, and LEVIN and that after that the Senate stand in recess.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

100TH BIRTHDAY OF FORMER SENATOR THOMAS DODD

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I am speaking today, as I have for the past 26 years, at the desk my father used during his 12 years as a Member of the Senate, from 1959 to 1971. I would like to think that this surface still bears some of the marks he might have made in an idle moment. As he did almost 50 years ago, I too have etched my name in this desk drawer.

Today I rise to speak of my father, for it was on this day, May 15, 1907, 100 years ago, that my father was born. I have two young daughters, Grace and Christina. They never knew their grandfather. For my girls, he is a painting that hangs in my office, photos in our home, or stories over dinner.

I try to explain, as parents and grandparents do, what their grandfather meant to me, who he was, what he did. I must say, it is hard to find the words. Some of my father's 12 grandchildren were lucky enough to know him. Even so, memory fades; but on this day, his 100th birthday, I wish to call up his memory as a gift to you, his grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren.

Like so many of his generation, born in the early years of the last century, my father, Thomas Dodd, had to overcome hardships—the death of his mother at an early age, the collapse of his father's business, the Depression years. Yet so much like his generation, hard jolts and trying experiences transformed and molded a man who would make a significant contribution to his country and our world.

As the Connecticut State director of the National Youth Administration in the early days of the New Deal at the height of the Great Depression, he helped young men and women find work—any work. As an FBI agent and then lawyer in the Justice Department, your grandfather and great-grandfather pursued notorious gangsters and prosecuted those who denied others their civil rights. He helped create the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department and brought to justice those who committed fraud and espionage. All those experiences were valuable contributions to helping those in need and bringing to justice those who did harm.

But none of those experiences compared to what he called the most important work of his life: his role as executive counsel under Justice Robert Jackson at the Nuremberg trials. By his own admission, this was the most important work of his career. It also was his most important, most life-changing event.

For almost 18 months, from the summer of 1945 to the fall of 1946, he confronted those who were the authors of the worst evil of the 20th century, maybe ever. As one of the leading prosecutors in the most important trial of the 20th century, your grandfather and great-grandfather demonstrated the supremacy of the rule of law over vengeance. Or, as Justice Robert Jackson said at the opening of those trials:

> That four great nations, flushed with victory and stung with injury, stay the hand of vengeance and voluntarily submit their captive enemies to the judgment of law is one of the most significant tributes that power has ever paid to reason.

From the Nuremberg years, your grandfather and great-grandfather emerged as one of the sharpest defenders of human rights in his day and an outspoken crusader against tyranny in all its forms. To those who suffered under the domination of the Soviet Union, there was no more valiant voice. To this day, he is remembered warmly by those who suffered under dictatorial regimes.

During his 16 years in Congress, first in the House of Representatives and 12 years in the Senate at this very desk, Thomas Dodd worked hard to make a difference in the lives of people everywhere who needed a champion.

Your grandfather's and great-grandfather's career did not end as he wanted it. He did not leave this desk as he would have liked. In 1970, he ran for another term and lost. ''Those who fight the times,'' it was said of him, ''do not always have an easy end.''

He returned to his home in Connecticut, and shortly after he died, 30 years before you were born, Grace and Christina. At the end of his life, his obituary was headlined ''A Lonely Fighter.'' It struck me as such an odd word for my father, who was such a wonderful storyteller, surrounded cradle to grave by a great big Irish Catholic family. I don't recall my father being alone a day of his life. And yet in his public life he had the politician's rarest virtue: he wasn't afraid to be alone.

However important and interesting your grandfather and great grandfather's life was, it is a terrible injustice to merely recite the chronology of his experiences. Even more important than what he did was the kind of person he was. Thomas Dodd was principled and courageous, fearless in the face of injustice, and outspoken in his defense of those in need. He was ahead of his time in so many ways—as an advocate for national health care, a proponent of sensible gun safety laws, an early voice warning of the effect of violence on television and the dangers of drug addiction, and a defender of those whose human rights were being denied.

Your grandfather and great-grandfather loved your grandmother and great-grandmother so much. He loved his children very much, as well. But the deep love for my mother was special to behold.

He was loyal to his hometown of Norwich, CT, and he cared deeply about the people of our home State. Thomas Dodd was a person of deep faith and a lifelong friend to many. He was proud of his family, and how proud he would be of his grandchildren and what they have accomplished and of the contribution you and his great grandchildren will make to your world.

Sixty-one years ago next month my father wrote the following words to my mother about his experience at Nuremberg. He was proud of what he had done at Nuremberg. While the words were addressed to his children, they also speak to his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

> I feel badly about you being alone with the children, but I'm doing the right thing and I feel sure we will not regret it. I will never do anything as worthwhile. Some day the boys will point to it, I hope, and be proud and inspired by it.

Only a few weeks before his death, in May of 1971, my father did an interview with a local Connecticut reporter. I was sitting in the room that day when the reporter asked if my father had known at the outset of his public life, when it began in 1932, how it would end, would he do it over again? I shall never forget his unhesitating answer:

> I would do it again in a minute, for there is no other calling where you can do as much for as many people as you can in a public life.

My father's answer has been the source of inspiration for me over these past 32 years in public service. So on this, your 100th birthday, from all of us—your six children, your son and daughters-in-law, your 12 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren—we say thank you, we love you, and happy birthday.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I didn't know Senator Thomas Dodd, but I know Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD, and I am sure Senator Thomas Dodd is smiling today.

This wonderful family that Senator CHRIS DODD has includes a wonderful wife, Jackie, whom we know, she worked in the Senate and was part of the Senate family before she married CHRIS DODD: and these two beautiful children, whom we in the Senate feel are part of us, Christina and Grace, we have watched them from the day they were born to now in the Senate gallery, and we really do feel they are partly ours.

It is a rare person we find in Senator CHRIS DODD, who now is chairman of the Banking Committee and doing a wonderful job, that committee working with the ranking member, the Senator from Alabama, Mr. SHELBY; and then also running for the Presidency of the United States.

So I say to Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD, I didn't have the opportunity to serve with Senator Thomas Dodd, but in this audience today, here in the Senate, are men—and I look and see two—who served with Senator Thomas Dodd: Senator DAN INOUYE and Senator ROBERT BYRD. I have spoken to them about Senators in the past and, of course, they have always mentioned Senator Thomas Dodd because he certainly is a man who made a difference in the Senate, as his son is doing.

One of the things that goes without saying is the ability of Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD to express himself. What an eloquent speaker he is. This is one of the rare times, because of the emotion involved with the words that he spoke, in which he spoke from written text. He usually speaks off the cuff, and he is very good. I understand how difficult this was for him. I could tell, from the tears in his eyes and the lump in his throat, how much he loved his father, his family, and how much he loves his family today.

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I rise today to join my leader to honor the distinguished Senator from the State of Connecticut, and one who I was proud to call friend: Senator Thomas Dodd.

Senator Tom Dodd, the father of Connecticut's senior Senator, CHRISTOPHER DODD, would have been 100 years old today. I would like to take a moment to reflect upon his remarkable career.

Tom Dodd was, in many ways, the picture of a Senator. In a tribute shortly after his death in 1971, a colleague said:

> His ability was outstanding and his appearance was striking. With the dignity of his bearing and the gray of his hair and his booming resonant voice, he made an impressive figure on the Senate Floor.

But there was much more to Tom Dodd than style. Through a lifetime of service, he brought a dedication of fighting evil in all its forms: in racism, in greed, in sabotage, genocide, and tyranny. Few have piled up such an impressive record.

Tom Dodd began his career as an FBI agent tracking down some of our Nation's worst criminals. In a way, he had something of the FBI agent about him for the rest of his life. He was determined to give wrongdoers no quarter, in word or in action.

During the Great Depression, he led the National Youth Administration of Connecticut, putting thousands of his fellow citizens to work, and then he joined the Department of Justice as a prosecutor. He fought the Ku Klux Klan, long before any Americans saw its true nature.

In later years, he prosecuted union busters who kept workers from bargaining together for fair conditions. And when the Second World War came, he served with devotion on the home front, bringing prosecutions against German American Bundists, Nazi sympathizers who tried to sabotage the war effort.

When the Nazis had been defeated, his country called Tom Dodd to Nuremberg, Germany, to help lead the historic prosecution of Nazi war criminals. And Tom Dodd said yes because he knew that Nuremberg was America's chance to prove its commitment to the rule of law. If we simply gave in to vengeance, we would be walking in the footsteps of those we despised, and Tom knew intuitively that America stood for something more.

He was quickly promoted to executive trial counsel, second only to the lead prosecutor, Robert Jackson. Laying before the world indisputable proof of the Nazis' crimes, Tom and his colleagues succeeded. They had sacrificed the certainty of an execution for the uncertainty of a trial. The test was one of principle over power—and America passed.

Tom's lifetime of service was crowned with two terms in the House and then election to the Senate. He served in this Chamber—at the desk now occupied by his son CHRIS—for 12 years. In the face of enormous opposition, he passed America's first comprehensive gun control law. He fought drug abuse and juvenile crime and violence on television. He protected the homeland on the Internal Security Subcommittee and was one of our most eloquent voices in support of the International Genocide Convention. Tom Dodd said had it been in force in the 1930s, the crimes of Hitler might have been deterred.

For the rest of his life, Tom remembered what he had seen at Nuremberg. He had seen tyranny face to face; he had seen, as he put it, an ''autopsy of history's most horrible crime.'' And he remained an enemy of tyranny for the rest of his life. He knew, as one author put it, that the Nazis' ''corruption of spirit, the irresistible human addiction to power, were like first drafts of a terrible future.'' So he spoke out against that corruption wherever it showed itself, and against Communist tyranny above all.

One colleague remembered that Tom Dodd's many foreign policy speeches ''were memorable in the annals of the Senate for their scope and their scholarship, their philosophical consistency, and their nonpartisan nature.''

True, Tom's career did not end as he would have wanted it. In 1970, he ran for another term as an Independent and lost. He returned to his home in Connecticut, and shortly after passed away. But through those last, difficult months—and I remember it well even today—he held his head high.

Tom's steadfast example and his eloquent words remain with me still. In 1950, Tom Dodd said the following:

> At Nuremberg, we laid down the doctrine that individuals are responsible for some offenses. It always seemed to me that it is the people who make up the government. Individual people.

What holds true for the worst surely holds for the best. Behind all of Tom's achievements there was an indelible individual—passionate, strong, wise, and brave. I was privileged to call him among my friends. I have no doubt that he would be so proud of his children today.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I think I am next in order, but I see some of Senator DODD's colleagues, and if they want to speak to Senator DODD, I would be happy to defer.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would be happy to defer to the Senator from West Virginia, if he wishes to speak.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I knew Tom Dodd. I served with Tom Dodd. He reminded me of a Roman Senator. God bless him. It has been quite some time since Senators talked about the case for censure against Senator Tom Dodd. These remarks on the floor today bring back to mind those difficult days.

I have grown quite close to Tom Dodd's son, Senator CHRIS DODD. We have sat next to each other in the Senate for ten years. He is a fine Senator and a fine man.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I had not planned to speak until I heard Senator CHRIS DODD with his tribute to his father. It brought back, quickly, an early memory, my own memory of his father. It goes back to an earlier time when I was a college intern in the office of Senator Paul Douglas, whose office was next-door to Senator Dodd's office. I can recall, as a college student, watching as Senator Dodd would come and go.

Of course, we all knew his name. We all knew what a great contribution he had made to the Senate. It was not until later that I read about what a great contribution he had made to the world.

I recall, when Senator CHRIS DODD, his son, came to the floor when we were in the midst of debating how we would conduct ourselves on this war on terror and gave one of the most memorable speeches in the history of the Senate, talking about the standards that a nation should live by even in the midst of a war. He recalled the inspiration of his father, an inspiration that has been mentioned several times this morning—the service his father gave to America and to the world at the Nuremberg trials.

Senator CHRIS DODD said on the floor:

> To watch the U.S. Senate, on the anniversary of the Nuremberg trials, step away from the great principles enshrined at that time is one of the saddest days I've ever seen in . . . my almost 30 years in serving in this body.

I remembered that speech, and I wanted to enter this quote in the RECORD for one simple reason. We all wonder what our legacy will be, those of us who are fortunate enough to serve in the Senate. In the history of this country, 1,895 men and women have had this high honor to serve here. Some have faded into obscurity. Their names can hardly be recalled. Others left great legacies. Certainly, Senator Thomas Dodd did, in his public service, both before the Senate and the House, and after and during.

But he also left another piece of legacy which we in the Senate appreciate today. He left a son dedicated to public service, a son who has not only carried on in his tradition of public service but has honored his father's memory with that service. When CHRIS DODD came to the floor and recalled his father's contribution in the Nuremberg trials, in a war-torn world trying to find some peace and some direction, he remembered his father's work and brought it with him to work that day in the Senate. His voice on the issue of habeas corpus and the treatment of prisoners has been an inspiration to all of us.

As I listened to him pay tribute to his father, a tribute which his father richly deserved, I wanted to join paying tribute to his father and to his father's son who carried on in such a great tradition of public service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I will be very brief, I say to the Senator from Tennessee. I was in the Chamber when Senator DODD was paying tribute to his father on what would have been his 100th birthday. I didn't want to let this moment slip by without telling Senator DODD, when I was a young boy, I was up in this gallery. I don't know if it was this gallery or this one, but I was looking down and I remember seeing your father.

I asked the people who were sitting with me: Who is that Senator?

They said that was Senator Tom Dodd.

I said: That man looks like a Senator.

Mr. DODD. Right.

Mr. CONRAD. He had that booming voice, and he had an air about him, an air of authority. It was very interesting to see others' reaction to him. You could see they had respect for him in the way he was addressed.

I later, then, read a book about him. I don't think I have ever told Senator DODD this, but I read a book about your father, about the life he had led. I remember distinctly about his being an FBI agent and the Nuremberg trials. That made a great impression on me.

Then, when I came to the Senate and had the opportunity to serve with Senator CHRIS DODD, I thought: You know, you couldn't be more proud. Your father, looking down on all of this—he could not be more proud than to have his son in his seat in the Senate, somebody who also looks like a Senator—but much more than that, someone who, similar to his father, commands respect from other Senators because of the quality and the character of his work.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DODD. I thank the Senator very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am glad I have had an opportunity to hear this and will only say, to make certain the same sentiment is expressed from this side of the aisle—I knew Senator DODD's father. I didn't know him well or personally, but I knew him because I was Senator Howard Baker's legislative assistant at a time when Senator Dodd served here. I admired him. I respected him. More importantly, I remember the respect Senator Baker and others had for him and for his long and distinguished career.

My own father would be 100 years old this year, so I understand the enormous pride this Senator DODD has for his father, Senator Dodd. Senator DURBIN and Senator CONRAD and others said this as well: The father would be proud of the son.

I had the privilege of serving as sometimes the chairman, sometimes the ranking member, of committees with Senator CHRIS DODD. It is a tremendous pleasure to see how he cares, especially for children and families in the workplace and contributions he has made here.

This is a day for a tribute to the father and a day that we are sure his father would have great pride in his own son.

Mr. DODD. I thank the Senator.

Mr. ALEXANDER. If there are no other comments regarding Senator Dodd, I would like to talk about immigration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. ALEXANDER pertaining to the introduction of S. 1393 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

(The remarks of Mr. LEVIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1395 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.''

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CARPER).

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Maryland, Mr. CARDIN, is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1071 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1065

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the previous order be modified to provide that the amendment I intend to call up is amendment No. 1071.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside, and I call up amendment No. 1071.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN], for himself, and Ms. MIKULSKI, proposes an amendment numbered 1071 to amendment No. 1065.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for the siting, construction, expansion, and operation of liquefied natural gas terminals)

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. SITING, CONSTRUCTION, EXPANSION, AND OPERATION OF LNG TERMINALS.

Section 10 of the Act of March 3, 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403), is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and designation and all that follows through ''creation'' and inserting the following:

''SEC. 10. OBSTRUCTION OF NAVIGABLE WATERS; WHARVES AND PIERS; EXCAVATIONS AND FILLING IN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The creation''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) SITING, CONSTRUCTION, EXPANSION, AND OPERATION OF LNG TERMINALS.—The Secretary shall not approve or disapprove an application for the siting, construction, expansion, or operation of a liquefied natural gas terminal pursuant to this section without the express concurrence of each State affected by the application.''.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that Senators LIEBERMAN and DODD be added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1071.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this amendment would restore the authority of State and local governments to protect the environment and public safety of the sitings of liquefied natural gas, LNG, terminals within their own State. The amendment is drafted to be an amendment to the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, which gives the Army Corps authority on section 10 permits. The current law on the siting of LNG plants basically allows the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to site without the consultation or approval of State or local governments. This amendment is an effort to restore federalism to the process of siting LNG plants.

There are now dozens of proposals to site new LNG plants in the United States. Some are being suggested to be sited near population centers, which raises serious concern about public safety.

Let me point out that LNG plants and the tankers that bring in the natural gas are very much targets of terrorism. Richard Clarke, a former Bush administration counterterrorism official, said LNG plants and tankers are ''especially attractive targets'' to terrorists. The risks are great. We know LNG plants can spark pool fires, which are high-intensity fires, extremely difficult to extinguish. CRS has reported in the last six decades there have been 13 serious accidents involving LNG plants, including one in the State of Maryland in 1979 that had a fatality associated with it.

Maryland has one of the six LNG plants in our country, and there is a proposal to add another LNG plant in Maryland. AES Sparrows Point LNG and Mid-Atlantic Express intend to site a new LNG plant at Sparrows Point in the Baltimore metropolitan area. This is right in the middle of a population center. It is opposed by the congressional delegation. It is opposed by the Governor. It is opposed by the county executive in the jurisdiction in which the LNG plant is to be sited. It is unacceptable public safety, an economic and environmental risk. Yet there has been no consideration given by the individuals who want to site this plant to

the concerns of local government. It is totally up to FERC to make the decision, and that is wrong. State and local governments should have a meaningful opportunity to participate in decisions of siting LNG terminals. That is exactly what this amendment would do.

I see the distinguished chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee on the Senate floor. I respect her judgment as to the importance of moving forward on this bill. This amendment, because it hasn't been cleared, could add some difficulty to that process. It is within the jurisdiction of the Environment and Public Works Committee on which I serve, and I hope our committee would hold hearings on this issue and consider another vehicle which may be more appropriate than the bill currently before us to deal with the appropriate input of State and local governments on the siting of LNG plants. We have a responsibility to do that. We have a responsibility to our communities. We have a responsibility for public safety. We have a responsibility to make sure it is done right. Allowing FERC to do that without the input of State and local government is wrong.

I hope there will be another opportunity that I will be able to either have a public hearing or an opportunity to discuss this amendment further.

I am pleased several of my colleagues have expressed interest in the amendment. This certainly will not be the last time I will have an opportunity to talk about it.

AMENDMENT NO. 1071 WITHDRAWN

With that, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1089 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1065

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided on amendment No. 1089 offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, the amendment is very simple. There are three visitor centers now within 77 miles of the proposed site of this visitors center. Thousands of people, tens of thousands of people in Louisiana still live in trailers. We are going to add a fourth visitors center, and that duplicates exactly the same thing in the area.

It may be a good idea. I am not against it. But how dare we spend money and authorize a project when we haven't taken care of the folks of Louisiana. All this says is, we set priorities. We make sure the people of Louisiana are out of their temporary housing and into permanent housing before we go about spending millions of dollars on a visitor center. It has been stated that there would be no cost, as the center has already been built.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD an e-mail I received today from the Corps of Engineers saying this center has not been built and will, in fact, expend a great deal of Federal taxpayer money when it is.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

From: Greer, Jennifer A HQ02
Sent: Monday, May 07, 2007 12:05 PM
To: Treat, Brian (Coburn)
Subject: Info

Brian, wanted to check in. I know people are working this, but I am out of town and have a bit of trouble coordinating. Just wanted to let you know we didn't forget. I will send an update on status asap. Jennifer

From: Treat, Brian
To: Greer, Jennifer A HQ02
Sent: Mon May 07 21:41:09 2007
Subject: RE: Info

Thanks Jennifer. Any word on when we'll receive the information?

I will be updating my boss in the morning and just wanted to make sure.

Thanks again for your help.

Brian

From: Greer, Jennifer A
To: Treat, Brian (Coburn)
Sent: Mon May 07 21:51:59 2007
Subject: Re: Info

I think tommorrow. will stay in touch.

From: Treat, Brian
To: Greer, Jennifer A HQ02
Sent: Mon May 0722:44:24 2007
Subject: Re: Info

One other question. In WRDA, the bill is authorizing an upgrade to the Morgan City, LA visitor center. Do you know if the original type B center was ever built or if this is merely changing the 86 authorization? Thanks.

From: Greer, Jennifer A
Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 9:16 AM
To: Treat, Brian (Coburn)
Subject: Re: Info

Brian, the center was never built. Jennifer

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I hope we will do what we did on the last amendment, which is to say no to it because, as we learned from the Senators from Louisiana, this particular amendment is directed at the local people who are willing to pay 100 percent for this center. The fact is, Louisiana is never going to get on its feet if it does not revive tourism. Let's face it. It isn't that we can say: Let's just build the flood protection and worry about the visitor centers later. There is a certain amount of linear thinking going on behind this amendment and the one before.

This is the United States. We have to do everything; we can't just do one thing. We have to build the flood protection, and we have to revive Louisiana's economy. This is a rather mean-spirited amendment in the sense that not even a penny of Federal money is involved in the building of this particular center. I urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. COBURN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 1089. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) would have voted ''yea.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 11, nays 79, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 164 Leg.]

YEAS—11

Bunning	Craig	Kyl
Burr	Crapo	Smith
Chambliss	Ensign	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	

NAYS—79

Akaka	Grassley	Nelson (FL)
Alexander	Gregg	Nelson (NE)
Allard	Hagel	Obama
Baucus	Harkin	Pryor
Bayh	Hatch	Reed
Bennett	Inhofe	Reid
Biden	Inouye	Roberts
Bingaman	Isakson	Salazar
Bond	Kennedy	Sanders
Boxer	Kerry	Schumer
Byrd	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cantwell	Kohl	Shelby
Cardin	Landrieu	Snowe
Carper	Lautenberg	Specter
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Clinton	Levin	Stevens
Cochran	Lieberman	Tester
Coleman	Lincoln	Thomas
Collins	Lott	Thune
Conrad	Lugar	Vitter
Corker	Martinez	Voinovich
Cornyn	McCaskill	Warner
Dodd	McConnell	Webb
Dorgan	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden
Feingold	Murkowski	
Feinstein	Murray	

NOT VOTING—10

Brown	Domenici	McCain
Brownback	Durbin	Rockefeller
DeMint	Graham	
Dole	Johnson	

The amendment (No. 1089) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 5 minutes of debate equally divided on amendment No. 1086 offered by the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. FEINGOLD.

The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, last week I spoke at length on my prioritization amendment. I urge all my colleagues to support the Feingold-McCain-Coburn-Carper-Gregg-Sununu-DeMint amendment.

This important amendment would help jump-start a process for ensuring

that limited taxpayer dollars go to the most worthy water resources projects.

Right now, Congress does not have any information about the relative priority of the nearly $60 billion authorized but unbuilt corps projects. What we do have is individual Members arguing for projects in their States or districts, but no information about which projects are most important to the country's economic development or transportation systems, or our ability to protect citizens and property from natural disasters.

This amendment would create a temporary group of water resources experts to do two things: (1) make recommendations on a process for prioritizing corps projects; and (2) analyze projects authorized in the last 10 years or that are under construction, and put similar types of projects into tiers that reflect their importance. This would be done with clear direction to seek balance between the needs of all States.

This information will be provided to Congress and the public in a nobinding report. That is—Congress and the public get information to help them make decisions involving millions, even billions, of dollars. We need to get ideas on the table, and I think my colleagues will agree that a report with recommendations to Congress is a good, commonsense first step.

The New Orleans Times Picayune certainly does. Just yesterday, the paper editorialized in favor of my amendment and stated:

> Using objective criteria rather than political clout to decide what should be done is a smart, reform-minded step.

This amendment also has the support of a number of taxpayer and conservation groups.

I thank the chairman and ranking member for their efforts to retain key reforms in the underlying bill; however, this is a critical reform component and I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield the floor.

• Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator FEINGOLD, along with Senators COBURN, CARPER, GREGG, SUNUNU, and DEMINT, in offering this important amendment. It is designed to help Congress make informed decisions on which Army Corps projects should be funded based on our national priorities.

In August 2005, our Nation witnessed a devastating natural disaster. When Hurricane Katrina hit the shores of the gulf coast, it brought destruction and tragedy beyond compare; more so than we have seen in decades. Almost 2 years later, the gulf coast is still trying to rebuild and our Nation continues to dedicate significant resources to the reconstruction effort. One of the many lessons we learned from Katrina is that we must ensure that our Army Corps resources are being used in the most productive and efficient manner possible. It is time that this Congress took a hard look at how we are spending our scarce Army Corps dollars and whether or not they are actually reaching our most critical projects.

Our current system for funding Corps projects is not working. Under today's practice, Members of Congress commonly submit requests for pet projects important to their constituency, and those requests are essentially horse-traded by committee and party leaders. Too often a Member's seniority and party position dictates which projects will be funded. Instead of relying on political muscle, we should fund projects based on national priority. But under the current regime, requests are made and filled without having a clear picture of how a project affects the overall infrastructure of our Nation's waterways or where it fits within our national waterway priorities. That shouldn't be acceptable to anyone in this Chamber, and it isn't acceptable to the American public.

Now, many of my colleagues are thinking, ''there he goes again, railing against earmarks.'' But earmarks aren't the full story here. There is a $58 billion backlog of Corp projects today, and the bill before us proposes to add another $15 billion, according to the Office of Management and Budget. Unfortunately, the Corps receives $2 billion annually on average, so there is no way to fund most of these projects. What is more troubling is that there is no way to know which projects warrant these limited resources because the Corps refuses to tell Congress what it views as national priorities. In fact, every time Congress specifically requests a list of the Corps' top priorities, the Corps claims it's unable to provide an answer. This is clearly unacceptable and cannot result in the best interests of public safety.

The sponsors of this amendment are not the only ones who are concerned. Let me quote Representative HOBSON, former chairman of the House Energy and Water Appropriations Committee, from his statement on the floor on May 24, 2006:

> Last fall, we asked the Corps to provide Congress with a ''top 10'' list of the flood control and navigation infrastructure needs in the country. The Corps was surprisingly unable or not allowed to respond to this simple request, and that tells me the Corps has lost sight of its national mission and has no clear vision for projects it ought to be doing in the future . . . frankly, what is still lacking is a long-term vision of what the Nation's water resources infrastructure should look like in the future. ''More of the same'' is not a thoughtful answer, nor is it a responsible answer in times of constrained budgets.

In February of this year, the National Academy of Public Administration, NAPA, issued its report, ''Prioritizing America's Water Resources Investments, Budget Reform for Civil Works Construction Projects at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.'' The Report included the following findings:

> The present project-by-project approach, with lagging project completions, on-again-off-again construction schedules, and disappointed cost-share sponsors that do not know what they can count on, is not the best path to continued national prosperity.
>
> The prioritization process is not transparent. At several points, within both the executive and legislative branches, the decision process is not sufficiently open or documented so that the public can readily understand the reasons for funding or not funding projects.
>
> Larger questions emerged that bear on the future sustainability of the nation's water resources . . . The answer to these questions should begin with a fundamental reassessment of national water resources needs, goals, and strategies. It should end with a substantially reshaped planning and budgeting process . . .

Our amendment is designed to address these problems and shed light on the funding process. It would allow both Congress and the American people to have a clearer understanding of where our funding should be directed to meet the most pressing water infrastructure needs of the country.

Last year, we proposed a related amendment during debate on the Water Resources Development Act. While that amendment was intended to help Congress make clear and educated decisions on which Army Corps projects should be funded based on our nation's priorities, concerns were raised about specific provisions of the amendment and it eventually was rejected. Therefore, we have revised our amendment to address the concerns we heard on the floor last July.

For example, there was concern that our previous amendment gave too much power to the administration by placing the power of prioritization in the hands of a multi-agency committee. The amendment before us responds to those concerns by establishing an independent commission that would review Corps projects that are currently under construction or have been authorized during the last 10 years. These projects would be evaluated by several commonsense, transparent criteria. They would also be divided and judged within their own project category such as navigation, flood and storm damage reduction, and environmental restoration. Each project category would be broken into broad, roughly equal-sized tiers with the highest tiers including the highest priority projects and on down the line. The commission would prepare an advisory report detailing its findings that would be sent to Congress and be made available to the public. Similar to our prior proposal, the prioritization report required under our amendment is an effort to inform Congress, but it does not dictate spending decisions.

To more fully understand the need for a prioritization system, let's consider funding for Louisiana in the fiscal year 2006 budget. The administration's budget request included 41 line items or projects solely for Louisiana that totaled $268 million. That works out to $6.5 million per project on average. The House Energy and Water Appropriations bill included for Louisiana 39 line items or projects totaling $254 million—again in the neighborhood of $6.5

million per project. The Senate bill included 71 line items or projects to the tune of $375 million—averaging out to $5.3 million per project. So, while even more money was proposed for Louisiana under the Senate version, individual projects would receive less money and, inevitably, this would result in delays in completing larger projects. This all comes down to the real-world consequences of earmarking. Communities actually lose under the earmarking practice.

Can we really afford long, drawn out delays on flood control projects that people's lives depend on simply because too many members are fighting to earmark projects important to them, but without the benefit of how such projects fit into the country's most pressing needs? We lack the information we need to offer us guidance in funding Corps projects. Without such guidance, we will only further the risks to public safety and continue to delay the timely completion of critical projects. Now, some may believe that under our amendment smaller projects will lose out. However, the size of the project has no impact on the prioritization system. In fact, this objective system will help find the hidden gems in the Corps project list and highlight their importance.

It is time that we end this process of blind spending, throwing money at projects that may or may not benefit the larger good. It is time for us to take a post-Katrina look at how we fund our water resources projects. Shouldn't we be doing all that we can to reform the Corps and ensure that most urgent projects are being funded and constructed? Or, are we going to be content with business as usual? As stated in a letter signed by the heads of Tax Payers for Common Sense Action, the National Taxpayers Union, and the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste in support of our amendment:

> Enough is enough . . . we need a systematic method for ensuring the most vital projects move to the front of the line so limited taxpayer funds are spent more prudently.

I commend Senator FEINGOLD for his efforts to build on and improve upon the Corps reforms that we've worked to advance during the reauthorization debate. Corps modernization has been a priority that Senator FEINGOLD and I have shared for years, but never before has there been such an appropriate atmosphere and urgent need to move forward on these overdue reforms.

This important prioritization amendment has been endorsed by many outside groups, including Taxpayers for Common Sense Action, National Taxpayers Union, Citizens Against Government Waste, American Rivers, National Wildlife Federation, Earthjustice, Environmental Defense, Republicans for Environmental Protection, Sierra Club, and Friends of the Earth.

The Corps procedures for planning and approving projects, as well as the Congressional system for funding projects, are broken, but they can be fixed. This amendment is a step toward a more informed public and a more informed Congress. We owe the American public accountability in how their tax dollars are spent. Literally, lives depend on it.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.●

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I yield myself 1 minute 20 seconds, and I will yield the rest of the time to Senator INHOFE.

I thank Senator FEINGOLD for being a leader on Corps reform. I don't view this amendment as reform. My colleague says we have to take the politics out of the decisionmaking process. Well, the fact is, his commission is a political commission appointed by the President, appointed by the Speaker, the minority leader, and so on. So he is taking the decisions, in many ways, away from us. Therefore, I call this the ''we have met the enemy, and it is we'' amendment—taking the power away from us to decide what is important in priorities and adding another layer of bureaucracy in political appointees, who are now going to slow things down.

We do have problems. It has taken 7 years to get to this point with WRDA. There are checks and balances every step of the way. We have very tough criteria in this bill. I know the occupant of the chair knows that because he is on the committee.

Senator INHOFE and I have said the locals have to pay their share. The cost/benefit ratio has to be in place. Everything has to be thought through. The Corps has to make their report. They come to the committees, and they go through authorization and appropriation.

I hope we will vote no on this amendment.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first of all, I agree with what the Senator just said. We have plowed this field before. The votes were 88 votes against last time. Nothing has changed. I know the intentions of the Senator proposing this are right, but the amendment assumes there is one, and only one, correct rank list of projects, and we need to have somebody else write it down. We already have the Corps of Engineers going through and determining, as Senator BOXER said, what the criteria is and why these things should be considered, and normally it would then come to us. I think that is what we are supposed to be doing; it is why we are elected. So now we would have, if we pass this amendment, one more bureaucracy between the Corps and us. If there is anybody on the conservative side who thinks it inures to anyone's benefit to have one more layer of bureaucracy, then this is your chance to vote for it.

I ask that you oppose this amendment.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) would have voted ''yea.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 22, nays 69, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 165 Leg.]

YEAS—22

Allard	Corker	McCaskill
Bingaman	Dodd	Nelson (FL)
Burr	Ensign	Sanders
Carper	Feingold	Sununu
Casey	Gregg	Voinovich
Clinton	Kohl	Webb
Coburn	Landrieu	
Collins	Lieberman	

NAYS—69

Akaka	Grassley	Murray
Alexander	Hagel	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Harkin	Obama
Bayh	Hatch	Pryor
Bennett	Hutchison	Reed
Biden	Inhofe	Reid
Bond	Inouye	Roberts
Boxer	Isakson	Salazar
Bunning	Kennedy	Schumer
Byrd	Kerry	Sessions
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cardin	Kyl	Smith
Chambliss	Lautenberg	Snowe
Cochran	Leahy	Specter
Coleman	Levin	Stabenow
Conrad	Lincoln	Stevens
Cornyn	Lott	Tester
Craig	Lugar	Thomas
Crapo	Martinez	Thune
Dorgan	McConnell	Vitter
Enzi	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Graham	Murkowski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—9

Brown	Dole	Johnson
Brownback	Domenici	McCain
DeMint	Durbin	Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 1086) was rejected.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 20 minutes equally divided between the Senator from Connecticut and the Senator from Nebraska prior to the time of taking up consideration of the Kerry amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I would say it would be Senator HAGEL first, followed by Senator DODD.

Mr. INHOFE. No objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I rise today to address the issue of Iraq. The debate on Iraq over the last few weeks in our country and the Congress has been centered on conditions for America's continued involvement in Iraq. Unfortunately, it has been defined by many in the context of political winners and losers. Either President Bush wins or Congress wins. That is not responsible legislation. That is not a responsible approach to a serious issue such as a war, when today we have crossed over to 3,400 Americans killed in Iraq.

The troops will get their money. They need to get their money. We will find a center of gravity that will accommodate the President and the Congress with the appropriate language or conditions for America's continued involvement in Iraq. The question we need to focus on now is: Where is Iraq headed? The answer will require an honest and clear analysis of the facts, as the facts are on the ground in Iraq today.

I returned 3 weeks ago from my fifth trip to Iraq, and there is not much good news in Iraq. There is no point unraveling the last 4 or 5 years of mistakes and bad decisions or assigning blame. We are where we are. We are where we are, and we must get beyond the immediacy of today and the debate over the conditions of our continued involvement. We need to ask the question: What happens next? What happens in September and October? What comes after, hopefully, a reduction in violence? Where are we going in Iraq? How do we get there? Do we need a new strategy in Iraq, new thinking?

As Secretary of Defense Gates has said, America's continued support is not open-ended, and the American people have registered that fact very clearly. Iraq is caught in a vicious complicated cycle of violence, despair, and no solutions. This cycle must be broken. American military power alone will not be the solution in Iraq. General Petraeus and all of our military leaders have stated this.

Iraq's political system and leaders seem incapable of finding a political accommodation to move Iraq toward a political reconciliation. Our civilian and military leaders all agree there is no military resolution. That is only a temporary holding pattern for the Iraqis to find that new consensus of governance, and only a political resolution in Iraq will sustain that new center of gravity and that new consensus.

Some strategic new thinking must be found in Iraq for our policies, not unlike what Ambassador Carlos Pasqual, Larry Diamond, and many others, have been thinking and writing about and putting forward over the last few weeks. First we must take the American face off of Iraq. Get America out of the middle of the Iraqi political process. We are exacerbating, we are complicating the problem; not because we are not well-intentioned and have not made tremendous sacrifices but because the people of Iraq and the people of the Middle East believe we are still an occupying power after 4 years in Iraq.

We must engage, as the Baker-Hamilton report recommended, Iran and Syria. The Bush administration deserves credit in beginning the engagement; however, it needs to be done in a regional framework, not a series of bilateral talks with unclear or disjointed purposes and objectives. The time has come to consider an international mediator for Iraq—probably under the auspices of the United Nations—to begin a new process for achieving some form of political accommodation in Iraq. The Iraqis are obviously incapable of bringing that consensus, that accommodation together. Only a credible and trusted outside influence can bring this political reconciliation about in Iraq. If it can be done, it will be up to the Iraqis to support it and to sustain it. America cannot do that for them.

There are significant political, cultural, historical, religious, and regional differences between Iraq and other countries that have had UN mediators, such as Afghanistan, Kosovo, East Timor, and Northern Ireland. But they have been tailored to work, and they have worked.

We have to understand we have no options in Iraq today. There is chaos today in Iraq. We must change direction, strategy, and policy. America can continue to support this process and help ensure the success of this mediation, but we can't, and we won't, continue to be the occupying power in Iraq.

America has an important strategic, geopolitical, energy, and economic interest in the Middle East. It would be irresponsible to abandon Iraq and other interests in the region. But if we don't find a new direction soon, and a responsible and workable policy to help the Iraqis find some core stability, bringing some political consensus, America will leave and the Middle East could then erupt into a very dangerous regional conflagration. Reality and clear new strategic thinking being incorporated in a new direction and policy in Iraq is now required. These are the essential dynamics the Congress must now engage in—the Congress, with the President—and we must put aside the partisan dynamics, the partisan difficulties and differences. War should never be held captive to partisanship. It should never be a wedge issue for either political party. This is too serious. It is very serious.

As we enter our fifth year, with the kind of money and casualties we have invested in Iraq, we must ask ourselves: Where do we go next? How do we get there? I think that will depend on some bold new strategic thinking, incorporating a new UN mediator we can support and frame and be a part of, and taking the American face off of the political process in Iraq. These are the issues we must debate and find consensus on.

I would hope as we work our way through the differences on the $100 billion in additional spending for Iraq and Afghanistan that we will move to that next series of significant consequences and seriously find a new strategy and policy for Iraq and America's interests in Iraq and the Middle East.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, let me commend my colleague from Nebraska. He and I have worked on a number of issues over the years. In fact, in my remarks—and I had no knowledge when I prepared these remarks that I would be following my colleague from Nebraska—I quote some of the statements he has made about the situation in Iraq.

I commend him for his candor and his directness. He brings a lot of experience and knowledge to these issues, and is as deeply committed as anyone here to the well-being of our men and women in uniform, regardless of where they serve. He has clearly pointed out what is necessary here, not only the resolution of our military presence in Iraq but, just as importantly, what comes afterward: How do we then move beyond the military question to the political, diplomatic, and economic issues that offer some hope to the Iraqi people and ourselves for reemerging in peace and stability in that part of the world. I commend him for his comments.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the Feingold-Reid-Dodd amendment, which will come up at some point on this water bill under arrangements that the leader has provided, along with others. I would have preferred a freestanding proposal by my colleague from Wisconsin, whom I am pleased to join today, but under the circumstances, I recognize this may be the best opportunity we will have to actually debate his amendment, and I urge my colleagues to be supportive of his proposal. I realize it is a proposal that has some critics, but I believe it is the most honest, straightforward answer to the present situation in Iraq, one that is deteriorating by the hour, I would point out.

We need to reverse 4 years of a failed policy by safely redeploying our troops out of harm's way, out of the middle of Iraq's civil war. Despite our best wishes, and our military's best efforts, we are unable to solve Iraq's problems and their civil war. That has become clear. We cannot do that with military force. That was the conclusion of our military leaders 4 years ago, and they have never wavered in that conclusion. There is not a military solution to Iraq's civil war.

After invading over 4 years ago, we still lack a coherent strategy, and our

military presence has not improved the security situation in Iraq. The valor, the determination, the courage of our service men and women has been remarkable, and all of us in this Chamber, I believe, share that view. Yet the situation in Iraq grows worse, literally by the hour. This is simply unacceptable.

The President of our country contends now, as he contended for the last 4 years, and I quote him:

> Absolutely we're winning. Things are getting better. We do have a strategy, but it just needs more time.

Those statements are false, unfortunately. We have no strategy in Iraq, in my view, just a surge tactic in search of a strategy. We had a surge in late 2005, and the result was the worst year of violence in Iraq since the war began. We also had two additional surges in Operation Together Forward I and II, and both of those surges failed as well.

My colleague, Senator HAGEL from Nebraska, recently argued, and I quote him here:

> The President's strategy is taking America deeper and deeper into quagmire, with no exit strategy. The strategy to deepen America's military involvement in Iraq will not bring about a resolution in Iraq.

I wholeheartedly agree with that conclusion. As the Baker-Hamilton report rightly concluded, there will be no military victory in Iraq. Iraq's civil war cannot be solved with military force alone. Only Iraqis can solve the quagmire now facing their country. Only Iraqis can chose to reconcile, to reach power-sharing agreements, to govern and police collectively, and to share the country's oil wealth.

But despite our best hopes that is not happening, and our military is unable to make that happen. This is why the surge tactic is fundamentally flawed. We cannot implement a military solution to what is fundamentally a political conflict in that country.

I believe we have a moral obligation to protect Iraqis and to help them reach these compromises, but we are not succeeding in doing that. In fact, for 4 years now we have not succeeded in doing that as well. An objective look at key indicators since our invasion will demonstrate that the situation has steadily deteriorated each year under the Bush administration. Whether you examine the number of civilian deaths, the number of internally displaced refugees, the number of Iraqis who fled their country, now in excess of 2 million, or in the amount of power and water flowing into Iraqi homes, all of these indicators demonstrate the overall situation in Iraq has not improved. In fact, it has deteriorated during the last 4 years. That is why I believe we must begin redeploying our forces out of Iraq within the next 120 days and complete the redeployment within the next year.

That is why I also believe that simultaneous to redeployment, and after the redeployment has been completed, we must conduct targeted counterterrorism activities to protect the Iraqi population from terrorists, to expunge al-Qaida from Iraq, and help ensure Iraq does not become a terrorist safe haven. I note that while I agree with Senator LEVIN that military readiness is currently lacking, I am concerned by the waiver provisions included in the amendment of my colleague from Michigan. It is true that due to the administration's defense policies many U.S. combat forces are not mission ready, are not adequately trained, and have not been given appropriate resting periods between deployments.

I recently visited some soldiers at Walter Reed Hospital who had been injured in Iraq. I asked them how much cooperation they were getting from the Iraqi people and what their observations were.

Without quoting them directly, let me paraphrase their comments. They said while the Iraqi people seem to be pleasant people and many seem to be interested in doing what they could to be helpful, in too many instances they pointed out that the civilian population knew where these IEDs were, these roadside devices. They knew where the ''ammo dumps,'' or the ammunition stockpiles were. Yet they never ever shared this information with our military in the communities where we were trying to provide security.

One soldier pointed out that we would spend a month and a half cleaning out an area with problems, and an hour and a half after they had left, things were right back where they were a month and a half before. Those are their words, not mine.

We know hear that these missions, despite the Herculean efforts of our military, are not getting this job done because of the raging civil war in that country. But providing a waiver to the President under the Levin amendment is tantamount, in my view, to re-authorizing the war. It doesn't hold the administration or the Iraqi Government accountable. It doesn't force a change in mission, and it doesn't begin to redeploy our forces. Instead it allows the administration to stay the course, full speed ahead, to use the words of Vice President RICHARD CHENEY. The Feingold-Reid-Dodd amendment provides the best means, in my view, for changing our mission in Iraq.

As much as I wish we were able to secure Iraq ourselves, that the surge would work, or that our military presence in Iraq would bring about the compromises necessary, I think the evidence is clear it is not happening, and it will not happen. The American people know this, our troops who have served and sacrificed in Iraq know it, and I believe the Iraqi people know it as well. Only when Iraqis themselves decide they will no longer tolerate violence and destruction, only when their leaders come together will this violence be reduced. That is what needs to happen across that plagued country. The United States should help where it can, by training and equipping reliable and accountable Iraqi security forces that will serve the greater Iraqi nation, not their own tribe or their own sect.

According to a recent CBS poll, 70 percent of Shiites and nearly all of the Sunnis think the presence of U.S. forces in Iraq is making security worse. The vast majority of Iraqis, regardless of their sect, believe American troop presence in Iraq is making Iraq less safe.

Madam President, 78 percent of Iraqis oppose the presence of U.S. forces on their soil, and 51 percent of Iraqis support attacks on coalition forces. Slightly more than half of the population we are trying to protect approve of the attacks on U.S. soldiers. That is just not acceptable.

But it is not just the Iraqi public who want American forces out of their nation. The Iraqi Government does as well. A majority of the Iraqi Parliament recently signed a petition for a timetable governing a withdrawal of American forces, and in a recent high-level meeting, Iraq and its neighbors signed what they called the Marmara Declaration, reaffirming this sentiment. They declared in this declaration that ''a timetable should be established for the Government of Iraq to take full authority and responsibility, including for security throughout the country.''

The declaration went on to say:

> The United States should commit to a comprehensive strategy for responsible withdrawal, consistent with Iraq's security and stability based on milestones and a general time horizon.

It also says:

> Iraq's Armed Forces need to be nationally representative, Iraq's police should be credible to its citizens, and representative to the communities they serve.

The Feingold-Reid-Dodd amendment does just that. It does what the Iraqi people and the American people want, and it does it in a responsible way. This legislation mandates that the redeployment of U.S. forces should begin, as I mentioned, within a 120-day period and be completed within a year. Simultaneous to this redeployment, the legislation calls for continued counterterrorism operations, and the training and equipping of reliable and accountable Iraqi security forces to take over the responsibility of safeguarding the Iraqi population.

It is up to us to change the President's failed course in Iraq and to hold our President and the Iraqi Government accountable. It is up to us to mandate a change in direction, to begin to responsibly bring our troops home, to continue to help the Iraqis battle terrorists, and to train and equip reliable Iraqi security forces ,so Iraqis can police their own country and decide their own future.

We cannot afford another day of escalation, $2 billion a week, $8 billion a month, lives lost, lives completely ruined in many cases. But also what is happening in Iraq itself, with the dislocation of the Iraqi people, the 60,000

who have lost their lives—the situation is not improving. A true change in direction is needed. The price our Nation is paying, the price our men and women in uniform are paying, is too high for a failed policy, a policy that has not succeeded because it cannot succeed.

I urge my colleagues at an appropriate time when Senator FEINGOLD will offer his amendment to support this amendment. None of us can guarantee it is going to produce the desired result of convincing the Iraqi people what they should have been doing all along, instead of proposing a 2-month vacation, but rather sitting down and trying to come up with the political reconciliation for their country.

Our hope is by beginning a clear redeployment and setting a termination date—this must or this may convince the Iraqi people and their leaders that they should come to terms with their own political future. For those reasons I urge the adoption of the Feingold amendment.

I urge, as well, consideration of what Senator HAGEL has suggested: talking about moving beyond the military issue, to utilize the tools available to us, the political, economic, diplomatic tools that are the means by which we should try to achieve reconciliation. But a continuation of our military presence under its present structure is not working. It should come to an end. This is the best effort to achieve that goal.

Again, I urge the adoption of the Feingold amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I think the Senator from Massachusetts has a unanimous consent request. I ask he be recognized for that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 hours of debate. I don't think this is correct, the way I have been given it. I think we had a unanimous request that we have 2 hours of debate, initially equally divided, with 10 minutes to begin—the Senator from Oklahoma will speak in response to the Senator from Connecticut on Iraq. That will count against the time for the debate on my amendment. Then after those first 2 hours, we would again equally divide——

Mr. INHOFE. Reserving the right to object, it is my understanding we started out at 45 and 45. We are down now to 2 hours where you are increased from 45 minutes to an hour. That would be equally divided. I probably will yield back some of my time.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I may also. But this is an important subject, and I do not want to get squeezed on the time.

I had originally requested 1 hour, initially, and then 15 minutes at the back end, a half hour equally divided. I would like to stay with that.

What we are really talking about is the difference of 15 minutes, which I may or may not use. But I say to my friend from Oklahoma, I think it is not asking too much of the Senate to have that protection of the extra 15 minutes. If we don't use it, we can both——

Mr. INHOFE. Let me ask for clarification. What you are saying is, instead of 2 hours equally divided, it would be 2½ hours equally divided? I have no objection, with the understanding that I can count against my time and talk for up to 10 minutes on the subject of Iraq.

Mr. KERRY. I have no objection to that. I propound that request: 2 hours of debate initially equally divided and a subsequent half hour equally divided, and with the first 10 minutes to be taken by the Senator counted against him to speak on Iraq. Then I add, if I may, that no second-degree amendment be in order prior to the vote and, upon the use or yielding back of time but not before 5:35 p.m, the Senate would then proceed to vote in relation to the amendment; that the amendment by agreement must receive 60 affirmative votes to be agreed to; if it does not it would be withdrawn without further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? No objection.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the Chair.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, first, I thank the Senator from Massachusetts for working out this unanimous consent agreement. These things are sometimes complicated. I know he has just as strong beliefs about his amendment as I do in opposition. I think this will accommodate it. Let me go ahead, if I might, and take a few minutes.

It would be disrespectful for me to walk in here and ask the last two Senators who were talking what they have been smoking recently. I do not understand how someone can say they came back a few weeks ago from Iraq and then have a report like this. It is just incredible.

I have to say, I know I have been in the Iraqi AOR more than any other Member of the House, any other Member of the Senate, anybody else. I take this very seriously. I am on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I spend time studying this issue, the most critical issue facing Americans today, and that is this war on terrorism. It is one that we are winning and we can win.

I have to tell you, I spent this last weekend with—it was my 14th trip there. I was there. I was walking around, rolling around in the sand in Anbar Province. I was shocked at what I saw. Maybe someone, giving them the benefit of the doubt, if they have been there and it has been a few weeks—maybe this really hasn't worked. But lets keep in mind the surge policy came in in February. So we need to look and see what it is that has happened since February that is working.

I have to say this also: General Petraeus is the guy in charge. Here we are sitting down talking about micromanaging a war with 435 Members of the House and 100 Members of the Senate, when we have a President who is doing the job that the Constitution tells him to do. Yet we are trying to interfere with that process.

Going back to some of the previous trips, I watched as time went by over the last 5 years, each time I go back, a greater level of cooperation that we are finding from the Iraqis. This last time—I think I have to give credit to some of the people who are talking about—the-cut-and-run crowd. The surrender crowd, has got the Iraqi's attention. I see that they are, in fact, becoming a lot more aggressive in what they are doing right now. But I am going to share with you—this is new stuff, this just happened 2 days ago. This isn't something that might have happened 5 years ago or longer than that.

I remember a couple of weeks ago when General Petraeus came to Congress. He gave a report. It was a classified briefing on the fourth floor and then he had some news conferences. He gave some positive comments. I carry those around with me.

He said:

> Anbar has gone from being assessed as being lost to a situation that is now quite heartening.

He said:

> We have, in Ramadi, reclaimed that city.

He said:

> We are ahead with respect to reduction of sectarian violence and murders in Baghdad by about a third, about 33 percent.

These are the things that were happening at that time. I thought, you know, a lot of the people who really just do not think we need a military to start with and aren't concerned about what is happening to us over there might say General Petraeus was overly optimistic; he was not being conservative; and he is telling us things that flat aren't true. So I thought I would go over and find out.

I went over. I was there this weekend. I spent most of my time, not in Baghdad, not in places where people go, but in Anbar Province. I spent my time in Taqaddum—an area nobody else goes to, to my knowledge, nobody has been to—and Ramadi and Fallujah. That is what we are talking about when we talk about Anbar Province.

The reason that is important is that is where most of the violence has taken place. That is where we have watched, as time went by—where we lost the most lives. We remember so well hearing the stories about our marines in Fallujah going door to door, very similar to what was happening in World War II. And that is a fact, they were.

And that is a fact. They were. But then along came the surge and along came General Petraeus. I have to tell you, General Petraeus was being very conservative when he was here 10 days ago or 2 weeks ago, whatever it was.

I am going to tell you exactly what is happening there now. And these people

who are the prophets of doom, I hope they are listening.

First of all, let's just take Ramadi. That is the area which was supposed to be the toughest area. You might remember a year ago al-Qaida controlled that city. They held a parade a year ago, and they declared—after that parade, they said now Ramadi is their capital, the capital of terrorism, the capital of al-Qaida.

Well, that is what happened a year ago. A year ago, we had a total of 2,000 Iraqi security forces. You know the whole idea here is to get Iraqi security forces trained, equipped, and let them take care of their own problems and their own terrorism that is coming in. Keep in mind that these terrorists are not after Americans; they are after Iraqis. They do not want freedom in that country. Back then, at that time, when they bragged, when al-Qaida bragged that Ramadi was their capital, we only had 2,000 Iraqi security forces. That is all. Do you know how many we have now? We have 12,200 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces in Ramadi.

Things are happening there. They had 1,200 people volunteer from Ramadi for the Iraqi security forces, more than they could train and handle—in 1 day, 1 day. Well, they have things that are going on, showing them support for the Iraqi people.

We all know that in our own hometowns, we have this thing called Neighborhood Watch Programs where we are going to try to stop crime. They have one there too; it is called the neighborhood security watch. This is where civilians—not military, not armed—these people put on little orange jackets and go out, and they try to find where IEDs are hidden, where explosive devices are hidden. They have spray paint, orange spray paint, and they will put a circle around where they are. Then our troops will go in there and detonate them, and then everyone is fine. Before that, we were losing American lives by walking into these situations. That is not happening now. This is because of the neighborhoods. These are the Iraqi people.

The troops have reclaimed Ramadi, very clearly. If you just look at Ramadi—one city—since February, overall attacks are down 74 percent. That is since February. That is when the surge was announced. The IED attacks are down 81 percent—not 10 percent, not 15 percent, 81 percent. It is a huge success story.

In Fallujah, you know, I can remember going to Fallujah years ago—Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that if I go over my 10 minutes, I have a few extra minutes and it will be deducted from my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, in Fallujah right now, one Iraqi brigade owns the battlespace. This is the term which we use in the Armed Services Committee, ''owns the battlespace.'' It means they are providing their own security. Now, this was not true a few years ago when I first went there. No one could get anywhere near anything in town. You would not take the risk of going in.

I was there during both of the elections, and I saw the Iraqi security forces go to vote the day before the public would vote. When they did this, they found themselves in a situation that was very dangerous. They voted the day before so they could provide the security for the populous of Fallujah. Well, several of them were killed, as you recall. But I talked to them each night after they went to vote, and they were overjoyed in doing it. They said: The day is coming when we are going to be able to take care of the security in Fallujah.

All right, that was 4 years ago and 3 years ago and 5 years ago on different trips I made there. This weekend, just 2 days ago, we have now officially turned over the security of Fallujah to the Iraqis. They are providing the security.

If you look in the whole province of Anbar, you see another thing that is happening. A lot of people think—we hear a lot from the Prime Minister, Maliki; we hear about the Minister of Defense, Jasim; we heard about Dr. Rubaie—all of these people who were appointed or elected to be the leadership of Iraq. They are not the ones who are really making the decisions as far as the people are concerned. It is a different culture. It is the clerics and the imams in the mosques.

Now, we measure what goes on in the mosques. It is just like we would hear a sermon in the United States in a church—we go there and find out what they are talking about. Prior to February, 80 percent of the mosques had messages that were delivered by the clerics there or the imams there that were anti-American, getting everyone stirred up every Saturday or whenever they get together. In April, it was zero. There wasn't one mosque, of the hundreds of mosques, that had an anti-American message. For that reason, you have all of the populous coming in and saying: We want in on this thing. We are going to actually get something done here. We are tired.

They are the ones who have been the targets for the terrorists. They know that. Certainly the clerics know that. That is why we are getting this surge of cooperation.

In March of 2006, there were only 4,000 what they call Iraqi security forces. Today, there are 27,500 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces. The Sunni tribal coalition is fighting al-Qaida. That is something new. That wasn't happening 3 weeks ago. It certainly was not happening in February.

I did stop in Baghdad. I spent most of the time in Anbar Province. But in Baghdad, I was heartened to see something new—and I did not know how it worked—is being put in place. It is called a joint security station. Now, in Baghdad, there are 27 of them. So the night before last, late at night, I went out there and I saw how they worked. Instead of our troops going out on raids during the day and then coming back to the Green Zone where they will be safe, our troops are now staying out there in those areas in these joint security stations. They are there with the Iraqis. They are sleeping there with them, they are eating with them, and they are developing close relationships. That is the key to this thing. This all came from General Petraeus, that we have relationships in these areas. If you talk to our troops—you don't talk to the guys on the Senate floor here; talk to the troops, find people who are coming back. You ask them what their relationship is now with the Iraqi security forces.

I have to say this also—even though we heard this before, we did verify it is actually more than this—the sectarian murders in Baghdad are down by 30 percent. Now, that is not quite as good as it is in Anbar Province. One of the reasons is Anbar Province is where all of the problems were, and we are concentrating more and the Iraqis are concentrating more there. I went to the marketplace there. I did not have any helicopters over the top. I went through, I took an interpreter, I stopped and talked to people on the street, and they are so appreciative of what we are doing there, and it is no wonder that they are.

I just have to say that these relationships have formed. The term they are using is the ''brotherhood of the close fight.'' I give General Petraeus credit for engineering a lot of these things.

Lastly, I would say—you may not believe me because you know I have a strong feeling about defending America, and you might say I am prejudiced. Yes, I was on the House Armed Services Committee for years and then on the Senate Armed Services Committee for the last 12 years, and so I watch and see what is happening. I recognize we need to rebuild America's military now to be able to meet future challenges like this.

I would only say this: Everything that I have now said, if you don't believe it—and I thought I would never recommend to my conservative friends that they ever watch CNN, but I am going ask them to go ahead and watch CNN this time, and there is someone named Nick Robertson who asked to go along to some of these stations I went to two nights ago, the joint security stations. They are giving a report, and you will be shocked to find out that even CNN, which has been no friend of our President and no friend of our efforts in Iraq, is now coming out with reports that are saying exactly what I am saying right here.

So have your good time. Stand up and take your bows and criticize the President and criticize the effort in Iraq and criticize our soldiers. Let me tell you, they are doing a good job, we are winning there, and this information I share with you is just 1 day old.

With that, I yield the floor.

Let me ask how much time I used off of my amendment time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 13½ minutes.

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1094 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1065

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I thank the Republican manager, the Senator from Oklahoma.

I call up amendment No. 1094.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. KERRY], Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. REED, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. CANTWELL proposes an amendment numbered 1094 to amendment No. 1065.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the consideration of certain factors relating to global climate change)

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2_____. GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.

(a) PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS.—To account for the potential long- and short-term effects of global climate change, the Secretary shall ensure that each feasibility study or general reevaluation report prepared by the Corps of Engineers—

(1) takes into consideration, and accounts for, the impacts of global climate change on flood, storm, and drought risks in the United States;

(2) takes into consideration, and accounts for, potential future impacts of global climate change-related weather events, such as increased hurricane activity, intensity, storm surge, sea level rise, and associated flooding;

(3) uses the best-available climate science in assessing flood and storm risks;

(4) employs, to the maximum extent practicable, nonstructural approaches and design modifications to avoid or prevent impacts to streams, wetlands, and floodplains that provide natural flood and storm buffers, improve water quality, serve as recharge areas for aquifers, reduce floods and erosion, and provide valuable plant, fish, and wildlife habitat;

(5) in projecting the benefits and costs of any water resources project that requires a benefit-cost analysis, quantifies and, to the maximum extent practicable, accounts for—

(A) the costs associated with damage or loss to wetlands, floodplains, and other natural systems (including the habitat, water quality, flood protection, and recreational values associated with the systems); and

(B) the benefits associated with protection of those systems; and

(6) takes into consideration, as applicable, the impacts of global climate change on emergency preparedness projects for ports.

(b) ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION PROJECTS.—For purposes of planning and implementing flood damage reduction projects in accordance with this section and section 73 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 701b–11), the term ''nonstructural approaches and design modifications'' includes measures to manage flooding through—

(1) wetland, stream, and river restoration;

(2) avoiding development or increased development in frequently-flooded areas;

(3) adopting flood-tolerant land uses in frequently-flooded areas; or

(4) acquiring from willing sellers floodplain land for use for—

(A) flood protection uses;

(B) recreational uses;

(C) fish and wildlife uses; or

(D) other public benefits.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that this be considered as an amendment to the Boxer substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, this amendment is a bipartisan amendment introduced with Senator COLLINS, Senator FEINGOLD, Senator CARPER, Senator REED of Rhode Island, Senator BIDEN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator CANTWELL.

This is an amendment regarding the impact of global climate change and the need for the Congress, as we consider spending money and requiring the Corps of Engineers to undertake certain projects across the country—it just seems logical as a matter of protecting the taxpayers' dollars as well as thinking about the future that we ask the Corps to include in their analysis of these projects judgments about the potential impact or the real impact of global climate change on that particular project.

Now, I am going to speak more about the common sense of doing that, why it is important, but I will just say very quickly, if you look at New Orleans where we had a breach of the levees as a consequence of the hurricanes and the rise of the seas, it is clear that much of the infrastructure of America is designed without reference at all to what is now happening to climates, to water bodies, to the various challenges we face with respect to global climate change. So you need to sort of lay out the parameters within which we ought to be making a judgment about this particular issue. That begins by sort of setting forth the facts. We ought to deal with facts with respect to the situation on global climate change.

This will be the first time Senators in the 110th Congress have been asked to vote on the floor in some way with respect to this issue of climate change. But it is an important opportunity for Senators to stand up and be counted with respect to this issue.

All this amendment seeks to do, as a matter of common sense, is to ask the Army Corps of Engineers to factor climate change into their future plans. By doing that, we are taking a small corrective measure to a process that is currently flawed because it does not do that. Secondly, we are making a statement here in the Senate about the need to finally, once and for all, recognize the reality of what is happening with respect to climate change.

The guiding principle behind this amendment is obvious: It is that climate change is real and it must be factored into our public policy in almost everything we do. If we are going to build buildings, those buildings have to be designed to a whole new set of specifications in terms of carbon emissions, in terms of energy use, because all downstream energy use will have an impact on how much coal and how much oil, alternative fuels, and other resources we need to consume.

The fact is that other countries are moving much more rapidly than we are as a Federal Government. In fact, the States in the United States and cities in the United States are already moving with greater authority and determination than the Federal Government. So this is a chance finally for Senators to put themselves on record.

Now, you can disagree on what—for instance, former Speaker Newt Gingrich and I held a debate a couple of weeks ago in which the former Speaker changed his position and agreed that climate change is taking place and that human beings are having an impact on that climate change. He agreed that we need to act, and urgently. Where we differed is in what actions to take, how those actions might be implemented, but there was no disagreement about the need to factor this into the policies in our country.

As we contemplate these steps we need to take, we really need to understand that everything we do here is to inform our decisions as we go down the road. That is really the message this amendment ought to send, that when it comes to public policy, we understand the warnings of our scientists, the warnings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and we are going to respond effectively at the national level.

The fact is, for too long this has been the subject of paid-for studies by industries that wanted to resist, but we know that in America, many of those industries have changed.

USCAP is a partnership of some of the major corporations in America that have come together responsibly to take action with respect to climate change. Companies such as General Electric and Florida Power & Light, American Electric Power, DuPont, Wal-Mart, many others are now responding to the needs of this issue. It would be stunning indeed if the Senate somehow stood apart from what the private sector and these States and local communities are now engaged in.

Let me summarize quickly some of the findings of the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The most recent report was written by about 600 scientists. It was reviewed by 600 experts. It was edited by officials from 154 governments. So you have Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Economic Ministers, Trade Ministers, Environment Ministers, Presidents of countries all across the globe, who are engaged in moving forward. Only the United States has remained significantly on the sidelines.

The basic facts are these: At both poles and in nearly all points in between, the temperature of the Earth's surface is heating up. It is heating up at a frightening and potentially catastrophic rate. The temperature we know has already increased about .8 degrees centigrade, 1.4 or so degrees Fahrenheit, and the warnings of the scientists I alluded to are that because of the carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere, about which we have the ability to do nothing, there will be an additional warming as a consequence of the damage that that does. So we are locked in, whether we like it, to a warming of somewhere between 1.4 and 1.6 degrees centigrade. These same scientists have reported to us through some 928 or so peer-reviewed studies. A lot of people are not sure what a peer-reviewed study is. After scientists have done their study and they have put it out to the public, that study is reviewed anonymously by another group of scientists with similar backgrounds and discipline. They then anonymously make an analysis of the methodology of those studies and of the conclusions that were drawn. What is interesting is that all 928 studies have determined that human beings, through our greenhouse gas emissions, are causing some of the increase of this temperature, and they have concluded similarly that there is a tipping point—nobody can predict precisely where it is—at which we get a catastrophic series of consequences which will then be too late to change.

Scientists are inherently conservative people. They are people who make judgments based on facts, as they discern them, through their analysis, research, and experiments. They don't make wild pronouncements that can't be substantiated. Where there is doubt, they have expressed doubt every step of the way. Where something is not conclusive, they have said it is not conclusive.

But now in this most recent report, they have reported to the world that there is a 90-percent likelihood that emissions of heat-trapping gases from human activities have caused ''most of the observed increase in global average temperature since the mid 20th century. Evidence that human activities are the major cause of recent climate change is even stronger than in prior assessments.''

In addition, they have said that the warming is unequivocal. The report concludes that it is ''unequivocal that earth's climate is warming as it is now evident from the observations of increases in global averages of air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snows and ice, and rising global mean sea level.''

The report also confirms that the current atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide and methane, two important heat-trapping gases, ''exceeds by far the natural range over the last 650,000 years.'' Since the dawn of the industrial era, concentrations of both gases have increased at a rate that is ''very likely to have been unprecedented in more than 10,000 years.''

These are some of the facts. I will relate more, if necessary, later. The bottom-line point to be made is, the opponents, those who say that it isn't happening, those who say that somehow we can't be certain that this is a contributing activity, have yet to produce one peer review study—not one—that conclusively shows why what is happening is happening and what is causing it, if it isn't the human activity that has been alluded to by these 154 countries and thousands of scientists. They certainly have an obligation to do that.

Here is what is most alarming. I have been listening to and working with these same scientists since then-Senator Al Gore and I and a few others held the first hearings on global climate change in the Senate in 1987. In 1990, we went to Rio to take part in the Earth summit which George Herbert Walker Bush participated in as then President of the United States and signed a voluntary agreement to deal with the framework for global climate change. In the 17 years since we attended that conference, I have attended other conferences in Buenos Aires, in The Hague, and in Kyoto. I have watched while we have learned more and more with greater certainty about the impact of this science. Throughout that journey of 17 years, I have never heard the scientists as alarmed as they are today. The reason they are alarmed today is that what they have predicted for those 17 years is happening at a faster rate and in a greater quantity than they had predicted.

What is our responsibility as public people? If the scientists, 928 studies strong, are saying to us, Senators, Presidents, Congressmen, here is what is happening, and they say it with conclusive evidence of exactly what is contributing to it, I believe we, as public people, have a responsibility to listen on behalf of the citizens. It is prudent to think about those things that we can do and ought to do in order to respond to this evidence.

Here is what those scientists tell us. Jim Hansen is the leading climatologist of our country at NASA. He started warning about this in 1988. Since 1988, those warnings have become more urgent. He now says we have a 10-year window within which to get this right. If we want to avoid the potential of a tipping point, we have 10 years to act. We also know the scientists have revised their own estimates of what the tolerable range is with respect to global warming. A year and a half, 2 years ago, they were telling us we could tolerate 550 parts per million of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and that translated to a 3 degrees centigrade warming that could be allowed before you reached this catastrophic potential tipping point. They have changed that now. Those same scientists have now revised their estimate based on the evidence they are getting as a consequence of what is already happening all over the planet. All over the planet you can see the sea drying up. You can see the southern portion of the Sahara Desert getting dryer. You can see ocean currents shifting, species migrating. In South Carolina, they wouldn't have any duck hunting today if they didn't have farmed ducks because the patterns have changed. The same thing in Arkansas, where it has significantly altered. Hunters across the Nation are noticing changes in the migratory patterns of the prey they used to hunt. We are seeing 20 percent of the ice sheet in the Arctic has already melted and predictions are the entire ice sheet will disappear within the next 30 years. The Greenland ice sheet, go up there and visit, see the torrents of water rushing through the ice itself. The danger of that is, this is on rock. This is not floating on sea ice, where the displacement is already recognized in the ocean because it is floating in the ocean. This is ice on rock. As it melts, if it melts rapidly, it does spill into the ocean and it alters the levels.

In addition, the warming of the ocean itself alters the levels. The warming expands the water, and as the water expands, the sea level rises and we are already seeing a measured level of increase of sea level according to all of our scientists. They don't doubt that. That is a stated fact. Sea level is rising.

Are we going to have the Corps of Engineers go out and build a project that has to do with rising sea level and not take into account how much it may rise, over what period of time it may rise? What the consequences might be of a storm that is more intense, coupled with an increase of sea level? It is common sense that we ought to be taking those kinds of things into account.

The scientists now tell us we can tolerate not 550 parts per million but 450 parts per million, and we can tolerate not 3 degrees centigrade increase but a 2 degrees centigrade increase. Why is that important? That is important because we can trace from before the industrial revolution the levels of carbon dioxide and temperatures of the Earth. Preindustrial revolution, the levels of greenhouse gases were at about 270 parts per million. It was about 500 or so billion tons of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It is measured by taking ice cores which we drill. You bore into the ice. You can go back tens of thousands of years, bore the ice and measure the levels of carbon dioxide, which also gives you an indicator of the temperature of the Earth. We see a complete parallel between the rise of the Earth's temperature, the rise of carbon dioxide and the industrial revolution itself over those 100 years.

We have now changed the level of greenhouse gases from 270 parts per million to 380 parts per million. That is what we are living with today. So if we are living with 380 parts per million

today and over 100 years plus we saw it go from 270 to 380, we only have a cushion of up to 450. If we have already increased the Earth's temperature .8 degrees and it is going to go up automatically another .8 degrees, that is 1.6, we only have a cushion of .4 to .5 degrees before we get to a tipping point.

I can't tell you with 100 percent certainty that is what is going to happen. But the scientists, the best we have in this country, have told us it is a 90-percent likelihood this is happening as a consequence of the things we are doing.

If you went to the airport today and got on an airplane and the pilot got on and said: Folks, we are about to leave and there is a 10-percent chance we are going to get where we are going, are you going to stay on the plane? This is a 90-percent certainty what scientists are telling us.

We went to war in Iraq on a 1-percent doctrine. As Vice President CHENEY said, if there is a 1-percent chance that harm could be done to our Nation, then we have to be willing to go to war and take the steps. Well, here you have a 90-percent chance that harm could be done to our Nation, and we are doing next to nothing at the Federal level. That is the cushion.

So when the scientists say to us we need to have a response, when the CEO of DuPont, the CEO of Wal-Mart, the CEO of 3M, the CEO of General Electric, and a host of other companies across our country are already taking steps because they recognize this has to happen, and we have to respond, we ought to be listening and responding ourselves.

Let me comment that, obviously, in California we already see a State taking action. California passed a landmark bill that establishes a first-in-the-world comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gases.

The mayor of New York is working on a congestion pricing scheme to lower emissions and pollution. Today, as we stand in the Senate, he is hosting a meeting of the mayors of the world's largest cities, from Copenhagen to Calcutta, on how to achieve the same ends.

Recently, my home State of Massachusetts, under the leadership of Governor Deval Patrick, has rejoined the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Now you have eight States that have come together specifically to try to reduce global warming pollution from powerplants. Across the Nation, 500 mayors from 50 States have signed on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which is an initiative to advance the goals of the Kyoto Protocol. Even President Bush finally saw fit to mention in his State of the Union Address ''the serious challenge of global climate change.''

We know specifically that climate change will challenge the way we manage water resources in the United States. It threatens our coastal communities and habitats with rising sea levels, more intense storms, storm surges, and flooding, especially along the gulf and Atlantic coasts. In many places, climate change is going to put added pressure on our water resources, increasing competition among agricultural, municipal, industrial, and ecological uses.

That is why this bill is an appropriate place for us to have an amendment that merely asks for the Corps of Engineers—which is federally chartered, and we spend Federal dollars on—to make certain what they choose to do is thoughtful about what the impacts may be that are predictable or ascertainable.

We know, obviously, what it looks like when we do not prepare for emergencies. We had it seared into our memories with the horrifying images of Hurricane Katrina. We saw the anguish of everybody who lived there and people across America.

The fact is, we are especially vulnerable to changes of weather and climate extremes because of severe storms, hurricanes, floods, and droughts. Now we need to begin planning for those emergencies that global climate change is likely to produce.

Over the last 100 years, we have seen an increase in heavy precipitation that has strained the infrastructure we have in place to deal with flooding. All across America, combined sewer overflows wind up putting raw sewage out into our rivers and lakes, which wind up poisoning and polluting those water bodies.

Thirty-nine percent of the rivers in the United States of America are contaminated. Forty-five percent of the lakes in the United States are contaminated. Forty-nine percent of the estuaries in America are contaminated.

In 19 States in our country parents and children are warned: Don't eat the fish because of the levels of toxins, chemicals that are in the water—19 States. In 44 States there are warnings about specific locations where you are not allowed to eat the fish.

So these are the kinds of consequences we see up and down the line. The number of days each year now with more than 2 inches of precipitation has risen by 20 percent. If we know the precipitation levels have risen by 20 percent in the last 100 years, doesn't it make sense, as we conjure up levees or other projects to prevent flooding, to understand what the likelihood is of the size of that flooding, the extent of it, and the intensity, as it grows?

The Southwestern United States is in the midst of a drought that is projected to continue well into the 21st century and may cause the area to transition to a more arid climate.

The Corps of Engineers stands on the front lines of all of these threats to our water resources. They are our first responders in the fight against global warming. Hurricane and flood protection for New Orleans, levees along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, levees in Sacramento, CA, and port projects up and down our coasts, east and west—these are just a few of the sites that are in danger. All of these Corps projects and many hundreds more will feel the strain, impact, and consequences of global climate change.

We also recognized, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the inadequacy of some of the projects in New Orleans that simply did not stand up. Just the other day, in the New York Times—Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the article of May 7, entitled ''Critic of Corps of Engineers Says Levee Repairs for New Orleans Show Signs of Flaws'' be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, May 7, 2007]

CRITIC OF CORPS OF ENGINEERS SAYS LEVEE REPAIRS FOR NEW ORLEANS SHOW SIGNS OF FLAWS

(By John Schwartz)

Some of the most celebrated levee repairs by the Army Corps of Engineers after Hurricane Katrina are already showing signs of serious flaws, a leading critic of the corps says.

The critic, Robert G. Bea, a professor of engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, said he encountered several areas of concern on a tour in March.

The most troubling, Dr. Bea said, was erosion on a levee by the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, a navigation canal that helped channel water into New Orleans during the storm.

Breaches in that 13-mile levee devastated communities in St. Bernard Parish, just east of New Orleans, and the rapid reconstruction of the barrier was hailed as one of the corps' most significant rebuilding achievements in the months after the storm.

But Dr. Bea, an author of a blistering 2006 report on the levee failures paid for by the National Science Foundation, said erosion furrows, or rills, suggest that ''the risks are still high.'' Heavy storms, he said, may cause ''tear-on-the-dotted-line levees.''

Dr. Bea examined the hurricane protection system at the request of National Geographic magazine, which is publishing photographs of the levee and an article on his concerns about the levee and other spots on its Web site at ngm.com/levees.

Corps officials argue that Dr. Bea is overstating the risk and say that they will reinspect elements of the levee system he has identified and fix problems they find. The disagreement underscores the difficulty of evaluating risk in hurricane protection here, where even dirt is a contentious issue. And discussing safety in a region still struggling with a 2005 disaster requires delicacy.

Hurricane season begins again next month.

The most revealing of the photographs, taken from a helicopter, looks out from the levee across the navigation canal and a skinny strip of land to the expanses of Lake Borgne. From the grassy crown of the levee, small, wormy patterns of rills carved by rain make their way down the landward side, widening at the base into broad fissures that extend beyond the border of the grass.

Dr. Bea, who was recently appointed to an expert committee for plaintiffs' lawyers in federal suits against the government and private contractors over Hurricane Katrina losses, said that he could not be certain the situation was dangerous without further inspection and that he wanted to avoid what he called ''cry wolf syndrome.'' But, he

added, he does not want to ignore ''potentially important early warning signs.''

He praised the corps for much of the work it had done since the storm, but he added that the levee should be armored with rock or concrete against overtopping, a move the corps has rejected in the short term.

Another expert who has viewed the photographs, J. David Rogers, called the images ''troubling.'' Dr. Rogers, who holds the Karl F. Hasselmann chair in geological engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla, said it would take more work, including an analysis of the levee soils, to determine whether there was a possibility of catastrophic failure.

But he said his first thought upon viewing the images was, ''That won't survive another Katrina.'' Dr. Rogers worked on the 2006 report on levee failures with Dr. Bea.

John M. Barry, a member of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East who has also seen the photographs, also expressed worry. ''If Bea and Rogers are concerned, then I'm concerned,'' he said.

Mr. Barry, the author of ''Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America,'' said it was important to seek balance when discussing the levees in the passionately charged environment of New Orleans since the storm.

''I don't want anybody to have any false confidence'' in the system, he said. ''On the other hand, if things are improving, people need to know that, too. And things have been improving.''

After being informed of the safety questions, Senator Mary L. Landrieu, Democrat of Louisiana, prepared a letter to send today to the corps commander, Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, asking whether the work by the corps was sufficient to protect the levee system.

At the corps, Richard J. Varuso, the assistant chief of the geotechnical branch of the district's engineering division, said that some erosion could be expected after a levee was constructed. ''If it rains, we get some rutting,'' Mr. Varuso said, adding that as vegetation grows in, the levee ''heals itself.''

Walter O. Baumy Jr., the chief of the engineering division for the New Orleans district of the corps, said the new levees were made with dense, clay-rich soil that would resist erosion. Although the stretches of the St. Bernard levee that were still standing after the storm are composed of more porous soils dredged from the nearby canal, Mr. Baumy said a reinforcing clay layer on top some 10 feet thick would keep the fissures from reaching the weaker soils.

Still, he said that ''we will take a look at this'' and that the corps would make repairs where necessary.

Dr. Bea, who wrangled with the corps last year about construction standards on the same levee, countered that recent work in the Netherlands suggested that clay-capped levees with a porous core, which are common, were prone to failure in high water.

Another official who viewed the photographs, Robert A. Turner Jr., the executive director of the Lake Borgne basin levee district, east of New Orleans, said he was concerned, but not necessarily alarmed, about the rills toward the crown of the St. Bernard levee, calling them a common sight on new levees in the area.

Mr. Turner said he was more concerned by the images of larger ruts toward the base of the levee, and said of the corps, ''We're just going to keep on them.''

Mr. KERRY. There is evidence in some of those levees they are not going to be able to withstand the intensity of the storms we now project. The current guidelines for Corps project planning were written in 1983, long before scientists were focusing on the existence as well as the threat and impacts of climate change. So I believe it is critical for the Corps to begin to account for that.

This amendment directs them to simply take climate change into account when conducting project feasibility studies or general evaluation reports. It ensures that Corps projects, particularly those that provide the first line of defense against climate impacts, are designed with global warming in mind.

This amendment is supported by dozens of groups that represent coastal communities and resources, from the National Wildlife Federation and American Rivers, to the Association of State Floodplain Managers, regional groups that represent coastal interests, including the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, and the Great Lakes States Coalition. They all strongly support this amendment. They support it because it protects our wetlands. They support it because it advances our policy response on a subject where the politics has often struggled to keep pace with the science.

On a weekly basis, we see mounting evidence and mounting alarm bells going off highlighting our need to act. This is our opportunity to do so for the first time.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, for clarification on the time, it is my understanding that we each started off with 30 minutes, and then we each get 15 minutes after that time has expired, and that I used 13 minutes of my time on my Iraq discussion.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, it is my understanding we asked for 2½ hours equally divided.

Mr. INHOFE. OK. So it would be an hour and 15 minutes for each side.

Mr. KERRY. An hour and 15 minutes, but we may well wind up yielding much of that back.

Mr. INHOFE. OK. So in this period now, I would have an hour, less 13 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Correct. The Senator would have 1 hour minus the approximately 13, 14 minutes the Senator has already used.

Mr. INHOFE. All right. That is fine. I do not think I will use all of this time right now. But in the event I get close to it, if the Chair would let me know when I have 3 minutes left, I would appreciate that.

I don't know where to start. I really don't. I don't have all my stuff I normally would have in talking about this subject right now because I did not know this was going to come up.

Certainly, everyone has a right to bring up amendments. This amendment is totally out of place for this bill. There is no justification for having it.

Let me make one comment about it. If the idea is—and apparently it is—this amendment is going to instruct the Corps of Engineers to come out with a report as to how anthropogenic gases would be affected by each project that is constructed around the country, let me suggest we have a $14 billion bill we are going to be voting on at about 5:30, 6 o'clock tonight. It is one that we desperately need. We have been debating this issue.

But I can assure you, if for some reason the Kerry amendment was adopted, it would kill the bill. There is no question about it. But it is not going to be adopted. It is a good forum to stand out here and talk about how everyone should be hysterical and should be worried.

It is interesting to me that the same people today who are saying the world is coming to an end, we are all going to die, just back in the middle 1970s were saying another ice age is coming and we are all going to die. Which way do you want it?

On this one, he is asserting, I guess, that somehow the climate is changing. Let me suggest, in 2006 the World Meteorological Organization issued statements refuting claims about a consensus that global warming is and will cause more frequent and intense storms, saying no such consensus exists. Even Al Gore has now backed away from claiming that global warming will cause more frequent storms.

I have a chart in the Chamber, a plot of the hurricanes going back to 1851. As you can see, this is constant. This has been going on for a long period of time. Now, if a surge of anthropogenic gases—this CO_2, methane, or whatever it is—were causing a warming period, then you would think right during the period around 1945 we would have a warming period because in the middle 1940s, after the Second World War, we had the greatest increase in greenhouse gases, with an increase of about 85 percent during that time.

But what happened? It did not precipitate a warming period. It precipitated a cooling period so bad that by the middle 1970s everyone thought we were going to die from another ice age coming.

Now, as far as this bill is concerned—I will probably repeat this in a little more detail in the final remarks, but I have to say this: We have $14 billion of projects. These are Corps of Engineers projects that are desperately needed. We have not had a Water Resources Development Act reauthorization bill for 7 years. We finally have the opportunity to have it.

Now, if this amendment should be adopted, it would delay all these projects by at least a year because the Corps would have to go back and restudy all these projects. So I think we should keep that in mind in terms of how it affects the bill we have.

Now, the junior Senator from Massachusetts talked about this great coalition called the U.S. Climate Action Group. Well, I can tell you about this great coalition. I do not know how many there are. There are about maybe

seven or eight companies, corporations that have joined this saying: Yes, we want to have some kind of a cap and trade on CO_2. We want to do something, maybe have a tax on them because we are good citizens. We are concerned about the environment.

Well, we had a hearing about that, only to find out every last one of them that we could research would end up making not just millions but in some cases billions of dollars if something like Kyoto would go through. I will be specific. DuPont would make $500 million a year in credits. DuPont, no wonder they are for it. If I were a member of the board of directors of DuPont, I would also do the same thing they are doing.

These are being paid for reductions in greenhouse gases as a result of things they have already done, so they do not have to do anything more. I am saying the $500 million a year—this came from an internal study, so this is not someone making an accusation—is based on $10 a ton. If it goes up to $20 a ton, then it is going to be $1 billion a year. So DuPont is for that. GE and BP, they are doing the solar panels and the wind tunnels. Well, sure, they would make a lot of money.

We can quantify all this. There is not time to go through all of that.

The other assertion that was made by the distinguished junior Senator from Massachusetts was that the sea level is going to come up. There are so many people who have watched the Gore movie, and a lot of the teachers have gotten into this, and it makes teaching real easy. There is one school in Maryland, and a parent came by to see me after we had our confrontation with Senator Gore about 3 weeks ago and said: Do you realize in my child's elementary class, his teacher makes them watch this movie once a month? They said the scary part is—for little kids who do not know any better, they think it is true, when it is not true. They said the scary part is the sea level rise.

This is what the Senator is saying: The sea level rises. I would suggest the IPCC, that is behind all of this—that is where it all started, like a lot of things in this country; it started with the United Nations—they came out in 2007, this year, and they have downgraded the sea level rise from 39 inches to 23 inches. They have cut it in half. They said further, in a report this year, the release of anthropogenic gases by livestock is greater than our entire transportation segment.

So we watch these things. Jim Hansen—I am going to talk a little about the scientists. I hear this thing, and the reason we are seeing so many people now in a panic is they realize the science has been changing on a regular basis for the last 3 years.

In fact, I have to tell you, when I became chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee in January, 4 years ago, I assumed that manmade gases were causing climate change. That is all you read in the media and all you heard about on radio and TV. I assumed it was right, until they showed us how much this would cost to the average American taxpayer. Then we said: Let's look at the science, only to find out that the science has been reversed.

Scientists always talk about Jim Hansen. I have been on several shows, and there is Jim Hansen. He has been more exposed on this than any other scientist.

I remind you that Jim Hansen was given a grant from the Heinz Foundation of $250,000. I cannot say there is no relationship between that and his opinion. I think there is and I will tell you why. I am going to talk about scientists.

Let's start off in Canada, which was one of the early signers of the Kyoto Treaty. Canada was taking the advice of a famous group called the 60 scientists in Canada. These are the 60 scientists who, at that time, recommended to the then-Prime Minister of Canada that they sign onto and ratify the Kyoto Treaty. Well, since that time, the scientists—that same group of people—have reevaluated the science. I will read some of these things they come up with. The one I know by heart is the most revealing. It says:

> Observational evidence does not support today's computer climate models, so there is little reason to trust model predictions of the future.

Significant scientific advances have been made since the Kyoto Protocol was created, many of which are taking us away from the concern about increasing greenhouse gases. Listen to this. These are the 60 scientists in Canada who were the ones responsible for advising the Prime Minister 15 years ago to sign the Kyoto Treaty. They say:

> If back in the 1990s we knew what we know today about climate, Kyoto most certainly would not exist, because we would have concluded it wasn't necessary.

They are now petitioning Prime Minister Harper to change their position on climate change. We have scientist after scientist. This is a good one. I used this the other day. Of the three strongest supporters of the alarmists—I am talking about the environmental alarmists who want to scare people—representing countries in a formidable fashion, one was Claude Allegre, a French Socialist, a geophysicist, a member of both the French and American Academies of Science. He was one who marched in the aisles with Al Gore 10 or 15 years ago, saying global warming is happening and it is caused by human discharges. Now he is saying that it was wrong. He has completely gone over to the other side. He says that the cause of climate change is unknown. He has accused the proponents of manmade catastrophic global warming of being motivated by money. I will talk about that in a minute.

Let's go from France to Israel. Astrophysicist Nir Shaviv was one of those real believers, an alarmist. He thought the world was coming to an end and that we are going to be warming up and that we have to do something about it. But he now points to growing peer-reviewed evidence that—the Senator from Massachusetts said there is no peer review evidence. Yes, there is. Shaviv refers to it here:

> Peer reviewed evidence shows that the sun has actually been driving the temperature change.

That is a shocker. You don't have to be a scientist to know that the Sun can have something to do with climate change. He has now come to the other side and is a skeptic. That was Nir Shaviv from Israel, who was on the other side. They are all shifting.

David Bellamy from the United Kingdom was another environmental campaigner at one time. He recently converted into a skeptic after reviewing the new science. Keep in mind that he is a Brit. He now calls global warming theories ''poppycock.''

These are actually, I would say, a few months old. Let me tell you what is happening recently. This is all in the last few days and weeks, and this is why all these people who want to scare people with global warming are in such a panic. They see that the science is slipping away. Think about this fact: Many people think their ticket to the White House is to scare people with global warming. Talk to anybody running for President. Watch it on the debates tonight. If they can scare you good enough, you may vote for them because they say they are going to do something about this.

Here is a brandnew one. Dr. Chris de Freitas of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, said:

> At first, I accepted that increases in human-caused additions of carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere would trigger changes in water vapor, et cetera, and lead to dangerous ''global warming''. But with time, and with the results of research, I have formed the view that although it makes for a good story, it is unlikely that manmade changes are drivers of significant climate variation.

He wrote that in August of 2006. He was one who was on the other side of this issue.

Here is another one. Dr. Jan Veizer, professor emeritus of the University of Ottawa, converted from being a believer to a skeptic after conducting scientific studies of climate history. He said:

> I simply accepted the global warming theory as given.

He said that in April 2007. He said:

> The final conversion [to a skeptic] came when I realized that the solar/cosmic ray connection gave far more consistent picture of climate, over many time scales, than it did the CO_2 scenario.

Here is another recent one. This is a paleo climatologist, Ian D. Clark, professor of the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Ottawa, who said:

> I used to agree with these dramatic warnings of climate disaster. However, a few

years ago, I decided to look more closely at the science and it astonished me. In fact, there is no evidence of humans being the cause. There is, however, overwhelming evidence of natural causes, such as changes in the output of the sun.

Here is another new one, Bruno Wiskel, from the University of Alberta. He once was a believer in manmade global warming. He set out to build a ''Kyoto house'' in his own yard in honor of the U.N.-sanctioned Kyoto Protocol. That is how much of a believer he was. This was said about him:

After further examining the science behind Kyoto, Wiskel reversed his scientific views completely and became such a strong skeptic that he wrote a book entitled ''The Emperors New Clay Markets,'' debunking the myth of global warming.

I could go on. I could spend 3 hours talking about scientists who were on the other side of the issue. I don't know where these guys came up with this idea. This is one that gets personal with Senator Gore. Keep in mind the source of this. This is MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the Senator from Massachusetts is making these statements. MIT climatologist Richard Lindzen, in June of 2006, said:

A general characteristic of Mr. Gore's approach is to assiduously ignore the fact that the earth and its climate are dynamic. They are always changing, even without any external forces. To treat all change as something to fear is bad enough. To do so in order to exploit that fear is much worse.

We can go on and on and on. I have found one thing to be probably easier to discuss with people than the science. I think at least people know that the science is not established, and there is no question that the trend now is that those scientists who were alarmists are now skeptics.

While you could debate the idea of how accurate the science is on this thing, there are things that you cannot debate. This is from the Wharton School of Economics. When I was chairman of the committee and I was a believer that this was true, this caused me to start looking into it. This is the Wharton Econometrics Forecasting Associates:

Implementing Kyoto would reduce the average annual household income nearly $2,700, at a time when the cost of all goods, particularly food and basic necessities, would rise sharply.

That is bad enough, that it would be $2,700. I don't know, in this particular amendment, what it would be. This amendment is clearly aimed at causing us in this country to somehow get into this mode of having either a tax on carbon or a cap on the trade program. Keep in mind, this is old stuff here, which has been around a while. More recently, we have had studies that were done by others.

Here is the MIT study that was released last month. This study analyzed the economic impact of some of the carbon cap on trade proposals. We have looked at this. The study found that the Boxer-Sanders bill, which is the one to be taken up by Senator BOXER and Senator SANDERS, would impose a tax equivalent of $4,560 on every American family of four. The Lieberman-McCain proposal, which is more modest, would cost the same American family more than $3,500 in 2015 and almost $5,000 a year by the year 2050. This is huge.

I can remember, in 1993, the largest tax increase in modern history was proposed and passed by the Clinton-Gore administration. It increased the marginal rates on all Americans by huge amounts. I could describe it, but it was a huge tax increase. It would cost $32 billion a year. Now, while that would cost $32 billion a year, the Kyoto elements that came out of the survey would cost over $300 billion a year. In other words, what I am saying is that the cost of cap on trade systems, or these reductions they are talking about, is far greater than 10 times the largest tax increase of 1993 in modern history. You can argue the science. One thing you cannot argue is the money. It will cost that amount of money.

I am going to go and cover a couple of things that I think are of interest. We will put up the EU chart. When Kyoto was passed, and prior to being ratified by a number of different countries, of the 15 Western European countries, only 13—all signed on, I say to the Chair, and ratified the Kyoto Treaty—all 15 countries of Western Europe. Out of those 15 countries, only 2 actually have met their emission requirements. Everybody can pat themselves on the back and say I am going to pass this thing, but only 2 out of 15 met the requirements. These are the countries, and the United Kingdom and Sweden were the only two out of all those countries that reduced the amount of emissions and tried to reach a target. The rest of them had increases in emissions. There it is right there on the chart.

So let me suggest to you something else that is significant. During the Clinton-Gore administration, when they had the various meetings with people trying to sign onto the Kyoto Treaty, we talked about how much money this was going to cost. Thomas Wigley was the scientist chosen by Al Gore during the Clinton-Gore administration. He was charged with the responsibility. He said if all developed nations—not some but all—signed on to the Kyoto treaty and lived by its emissions requirements ratified by the treaty, how much would it reduce the temperature in 50 years. I finished saying of the 15 western European countries, only 2 have made the targets. It is not going to happen, but if it did happen in never-never land, let's assume all the developed nations, all of us sign on to it and live by the emissions requirements, how much would it reduce the temperature in 50 years? The result at the end of 50 years was seven one-hundredths of 1 degree Celsius. It is not even measurable. So we have had the largest tax increase for 50 years and yet nothing has come from it.

I am going to go over something we did a few weeks ago. A few weeks ago the distinguished chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee—the committee I used to chair—decided she would have a hearing and have Al Gore come in and give his pitch, talk about his accomplishments, and so forth. I felt it wasn't going to go too well, so all I could do was use the opening statement I had. I had 10 minutes for an opening statement. This is what I did.

I said: I am going to state seven positions and, Mr. Gore, I would like to have you, since you are going to have all the time in the world to respond and I won't have nearly as much time, I want you to refute, if you can, any one or two or seven of these seven. He could not do it and did not do it. So we accept as fact those issues which I stated and he didn't refute. Let me go over them quickly.

No. 1, this is somewhere between a $300 billion and $380 billion tax increase on the American people annually. That is there. No one is going to deny that. That has already been verified. He did not refute that point.

No. 2, if all these things happen, it would be like the chart we saw: It would only reduce the temperature by seven one-hundredths of 1 degree Celsius in a period of 50 years, and everybody understands that is true. He didn't refute that.

No. 3, there is no link between hurricane intensity and global warming. I don't think anybody wants to get into that debate. I can and I will, perhaps—I won't get around to it until the second go round—very carefully and succinctly talk about the fact that scientists are now saying the linkage doesn't exist, and even Senator Gore is not talking about that anymore. That is No. 3.

No. 4, the sea level rise scenario is bogus. That movie a lot of kids are required to watch—kids are impressionable. They don't understand. They don't know it is science fiction. They think this is something that is going to happen, and those kids have nightmares. I have parents tell me—similar to the lady from Maryland whose daughter had to watch that movie once a month—we are all going to drown. It is a horrible thing, but they believe that.

Now we know the sea level rise scenario is bogus, and we have the documentation that says it is. He didn't refute that.

No. 5, it is all about money. You could put this in a lot of different categories. Yes, there are huge amounts of money involved. We already talked about the corporations supposedly joining in this coalition to reduce greenhouse gases because they are good citizens, only to find out they are making millions and, in some cases, billions of dollars by doing it. Every time I say this, I say I don't criticize them because if I were chairman of a board of any of those companies, I would do the same thing.

I already said how much money we are talking about. There are huge amounts of money to be made. Al Gore—and this is a small thing—after his little award the other day, his speaker's fee went up to $200,000 a speech. That is money. Obviously, there are a lot of people who would like to get in on that deal.

There is also George Soros, the Michael Moores, and these various foundations such as the Heinz Foundation that put in thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars, contribute to campaigns, buy off scientists. That group is very busy. That is No. 5. That wasn't refuted.

No. 6, the believers are converting. That is what I started off this presentation with, that the believers who are out there, who were strong believers 12 years ago, are now saying the science isn't there. I have given the documentation, I have given the quotes, I have given their names and titles. They are all distinguished scientists from all over, and they are coming the other way. That is why I say panic is setting in because all of a sudden people realize people are catching on.

Then the last point, No. 7. If you look at the movie—I confess, I have not seen it—the last frame of the movie says—I believe this is going to be accurate because I have it pretty well memorized: Are you ready to change the way you live?

The whole idea of the movie was to get people to start not using toilet paper and all this stuff the elitists in Hollywood want everybody else to do except for them. Then we find out Senator Gore's house in Tennessee emits 20 times the greenhouse gases of the average home in America—20 times. I said: You are asking everyone else are you ready to change the way you live. So I asked him to take a pledge, giving him a full year to comply, saying at the end of a year I will have my house emissions down so it will be the same as average America. This is day 51, by the way, and he hasn't signed that pledge.

I say these not in a light vein, because this isn't light. This is serious stuff. The science is there. The money is there. The taxes are there, the cost to the American people. Fortunately, the American people are catching on.

A lot of people have said: All right, INHOFE, so you got into this thing after you were once a believer in the fact that manmade gases were causing climate change, and you changed when you found out what it was going to cost. If the science isn't there and it is going to cost the American people 10 times the largest tax increase in history, then why would people be for it?

I suggest there are a lot of people outside who are very vocal. One statement is from France, from Jacques Chirac. Jacques Chirac said Kyoto is not about climate change. He says:

> Kyoto represents the first component of an authentic global governance.

That is not INHOFE, that is Jacques Chirac.

Another is Margot Wallstrom. She was the environmental minister for the European Union. Margot Wallstrom said:

> We are not talking about climate change, we are talking about—

Listen to this, Margot Wallstrom—

> Kyoto is about the economy, about leveling the playing field for big business worldwide.

There you have it, Madam President. My wife and I have been married for 48 years. We have 20 kids and grandkids. I am doing this today for them. I don't want them to have to pay huge tax increases the rest of their lives for something where most of the science has already been refuted.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. I ask the Chair if she will share with me what the time is now at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has 47 minutes remaining, and the Senator from Oklahoma has 31 minutes remaining.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the Chair.

Madam President, let me try to find a place to begin. That is a pretty extraordinary set of statements that has been set forth here. I suppose the first place to begin is by setting the record clear that the amendment has been completely and totally mischaracterized. This amendment does not affect the projects that are in the WRDA bill. The Senator has said this would kill the WRDA bill and every project in the bill would have to go back and be redone. That is specifically not true because this is targeted toward future projects, and it specifically leaves out those projects currently approved and in the process. So it doesn't touch anything in this bill. That is No. 1. That is the first mischaracterization.

Secondly, the Senator from Oklahoma spent a lot of time talking about Kyoto and how Kyoto would be terrible, Kyoto would require people to do this. We are not doing Kyoto. Kyoto is sort of out of the picture, in a sense, for us because we are well beyond the ability to ever meet Kyoto.

More importantly, when he cites the European community not living up to Kyoto, Kyoto doesn't go into effect until next year. They don't have to meet it until next year and they have until 2012 to meet it. To be throwing around comparisons to Kyoto today and saying, well, they haven't met it; of 15, 2 actually made the target—that is pretty good, that 2 have made the target before it even goes into effect.

Moreover, over the years, since 1990 when we began this process in Rio—and I might add, President George Herbert Walker Bush and Republican EPA Administrator Reilly and Republican Chief of Staff and former Gov. JOHN SUNUNU all signed on and agreed we needed to take this seriously and respond. That is not George Soros, that is not some Hollywood crew. That is a Republican President of the United States who signed us on to a voluntary framework over the years. And since then, Europe has reduced their emissions by .8 percent. Guess what. The United States has increased its emissions by 15.8 percent. So Europe is reducing; the United States is not.

The Senator mentioned a certain number of ''scientists,'' et cetera. First, we have done some research on a number of those folks previously. Some don't even qualify as legitimate scientists, No. 1. But No. 2, not one of them has ever produced a legitimate, scientific, peer-reviewed study that has met with scientifically peer-reviewed analysis that signs off on their conclusions. Not one of them, not one, compared to 928 peer-reviewed studies that have been put forward all over the globe by scientists from all kinds of countries.

He says scientists are changing their minds and moving in a different direction. I don't know what scientists the Senator listens to or who he is talking about because the most recent analysis of scientists is several thousand scientists who make up the intergovernmental panel on global climate change.

I know I heard the Senator talk about how this represents some kind of global conspiracy and global government and all of this, but it is something called the United Nations which Republican Presidents have used, conservative Republican Presidents, such as Ronald Reagan, often went to and found the ability to work cooperatively to achieve things. Whether it was President Jerry Ford, President Richard Nixon, or others, they respected the United Nations and have tried to enhance its ability to do some things on an international basis.

These several thousand scientists have put out four reports. Each report has been stronger than the next, and those scientists who are part of that process have not been leaving, departing, changing their minds, recanting, or asking to rescind their opinions. In fact, they have strengthened those opinions.

The most recent statement is pretty clear. It is unequivocal that the Earth's climate is warming. Evidence from observations of increased global air and ocean temperatures—and I quoted earlier the 90-percent likelihood they quote that it is human beings who are causing that.

You can choose to ignore evidence or not. All through history there were people who argued man could never fly, and we did. There were people who argued we couldn't have a vaccine for a disease. There were people who argued putting fluoride in the water was going to kill you. There were people who argued all kinds of things. There were people who argued the Earth is flat. But the fact is there were always bodies of evidence based on real science that found a consensus, and that consensus has never been more powerful

than it is today that what is happening is happening. Eleven of the last 12 years rank among the 12 hottest years on record since 1850, when sufficient worldwide temperature measurements began. Quoting from the IPCC:

Over the last 50 years, cold days, cold nights, and frost have become less frequent, while hot days, hot nights and heat waves have become more frequent.

The Senator said people are saying there is doubt about the increased intensity of storms, so let me quote what 2,000 scientists from over 154 nations, I think is the number, have concluded.

The intensity of tropical cyclones, hurricanes in the North Atlantic, has increased over the past 30 years, which correlates with the increase in tropical sea surface temperatures. Storms with heavy precipitation have increased in frequency over most land areas. Between 1900 and 2005, long-term trends show significantly increased precipitation in eastern parts of north and South America, northern Europe, and north and Central Asia. Between 1900 and 2000, the Sahell—that is the boundary between the Sahara Desert and some of the fertile regions of Africa to the south—the Mediterranean, Southern Africa and parts of southern Asia have become dryer, adding stress to water resources in those regions. Droughts have become longer and more intense and have affected larger areas since the 1970s, especially in the tropics and subtropics.

The Senator mentioned the scientists had revamped or revised their conclusion about ice melting from 39 inches to 23 inches. What they did was take out of that assessment the ice melting and looked simply at temperature—at the sea level rise that was occurring as a consequence of expansion and the other phenomena we are witnessing, and they found that is between 7 and 23 inches. Maybe people think 7 and 23 inches doesn't make a difference, but if you are in southern Florida, if you are on the islands, if you are in a port city, there are 100 million people who live within 3 feet of sea level. So you are looking at a potential threat of great significance. Those scientists have not walked away from that prediction. If you include the melting of the ice, which our best scientists are now telling us may well happen, it is even worse. It has the potential of 16 to 23 feet.

When a doctor tells you that you have indications you have a cancer, you usually go and try to find treatment. Well, the doctors are telling us something is going on and we ought to be concerned about it, and they are pointing to what it is.

I want to speak about the greenhouse gas concept for a minute, because it allows us to use our minds, the minds God gave us. It allows us to think about consequences. Why do we call it greenhouse gas? Where does the word greenhouse gas come from? It came long before we talked about climate change. The word greenhouse gas has been applied to these gases because they have the impact of creating a greenhouse effect on the earth, and the science is absolutely unequivocal. I defy any scientist to come in here, who is legitimate and bona fide, and tell us there is no greenhouse effect. Scientists agree there is a greenhouse effect.

In fact, life on Earth would not exist without the greenhouse effect. It is this thin layer of gases in our atmosphere that in fact preserves the ability for all of us to live on Earth, and those greenhouse gases contain heat within the Earth that keeps the average temperature of the Earth at 57 degrees Fahrenheit. If you didn't have a greenhouse effect, the Earth would be 60 degrees cooler. The greenhouse effect got its name because it behaves like a greenhouse at a nursery or in a garden, where the light can come in through the glass, and it comes through transparently, the light hits the pots of earth and things that are in there, reflects, and creates its own energy.

That energy then goes back out, reverberates the light, and comes back in a shortwave emission from the sun—and it is transparent—and it goes back in a longwave emission, which is less powerful. It is opaque. The veneer of the atmosphere, the greenhouse gas veneer is opaque to that energy trying to be released, which means it can't break through. It blocks it. A certain amount of that gas is trapped, and that is what creates the greenhouse effect, and it warms over a period of time.

That warming is now absolutely conclusive. It is incontrovertible. As Professor John Holden, who is a professor of government and earth science at Harvard, and also affiliated with Woods Hole Marine, states very clearly, the folks on the other side of this argument have two major obligations, neither of which they have ever met. Obligation No. 1: They have to show the warming that is taking place is caused by other than the greenhouse gases. In other words, they have to show what is causing it if the greenhouse gases aren't. And No. 2, they have to prove the greenhouse gases that are going up and behaving in the way I just described are not what is creating the warming. And they have never, ever, ever, ever met that standard. They have never provided a study that meets either of those tests. They can't show you what is doing it and they can't show you why the gases we create aren't doing it. We do have, however, a group of scientists who are warning us about what we ought to do.

The Senator dismisses very quickly the companies that are involved in this. Well, I have never met a company that goes off to do something and creates a storm about science based on complete fraud with respect to what they are doing. None of them came to the table willingly, may I add. They have come to the table because they understand the science. They have come to the table because they understand companies all over the world are exerting responsibility.

The former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill, was president and CEO of Alcoa, and for some 15 years now he has been taking steps as a CEO with a sense of civic responsibility to try to respond to this science.

The fact is all of these scientists, and I might add the presidents of these other countries, are speaking, obviously, out of concern for their own countries, out of concern for their own constituencies, and for the threats they face in those nations. Prime Minister Blair, who is leaving office shortly, has made this one of his major issues, one of his major crusades, and obviously has done so at some risk. But the fact is he and many other leaders of countries accept the science and understand their responsibility to try to meet it and to do so in a responsible way.

I have spoken to the sea level rise and to the United Nations, but there is one thing I might clarify very quickly. Mr. Hansen did not get a grant from the Heinz Foundation. Mr. Hansen was presented a Heinz award in honor of former Republican Senator John Heinz, who was a great leader on this issue. Senator Heinz knew global climate change was happening, he knew we needed to respond to these things, and Mr. Hansen received an award, with no strings attached, no communication whatsoever, as a recognition of his work. He has received awards from many other organizations and entities over the course of his lifetime, and I would put his credentials and his experience up against any of the other so-called scientists we sometimes hear referred to.

I might also add we have heard a lot about the implementation of Kyoto. I led the floor effort on Kyoto when the so-called Byrd-Hagel amendment was brought to the floor, so I know something about that particular process. The fact is those who have always opposed doing something about global climate change have tried to use that vote and Kyoto itself as an excuse to sow fear in their own party, saying how much it is going to cost Americans and how terrible it is going to be, how it will ruin our economy and take us backwards. These are exactly the same arguments we heard in 1990 when we did the Clean Air Act.

I sat in the room right back here, which is now the majority leader's room. It was then Senator Mitchell's office. We sat with EPA Administrator Reilly, with JOHN SUNUNU, and with others. Republicans and Democrats alike sat at that table and we negotiated out the Clean Air Act. I remember all the ''Chicken Little'' cries we heard as people came and said, well, you know, if you make us do this, it is going to cost $8 billion to the industry and it is going to destroy the industry, and it will reduce American jobs, and we are going to be noncompetitive. The environmental community came in and said, no, no, no, those guys are wrong, it is not going to cost $8 billion, it is going to cost $4 billion. And it won't take 8 years, we can do it in 4 years. Guess what. It cost about $2 billion and

took half the time. They were wrong, too.

All the statements about how it was going to ruin America's economy? We wound up growing our economy by 123, or whatever, percent over those years. More jobs were created and Americans did better. We did it and we breathed cleaner air at the same time.

The fact is, nobody has the ability to predict what is going to happen when you start down this road. Once you begin to kick these technologies into gear, then the entire basis of the judgments you are making begins to change, because the technology moves far more rapidly than anybody can surmise, and some things are going to appear that we don't even know about today.

Let us assume the Senator from Oklahoma is correct and I am wrong, and the scientists are all wrong, and Al Gore is wrong, and everybody who has spoken out on this all through the years is wrong, and that we went down this road in order to deal with some of these issues. What is the worst that could happen?

Given past experience with the Clean Air Act, and given experiences with where the world is moving on this issue, we are going to create a whole bunch of new technologies, create a bunch of new jobs, where we will have cleaner air to breathe, a population that is less impacted by asthma and emphysema and by other airborne particulate diseases, there will be less cancer, and we will wind up more energy independent, with cleaner fuels, and the United States will have greater security. We will lead the world in these technologies, because these other countries are committed to buying them.

If they are wrong, what is the worst? Global catastrophe, according to every prediction. That is the ledger here. You can take your choice. You can be prudent and take the steps we need to take, or you can continue to keep your head in the sand and ignore the work of these thousands of scientists and these leaders around the world and these corporate citizens and others who have come to the table.

All we are asking for here is that our Corps of Engineers makes a judgment. I mean, are we saying they shouldn't make a judgment; that they shouldn't make an analysis? Maybe the judgment they will make is they will agree the science is wrong. But shouldn't they be asked to make that judgment? Shouldn't they be asked to measure what in fact is possible, as a consequence of the evidence on the table? Wouldn't it be helpful to all of us to have them making those kinds of judgments?

I think when we look behind the curtain of the sort of red herrings that get thrown out here, there isn't one that stands up; not one peer-reviewed scientific analysis, not one legitimate, cogent statement to the contrary to explain why what is happening is happening and what the impact is.

Let's say it wasn't just the greenhouse gases, because we are not doing anything in this amendment to deal with greenhouse gases. Let's say it isn't the greenhouse gases but that the Earth is warming. Isn't it smart to have the Corps of Engineers at least make a judgment about what the effect of the warming may be with respect to water, since they are going to be dealing with water resources? This is, after all, the bill that deals with water resources for our country. It would be smart for the Corps of Engineers to be able to make some judgment with respect to that.

The Chair of the committee has come to the floor and has some information with respect to the Corps of Engineers' willingness to do that, so I yield such time as the Chair might use, and I reserve the remainder of the time after that.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, how much time remains for Senator KERRY?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator has 26 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. If the President could just tell me when I have used 4 minutes, I will yield the rest of the time back to Senator KERRY.

I think, again, this gives us the sense of some of the debate that has been going on inside the environment committee and across the various committees. I certainly believe these kinds of debates are helpful because we get the charges, if you will, out in the open. People on one side or the other can have this free debate.

I thank the Senator from Massachusetts. When I learned he was going to offer this amendment, I wrote to the Corps and I asked them whether they are considering the impact of global warming already as they do their work. I will ask consent to have printed in the RECORD their answer to me. It is dated May 10. I will just read a little bit of it.

The Corps planning process has been considering the physical impacts of global climate change for over 20 years, initially through the consideration of sea level rise in project planning. As part of the evolution in our approach to incorporating the impacts of global climate change, we are including more risk and uncertainty analyses in our planning process. We continue to collaborate with Federal agencies to ensure that we are up to date on the current interpretations of climate change scenarios and to refine our processes as more aspects of global climate change are understood. This is imperative because the water resources public works projects being planned and designed today must protect against and be resilient to future extreme events, which could be exacerbated by global climate change.

They are basically saying:

We believe the [Corps] is a leader in developing an innovative, yet practical, cost-effective approach to addressing climate change impacts in our planning and management of our key water-based infrastructure. We are well positioned to respond to the Nation's needs now and in the future.

I want to have this letter printed in the RECORD because I want to say to my friend from Massachusetts that as a result of his offering this amendment, we were able to get the Corps to focus on everything they have been doing to address climate change. I think the Senator will be pleased to see some of the steps they are already taking. I think his amendment is really consistent with what the Corps has already begun to do.

I thank Senator KERRY. I thank Senator INHOFE for engaging in this debate with him. It is a little more pleasant for me to see the debate between Senator KERRY and Senator INHOFE rather than Senator BOXER and Senator INHOFE. It is a little bit of a rest for me. I thank both of them for their intelligent approach to this debate.

I send this letter to the desk and ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS,
Washington, DC, May 10, 2007.

Hon. BARBARA BOXER,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BOXER: This is in response to your letter of May 8, 2007, to Lieutenant General Strock requesting information on how the Corps addresses the potential impacts of global warming in our planning process.

There are many avenues through which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Civil Works program addresses the difficult scientific, technical and operational issues raised by the uncertainty associated with climate change and its potential impacts on planning and management of water resources infrastructure. Attached please find a discussion of some actions we are taking to address climate change in all of our activities.

The Corps planning process has been considering the physical impacts of global climate change for over twenty years, initially through the consideration of sea level rise in project planning. As part of the evolution in our approach to incorporating the impacts of global climate change, we are including more risk and uncertainty analyses in our planning process. We continue to collaborate with Federal agencies to ensure that we are up to date on the current interpretations of climate change scenarios and to refine our processes as more aspects of global climate change are understood. This is imperative because the water resources public works projects being planned and designed today must protect against and be resilient to future extreme events, which could be exacerbated by global climate change.

In conclusion, we believe the USACE is a leader in developing an innovative, yet practical, cost-effective approach to addressing climate change impacts in our planning and management of our key water-based infrastructure. We are well positioned to respond to the Nation's needs now and in the future.

Sincerely,

STEVEN L. STOCKTON, P.E.,
Deputy Director of Civil Works.

Mrs. BOXER. I yield the remainder of the time to Senator KERRY.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, since we are having so much fun here, let me go

back and respond to the Senator's response. After this, I have a very significant meeting I am going to have to attend. I am going to have to reserve the remainder of my time, go attend that, and come right back here. I have to leave temporarily. Let me go ahead and cover these last 12 things the Senator from Massachusetts has said.

First of all, I think he is right on this—I found out he was right. I had said the cost of this and the effect of this would be to delay projects. I found out, after he said it and I found out it is true, that his bill starts from this point forward. The reason I didn't know that is because his amendment was not filed until last night, and I was on my way back from Iraq last night, so I was not aware of this. It doesn't change my argument, though. The argument is this is another step which has to be taken any time we have to go through any kind of a process.

I am sure, when we have the next Transportation reauthorization bill, he will have an amendment saying we have to know for each project how this could affect climate change. It really doesn't make that much difference.

The second thing, he said Kyoto is not really on the table. I am glad to know that because whether you call it Kyoto or something else is not important. It is still going to have to be some kind of restriction, some kind of carbon tax, some kind of cap-and-trade policy. When you do, it is going to cost money. So, yes, I used the Wharton Econometric Survey to demonstrate clearly that this is a tax increase of $2,700 on each family of four. However, the more recent bills—I grant to the Senator from Massachusetts, we are talking about this. We are talking about the ones that are more recent than this. The more recent ones, done by MIT, the Massachusetts—I stress that—Institute of Technology, show that the Sanders-Boxer bill's cost is about $4,500 for each family of four. McCain-Lieberman would be $3,500. So if you would rather not use Kyoto, that is fine. We will use some of the more recent ones. Nonetheless, it will be something equal to 10 times the largest tax increase in contemporary history.

He said also that there is not one peer-reviewed scientist—or study that substantiates what we are talking about. So let me just read them again here to make sure we understand what this is.

Two weeks ago, the top hurricane scientist in the U.S. Government—indeed, one of the top hurricane scientists in the world—published a peer-reviewed study in the scientific Journal EOS that concluded from the evidence that ''hurricanes in the Atlantic have not increased for more than a century.'' Peer reviewed. There it is.

Another one is a peer-reviewed study published in the April 18, 2007, issue of the science journal Geophysical Research Letters which found:

If the world continues to warm, vertical wind sheer, which literally tears apart storms, would also rise. These winds would decrease the number and severity of storms we would otherwise have.

In other words, it would actually have a decreasing effect. Again, it is peer reviewed.

We had a third one, too. We have several of those which are peer reviewed. So that statement is not correct.

Let's see, the fourth point is INHOFE said this is some kind of a global conspiracy. No, INHOFE didn't say that; Jacques Chirac said that, and I quoted him. I have quoted him, so there would be no reason to repeat it; it would be redundant, although it might be worth redundancy here. Jacques Chirac said—and he wasn't talking about Kyoto having anything to do with climate change.

Kyoto represents the first component of an authentic global governance.

That is not Senator JIM INHOFE saying that; that is Jacques Chirac.

I quoted other people—Margot Wallstrom, who is the Environmental Minister from the EU, or was at that time. She said it is about leveling the playing field worldwide. Again, the Senator from Massachusetts is wrong. It wasn't Senator INHOFE; it was Jacques Chirac.

No. 5—I always enjoy this one—they use the consensus that the world—you know, the Flat Earth Society. They have it backward. In fact, this is what we are faced with, the same thing science was faced with back when they thought the world was flat. They thought the Earth was flat, and that was the consensus. All the experts agreed on that at that time. Then we found out with new science that it was not. That is exactly, precisely what is happening in this case.

They all thought at that time that manmade gases were causing climate change. Now they readily admit and say—and I will be glad to read them again. I plan on yielding back a bunch of time because we do want to get to voting before too long. But I read all the scientists who are very strong in their consensus, and these were the scientists who were the strongest pro-global-warming extremists around 10 years ago, but they have changed their minds. It is in the record. I already read it about an hour ago.

Then, No. 6, the statement the Senator from Massachusetts said, the IPCC survey—that is the United Nations—was talking about 2,000 scientists agree to it. It is not 2,000 scientists. What he is quoting from is the summary for policymakers. Every time they have an IPCC meeting—they have had five now, I believe—they start out with a policy summary for policymakers. These are the politicians, not the scientists. They are the ones who believe it. Yet, even though they are strongly on the other side, they have to defend their position. It was the United Nations that started this whole thing. The IPCC was the group that did it.

It is going to be very difficult for them to change their position, so gradually they are coming over to our side.

The next thing the Senator from Massachusetts was criticizing me for was talking about minimizing the sea level rise. I am not. That is the IPCC. That is the United Nations. They said prior to this year's report that it was going to rise 39 inches over the next 100 years—until this year. They came out and they said: We will reduce that. Instead of 39 inches, it will be somewhere between 7 and 23 inches. Every time they come out with a new report, they reduce that sea level rise. Again, it is not INHOFE saying it; it is the IPCC talking about it.

No. 8, the greenhouse gas effect. I agree with this. The greenhouse gas effect gives life. We need to have that. The question is, What are the manmade gases? We call them anthropogenic gases, CO_2, methane, some others. These are primarily what they are talking about. Do these have a result of increasing temperatures? Is it increasing from natural causes or is it increasing from manmade causes?

Keep in mind, we have charts that show throughout the beginning of recorded history it has been like this. You know, people don't understand. God is still up there. We have natural things that are taking place. It gets warmer, gets cooler, gets warmer, gets cooler. Every time it does, I have an interesting presentation where we talk about the hysteria we see in the press, only to find out this was something in the New York Times in 1895, the same thing as they are talking about today.

This happens, natural causes are out there, and, yes, you need to have the greenhouse effect. It gives life. The question is, What do manmade gases—how do they increase it?

Put that Wiggly chart up one more time, the Tom Wiggly chart. This is the scientist who was commissioned by Al Gore during the Clinton-Gore administration. He said that if all developed nations signed the Kyoto treaty and lived by its emission requirements, it would reduce the temperature only by seven one-hundredths of 1 degree in 50 years. It is not even measurable. This is not me talking. Again, these are the scientists. They are scientists I didn't commission. That was done by Al Gore.

I am glad for the correction on Jim Hanson. He said Jim Hanson was not given a grant by the Heinz Foundation. Instead of that, he was just given a check. I recant what I said. He was not given a grant for $250,000; he was given a check for $250,000.

The Senator from Massachusetts talked about the Byrd-Hagel amendment. Let's remember what that amendment was. The amendment said—and this passed by 95 to nothing in this Senate. I was standing here. I voted. I don't know whether the Senator from Massachusetts was here. I assume he was.

Anyway, what it was, after they signed this protocol, they wanted to

submit it to the Senate for ratification. That is the process you have to go through. The President and administration can sign it, but it has to be ratified. Thank God it has to be ratified, and all these other treaties do, so we at least read them. So the Byrd-Hagel amendment was passed by 95 to 0—that is unanimous from everyone who was here—that said we will not ratify the Kyoto treaty if either of the two following is true: No. 1, that we are not requiring the developing nations to do the same thing the developed nations do, and No. 2, that it would be economically devastating for our country.

We know what it is going to cost in terms of how it relates to the largest tax increase in history, and we know also that China and the developing nations have no interest. China will become the largest emitter of CO_2 this year, way ahead of schedule. They are going to be the largest emitter, and they are sitting back laughing at us. I think we have only put on line one coal-fired generating plant to give this country the energy to run this country in the last 15 years—let me correct that. In the 15 years between 1990 and 2005, we didn't put on line any new coal-fired generating plants. At the same time we are not doing anything, China is cranking out one every 3 days.

Now, of the people standing on the floor of the Senate, I know Senator DORGAN is concerned about jobs, life in this country and other countries as well when we run out of electricity. Right now we are dependent upon coal for 53 percent of the energy it takes to run this great machine we call America.

Now, if you pull 53 percent out, this is where the corporations make money, those who are competing with coal. They make a fortune. Who pays? The poor pay. There was a very interesting study done not too long ago. It is not just a matter of the tax increase, CBO, 2 weeks ago, came out with a report that said, yes, it is going to cost this amount of money. But the worst part of it is it is going to cost the poor, people on fixed incomes. Those are the people who have to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy, on heating their homes and those things that are a necessity.

So, anyway, the Senator from Massachusetts talked about the Byrd-Hagel amendment. It is still out there. It still has 95 Senators who said: We don't want to ratify any program that is not going to apply equally to Mexico and India and China and other developing nations.

Then, I guess, No. 11, the point he made when he was talking about the economy, saying, oh, this is not true, well, I have a great deal of respect for the junior Senator from Massachusetts, but would you rather believe him or would you rather believe the Wharton Econometric Survey in conjunction with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology?

Look, I know I am not as smart as most of you guys around here. So I go to the areas where they are smart. I know where the scientists are. I would rather quote scientists who do know rather than stand here and tell you how smart I am because I am not. But I know how to read these papers. I do know for a fact the scientists have come over to our side.

I would suggest anyone who wants to really get into this thing, I have got a Web site, which is www.epw.senate.gov. Now, go to that. We have literally thousands, not hundreds but thousands of scientists who are now saying the science is not there. You cannot say there is a consensus.

Lastly, Senator BOXER, we are getting along real fine on this bill. She does not want to kill it; I do not want to kill it. This amendment is not going to pass. So I think the bill will pass.

But they say the Corps of Engineers is already doing this. If the Corps of Engineers is already making this evaluation on projects as to what effect they are going to have, then why do we need this amendment? I would suggest we do not need this amendment.

I reserve the remainder of my time. How much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 16 minutes 45 seconds. The Senator from Massachusetts has 22 minutes 41 seconds.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I reserve the remainder of my time. I am going to go to an appointment that I have right now and try to return in a few minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, let me respond, if I can, to the Senator from Oklahoma. I regret that he has to leave.

Almost every single one of the statements he just made does not apply to the question of global warming itself.

Let me give you an example. The Senator just cited two peer-reviewed studies. One of the peer-reviewed studies he talked about talks about hurricanes and the scientists who found that hurricanes have not increased.

We never asserted they have increased. I didn't come here and say they have increased. Maybe some people have talked about the increase in the number of hurricanes, but he has a peer-reviewed study, supposedly, that talks about hurricanes have not increased. He does not have a peer-reviewed study that says global climate change is not happening because of human-induced greenhouse gases. Not one.

The second study he cited as a peer-reviewed study was vertical wind shear, decreasing the effect of wind. Well, I am not here to debate vertical wind shear. Yes, there are certain indicators within the framework of models that cannot predict accurately exactly what is going to happen as a consequence of climate change. We have admitted that for 17 years.

The Senator, obviously, missed the fact that I said—I led the effort on our side on the Kyoto agreement with respect to Byrd-Hagel. I advised my colleagues to vote for it. I voted for it. And we voted for it because there was a simple principle at stake, which is whether we were going to treat this on a global basis, whether we were going to, all of us, join in. If the United States was going to be part of the solution, we could not be a solution by ourselves. We needed to have the less developed countries and others join in.

That has been a fight we have been involved in now for a number of years. But, please, I ask the Senator, do not misinterpret what we were doing in that. We were not suggesting that it was the cost factor or because we did not need to do it. It is because we needed to do it in the most sensible way, and we needed to do it within a global framework. We still need to do that.

Now, each of the statements the Senator just made is flat incorrect—most of them, 90 percent. I will be very specific. He talked about how it was politicians who wrote this, not scientists. Well, in fact, that is not true. This report was created by scientists. And the EPW Committee itself had a briefing in which those scientists, including the cochair, Susan Solomon of NOAA, presented the results.

The first page of the summary for policymakers lists the lead authors, every single one of whom are scientists. So let's get our facts straight. Moreover, the Bush administration made the following statement in support of the IPCC. They said that they continue to support and embrace the work of the IPCC and the science behind their most recent report.

So the Senator is at odds even with an administration that has been reluctant to deal with this issue. Let me also point out that—he pointed out this question of the discrepancy of the 7 and 23 inches in the change in sea level. Incidentally, these little sort of twists of fact are not so little in the summary because they are being used in the conglomerate, one after the other, to try to confuse people and pretend that somehow this issue is not real.

Each one of them gets blown away by the real facts, but they still keep coming back, something I learned a lot about a few years ago, where the facts don't matter. You just repeat something enough even if it is not true. Well, the fact is, with respect to the sea level rise, they try to make a big deal and say: Well, they have reversed the science; the scientists are going backwards. No, they are not. The sea level rise is still predicted to go up between 7 and 23 inches by 2100. That is what the IPCC report still says. The upper limit is lower than the previous report because they took out the contributions from Greenland and the Antarctic ice sheet. The reason they took them out is because the scientists believed, in keeping with their notion of accuracy and of trying to not be alarmists, that there was a lack of a reliable

model to accurately estimate the melting rate.

Now, you do not have a reliable model to accurately reflect the melting rate. But, guess what. To your eye, you can go up and see the melting. You can look at a satellite photo of 1979 and a satellite photo today, and your eye will tell you 20 percent of the ice is gone. It is not getting colder, it is getting warmer. The ocean is getting warmer.

So what is the logical conclusion? The logical conclusion is more ice is going to melt. And what happens when more ice melts? What was a reflectent to the rays of the sun—the ice—no longer is there to reflect. The sunlight goes into the water. Guess what it does in the water. It is absorbed, it warms up the water, and then guess what happens. The ice melts faster. You do not need to be a scientist to do this. Any kid in school can figure that out, which is why young people get this.

The Senator should not distort these facts. One after another he lays out something that suggests something that is happening that is not.

Take Jacques Chirac's comment. First of all, he is the only person I know of who ever suggested that Jacques Chirac speaks for America. But having said what he said about Jack Chirac and global governance, global governance is something that Presidents have dealt with in the context of the U.N. without ever considering giving up the sovereignty of the United States.

You can have global governance. Anytime you have a treaty, it is global governance. When you had the World War II treaty on the battleship Missouri, with Japan, that was governance.

When the United States went over and Douglas MacArthur helped to create a constitution and create a democracy, that was global governance. It turned out it was a pretty darn good result as we rebuilt Europe and a lot of other places.

Global governance does not have to be this bugaboo word that is used to scare people that somehow we are giving up the sovereignty of the United States. Every one of these arguments just kind of melts away like the ice itself. I think we ought to have a real debate about what is happening.

Let's go to the economy. That is the big one that they love to pick on and say to Americans: Oh, this is going to cost you so much money if you do this, and it is going to wind up being terrible. Well, that is not what the best economists in the world say. That is not what the best business leaders in the world say.

In fact, they have concluded if you do not do something, it is going to cost a lot of money. You want to pay a lot more money for insurance? You want to pay a lot more money for dams that are bigger, pay a lot more money for hospitalizations, more cancer, for more asthma, for more problems of the particulates in the air? Then you can go ahead and burn dirty coal and not be smart about the future.

The fact is, Sir Nicholas Stearn, who is one of the leading economists in Britain, former head of the Bank of England and one of the people whom Prime Minister Blair tapped to give them an analysis, wrote this in a report last fall:

> The scientific evidence is now overwhelming.

This an economist.

> Climate change is a serious global threat, and it demands an urgent global response. The review has assessed the wide range of evidence on the impacts of climate change and on the economic costs, and has used a number of different techniques to assess cost and risks. From all of those perspectives, the evidence gathered by the review leads to a simple conclusion. The benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic costs of not acting. Climate change will affect the basic elements of life for people around the world, access to water, food production, health, and the environment. Hundreds of millions of people could suffer hunger, water shortages, coastal flooding as the world warms. Using the results from formal economic models, the review estimates that if we don't act, the overall costs and risks of climate change will be equivalent to losing at least 5 percent of global GDP each year now and forever.

Losing 5 percent of GDP now and forever, that is the economic prediction of not acting. And they say if a wider risk of impacts is taken into account, the estimates of damage could rise to 20 percent of GDP or more. In contrast, the cost of action, reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the worst impacts of climate change can be limited to around 1 percent of global GDP each year.

That is an economic standard that, in fact, MIT economists have also confirmed, not quite the same figures but very similar. The bottom line is there is a consensus that the cost of not acting is far more expensive to the American people than the cost of acting.

I go back to the experience we had on the Clean Air Act in 1990. I don't remember Senator INHOFE being part of that discussion. But the fact is, in 1990, when we did that act, the same arguments were put forward about not proceeding forward, and every one of those arguments was blown away by the reality of what happened as well as by the judgments of Republicans and Democrats alike that it was important to act.

Back then, incidentally, DuPont, which has already been castigated by the Senator as somehow being in this for the money—DuPont was the principal producer of the chlorofluorocarbons that were part of the Montreal Protocol. DuPont was unwilling to move until they knew that the marketplace was going to be the same for everybody, which is what happened when the protocol went into effect. Once they knew what the marketplace was going to do, then they proceeded forward with an alternative to the CFCs.

So they proved that, No. 1, you can do it, but, No. 2, you have to do it where the marketplace is, in fact, working. That is why people believe—incidentally, this amendment has nothing to do with cap and trade. I happen to support it. We will have that debate down the road. But this amendment has nothing to do with it. This merely suggests if we are going to spend Federal dollars on water projects in America and levees and other kinds of projects, that we ought to know for certain every one of those projects is being judged specifically as to the impact of global climate change.

With respect to the cap and trade issue, the fact is, those companies don't want to proceed ahead until they have the same kind of certainty that the marketplace will give them when there is a uniform standard throughout the marketplace. That is far from a bottom-line, profit-seeking motive.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If neither side yields time, time will be charged equally to both sides.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that time be charged equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am sorry I had to leave at a very contentious time. Notes were given to me of what the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts said, that 90 percent of everything that INHOFE said is wrong. I didn't say anything. I am quoting scientists. I am quoting groups that are making analyses, and three of the quotes I made were from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He can say what I said is wrong, but he is saying that the scientists were wrong, and they never asserted that hurricanes have increased. It is a little confusing to me because maybe in the last few days he hasn't asserted that, but look at the movie. It talks about hurricanes. Those statements are made with regularity. In fact, they made the prediction that this past year was going to have more and more severe hurricanes. As it turned out, we had less and less severe hurricanes. I agree the models aren't perfect.

I don't know what he said about the Byrd-Hagel amendment but, again, you can't find any of these studies on any of the plans——

Mr. KERRY. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. INHOFE. No, I will not. You can't find any of the studies that are out there that haven't somehow talked about the fact that it is going to do economic damage. We know it is. No one can possibly say that there is a way to approach this where it is not

going to cause the economy to be damaged. So that was in the Byrd-Hagel amendment. The Byrd-Hagel amendment also said we don't want to ratify anything. We are not going to ratify anything. Every Senator said: We are not going to ratify anything that does not require that the developing nations do the same thing that the developed nations do. Obviously, we have not seen one plan that has come along that addresses the cap and trade and greenhouse gas, anthropogenic gas emissions, that doesn't inflict damage that the developing nations are willing to do.

IPCC was not written by politicians. I never said the report was. I said the summary for policymakers was written by politicians.

Sea level rise is not going backward. All I can say is, if you are going to hang all your hopes on the IPCC, look at the report. This was this year, 2007. I have said this several times. I don't know why I have to keep repeating it. Yes, it has been cut in half, their estimate as to how much sea level rise was going to take place. This isn't the first time that has happened. This happens almost every time they have it in one of the reports. So the sea level rise, no sense repeating that.

INHOFE shouldn't distort. He is the only one I know of who says Chirac speaks for America. Chirac speaks for America—ye gods. Since he accused me of saying that this is some kind of a global conspiracy, I was quoting the person who said that, who I am sure is a much better friend of the Senator from Massachusetts than he is of mine, and that was Jacques Chirac. Jacques Chirac said:

> Kyoto represents the first component of an authentic global governance.

That is not me. That is Jack Chirac. It answers the question why are these countries over in Europe so interested that we do something in this country that is going to hurt our economy. The answer came from Margot Wallstrom, Minister of the Environment for the European Union. She said:

> Kyoto is about the economy, about leveling the playing field for big business worldwide.

Yes, there are other countries that would love to have America be overtaxed and have all these economic problems that we don't have right now. It could inure to their benefit; there is no question about that. No one would deny that.

Best economists don't say controlling carbon will be costly. How many economists and how many scientists do I have to quote? I could use the rest of my time and not repeat one of the scientists, read another whole list, but I have done it so many times. Here are some I haven't talked about. This is the cost.

Going back, if you want to catch 60 at one time, let's take the 60 scientists in Canada, the ones I said earlier were the ones who recommended to the Prime Minister, 15 years ago, that they sign onto, ratify the Kyoto treaty. Now they say:

> If back in the mid-1990s we knew what we know today about climate, Kyoto would almost certainly not exist because we would have to conclude that it was not necessary.

That is 60 scientists there. You can try to discredit all 60 of them at one time and maybe you can do it. I don't know. But there are others. You can't look at these guys with the qualifications they have. Read what they have said. The fact that they have reversed their positions and say the scientists are not, there is some consensus because there is no consensus.

Senator KERRY quoted the Stern report, which has been discredited by even the economists who are climate change believers. I guess he was saying that I said there is a group of industries and we had a hearing on this. I wish the Senator from Massachusetts had attended the hearing. Yes, it is true there are several large corporations in America that are now embracing any kind of reduction, cap and trade or a tax or anything else because it inures to their benefit. I was specific as to how many millions and how many billions of dollars each one of these corporations would have. How dare me say that.

Again, if I were on the board of directors of any of these, I would say: Let's do the same thing. The whole idea is to make money. The problem is, it is as if no one is paying for all this fun we are having. Yes, it would have to be more money. But if we did that, somebody has to pay for it. Again, even the CBO says that all this money it is going to cost, the tax increase on the American people, whichever of these schemes we decide on, is going to be disproportionately on the poor and those who are on fixed incomes.

By the way, one of the statements on here was that no one has said we were going to have a worse hurricane season. I will quote one person I think the junior Senator from Massachusetts would know. It is Teresa Heinz-Kerry. Teresa Heinz-Kerry, the chair of the Heinz Foundation, has helped financially bankroll the Environment2004 campaign coalition, which is placing billboards throughout Florida claiming ''President Bush's environmental policies could result in stronger and more frequent hurricanes.'' That is a quote.

I don't know how much time we have left. We are now repeating each other. Nothing new has come out. I will have maybe a short final statement. I am willing to yield back the balance of my time.

I ask unanimous consent at this point, while we are both resting, that Senator WARNER be recognized for up to 4 minutes to make a statement as in morning business and that those 4 minutes be equally charged to both sides.

Mr. KERRY. Reserving the right to object, I respect the Senator. I would like to give him the time to speak but outside of my time. I would be happy to yield at this point in the day if he wants to speak as in morning business but not to be charged against our time. If he wants to take it off the Senator's time, he can.

Mr. INHOFE. All right. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Virginia be recognized for up to 4 minutes to speak as in morning business and his 4 minutes not be charged against either Senator KERRY or myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The senior Senator from Virginia.

REVEREND JERRY FALWELL

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise to say a few brief words about the Reverend Jerry Falwell, who passed away earlier today at the age of 73.

I have personally known Reverend Falwell since I first ran for election to the U.S. Senate in 1978. And, since that time, I have come to befriend a man who in many ways became a pillar of strength and inspiration not only to his community of Lynchburg, VA, where he was born but indeed to people around the world.

Throughout the 28-plus years that I have had the good fortune of representing the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia in the U.S. Senate, Reverend Falwell was always a constituent of mine, and he would often offer his counsel to me about pressing matters of the day. He would always do so in a polite, yet firm manner.

While I might not have always agreed with him, I have always admired Reverend Falwell, particularly for his unwavering commitment to what he thought was right. Jerry Falwell never ran from controversy, and he always stuck to his beliefs.

Indeed, I believe it was the firmness of his convictions that, in part, allowed Jerry Falwell to achieve so much success in whatever he undertook in life. He was an intensely driven man.

At the age of 22 he started a Baptist church in Lynchburg, VA, with 35 members. Reportedly, on the first Sunday his congregation met in 1956, the first offering totaled $135. Today, that same church has upwards of 24,000 members and annual revenues of all of his ministries total over $200 million.

In 1971, Jerry Falwell founded Liberty University—a liberal arts, Christian institution of higher education. Today, Liberty University employs more than 1,000 Virginians and educates more than 20,000 students a year either on its campus or through distance learning programs.

In my view, the thousands and thousands of students who Liberty has educated these many years will undoubtedly be one part of Reverend Falwell's strong legacy that will last for generations.

My thoughts and prayers today go out to the Falwell family, including his beloved wife of nearly 50 years, and his three children.

While I am up, I wonder if I could indicate to the managers that I intend to

file an amendment tonight along the lines established by the distinguished majority leader regarding amendments to be considered on this bill which relate to the appropriations bill now being formulated to provide for the funds for the troops. I think it is the wisdom of the two leaders jointly that on this bill those Senators who wish to have language attached to any appropriations bill would make known their desires through adding an amendment on this bill. Cloture will be filed on such amendments for tomorrow. If my amendment is selected by the Republican leader, then I understand it would be subject to a cloture vote tomorrow. But it would at least give me and my principal cosponsor, Senator COLLINS, the opportunity to express our two views and others who have been associated with us to likewise join in expressing their views. I will do that following the vote tonight.

I yield the floor and thank the managers.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support Senator KERRY's amendment to the Water Resources Development Act. This amendment is quite simple, and if enacted, would contribute to the modernization of the Army Corps of Engineers, something I have been fighting for for many years.

The Kerry-Feingold amendment would require the Corps to account for the potential long and short term effects of global climate change when planning projects. This commonsense amendment is vital for safeguarding communities and the environment since virtually every water resource project designed and built by the Corps sits on the front lines of global warming.

All Corps projects are going to feel the strain, the impact, and the consequences of global warming. This is true whether we are talking about ensuring that flood damage reduction projects will in fact provide communities with the promised levels of protection; ensuring that port projects take climate change into account for emergency preparedness purposes; or ensuring that ecosystem restoration projects are properly designed.

Along with many of my colleagues, I believe it is essential to take bold steps to address global climate change. Senators SANDERS and BOXER are leading the most comprehensive, scientifically based global warming pollutant bill to address the emission of carbon dioxide. I am proud to cosponsor that bill.

The Kerry-Feingold amendment does not address the emissions of global warming, but rather simply makes sure that future water resources projects take into account the effects of global warming. There are a lot of necessary policy changes needed to respond to global warming and we need to move forward on all fronts. This proposed amendment should gain broad bipartisan support, even from those who remain unsure of the best approach for curbing greenhouse gas emissions and even from those who remain skeptical about the causes of global climate change.

Our amendment ensures that Corps of Engineers projects will take into account the impacts of climate change, regardless of its cause. It also ensures that the Corps will take more aggressive steps to protect natural systems that can help buffer the impacts of climate change and that provide a host of other vital benefits.

Scientists clearly agree that the climate is changing. They also agree that, as a result of that change, we can expect an increase in extreme weather events. A recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change expresses this consensus. Climate scientists agree that global warming will cause stronger storms, more frequent floods, increased sea level, and extended droughts. This report concludes, among other things, that: Climate change will lead to more intense storms and increasing sea levels, particularly along the gulf and Atlantic coasts, which will pose significant risks to coastal communities from storm surges and flooding; climate change will lead to more flooding in the winter and early spring due to earlier snowmelt and increased rainfall, followed by more water shortages during the summer, particularly in the Western States; and climate change will lead to lower water levels in major river systems and the Great Lakes that will exacerbate existing water resources challenges.

The Scientific Expert Group on Climate Change to the United Nations also recently concluded that human health ''will be threatened'' by the global climate change-induced increases in the intensity and frequency of storms, floods, droughts, and heat-related mortality. These changes will clearly complicate water resource planning for the foreseeable future.

But we also know that there are ways to buffer the effects of these changes. Healthy rivers, streams, floodplains, and wetlands reduce the impacts of flooding by acting as natural sponges and basins, absorbing flood waters, and releasing them slowly over time. Coastal wetlands provide vital barriers between storm surges and communities. When these wetlands are lost, coastal communities are far more vulnerable to disaster, as we saw so tragically during Hurricane Katrina. Healthy streams and wetlands also help minimize the impacts of drought by recharging groundwater supplies and filtering pollutants from drinking water. And all of these resources provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and important recreational opportunities.

Even without global climate change, it is imperative that we take a more aggressive approach to accounting for and protecting these resources that are so essential for the Nation's health, safety, economic prosperity, and well-being.

We do not have to peer into a crystal ball to see the dangers of allowing the Corps to continue to plan projects without accounting for the changes that will be wrought by climate change. The Nation bore witness to those dangers when Hurricane Katrina slammed into the gulf coast. The devastation of New Orleans is a horrific example of the tragic consequences of an intense storm hitting a region where Corps projects have destroyed vital natural wetland buffers and have not properly accounted for the risk of severe storms.

Our amendment requires the Corps to immediately begin to address these types of issues.

Our amendment would require the Corps to utilize the best available climate science in assessing flood and storm risks. This seems like plain common sense to me, but as we have sadly witnessed again and again, common sense does not always guide the Corps and its decisionmaking processes.

Our amendment would require the Corps to more fully account for the value of the services provided by healthy rivers, streams, wetlands, and floodplains.

Of special importance to me, our amendment also builds on existing law and policy to require the Corps to use nonstructural approaches, where appropriate, in project planning. This is critical for ensuring the best possible protection for those natural systems that are so important for our current and future health, safety, and welfare. While the Corps is currently required to consider nonstructural approaches, it rarely recommends them. This is true even when nonstructural approaches would provide the same or better project benefits while avoiding damages to these vital resources.

This provision would not—let me say this again, it would not—prevent the Corps from using structural approaches like levees and floodwalls where they are needed. But it would require the Corps to be more aggressive in its efforts to utilize natural systems that on their own provide vital flood protection and water quality benefits. And it would also help the Corps overcome what the Department of the Army inspector general concluded was an ''institutional bias'' for constructing costly, large scale structural projects.

We can no longer rely on the status quo to protect our future. We can no longer rely solely on the Corps' traditional approaches to water projects. These approaches have too often severed critical connections between rivers and their wetlands and floodplains, and produced unanticipated wetland and floodplain losses. These approaches have left coastal communities, like New Orleans, far more vulnerable. These approaches have exacerbated flood damages by inducing development in high risk, flood prone areas and by increasing downstream flooding.

This amendment will change the status quo by removing blinders that have

plagued water resources planning for too long. I urge my colleagues to support our amendment and the commonsense changes it would bring about.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). Who yields time?

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, what is the time allocation at this point? How much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts controls 9 minutes 9 seconds. The Senator from Oklahoma controls 5 minutes 58 seconds.

Mr. KERRY. Well, Mr. President, I will try to speed up and use such time as I may use quickly.

Again, let me respond very quickly to some of the assertions that have been made. I want to try to get back to the bigger picture, but I will be very specific about a couple things.

First of all, I never have suggested, nor have I heard anybody who has argued in favor of actions suggesting, there would be no cost, which is the term the Senator from Oklahoma used. We are not talking about no cost. We are talking about relative costs. It is clear from all the best analyses of every economic model that the costs of not acting are much greater than the costs of acting.

That has become true, we have seen, in what has happened with respect to damages, migrations of species, other things that are already occurring and being observed as a result of the warming that is taking place.

In addition to that, I still say to my colleague from Oklahoma, despite the scientists he quotes, he still cannot produce one peer-reviewed study that says global climate change is not happening as a consequence of human activity. He cannot produce one peer-reviewed report that does not say it is happening, period—not one.

So he can come in with a report that says some little thing here, some little thing there, but that does not go to the fundamental question of who is causing what.

As I said earlier in this debate, they have a fundamental responsibility, if they are going to stand up and say to Americans we do not need to do anything; and that responsibility is to answer what is causing the warming if it is not the human-induced activity; and, secondly, how can the human activity that is being created not be doing what the scientists allege it is doing. On both counts, they have never, ever had a sufficient scientific explanation.

Moreover, again, I would point out—I did earlier; the Senator was not here—as to the so-called SPM, as it is called, the policymaker's summary, there is a list on the first page of that summary, and all the people who wrote it are scientists. They are the ones who put that report together.

So there is a point where you can sort of be debating all the red herrings here, which is not what is important. What is important in the end is that the consensus, globally, of leaders, of scientists, is clear about what is happening and why it is happening, No. 1. No. 2, what we are trying to do is not even respond to that, even though I believe we ought to be; we are simply trying to guarantee there is an adequate level of congressionally mandated—not voluntary but congressionally mandated—review with respect to this in the activities of the Corps of Engineers.

The fact is that climate change, obviously, relates to risk-based analysis. There are many climate change events that are taking place, all of which could affect the reliability of Corps projects. In this bill there is a program for ecosystem restoration in the Louisiana coastal area. Key is going to be ultimately developing a strategy for restoration that understands what happens with respect to coastal erosion and sea level rise. The Mississippi River Gulf Outlet in Louisiana, right along the coast, is dependent on storm surge information, hurricane prediction, sea level rise. Virtually every single beach replenishment project—what good is it going to do to replenish beaches in certain ways if the sea level is going to be rising and the intensity of those storms may increase?

With respect to that, I would say to my friend from Oklahoma, the prediction was there would be more named storms, more hurricanes, and indeed there were more named storms. The level of predictions of storms was met, they just did not hit the United States. We lucked out. But the total numbers, in fact, were high.

So you can play with these possibilities. You can ignore science, if you choose to. But I think responsible legislation at this point, given the scientists and the level of information we have, requires us to act, and this is one very small way to act responsibly.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Well, here we go again. This is exactly the same thing. If I responded to everything he said then, I have already done it before. I have read and I have talked about this. I have more scientists, if anyone wants to hear from more scientists. Also, as far as peer-reviewed studies, I have documented it, I have said where they are. So I can just say that so many times.

But here is what I would suggest: What we are talking about is an amendment to this bill, an amendment to the bill which addresses the Corps of Engineers and asks them to report to us on every project, from this point forward, certain types of things, and it describes what they are.

We had a hearing the other day, I say to my good friend from Massachusetts. It was May 11, 2007. That was, what, last week. We have had John Paul Woodley, who is the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

This is a quote from his testimony. He said:

> The United States Army Corps of Engineers has the capacity and necessary authorities to comprehensively examine the uncertainties, threats and vulnerabilities on water infrastructure and to implement the necessary adjustments as part of a proactive adaptive management program.

They can do it now. They can do it. This is the head of the Corps of Engineers. So they do not need this amendment.

Now, I wish to say this. We were supposed to have this vote at 5:30. It is now 10 after 6. I am prepared not to say anything else and to yield back the remainder of my time, if the Senator from Massachusetts will do the same thing.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to ask the Senator a question, if I may.

Mr. INHOFE. On your time, go ahead.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. On my time.

The Senator said he had a whole lot of peer-reviewed studies. I would ask the Senator a simple question: Does he have one peer-reviewed study that says conclusively global climate change is not happening as a consequence of human activity, and, No. 2, that it is not happening. Does he have a peer-reviewed study that says that?

Mr. INHOFE. Let me respond to that question. Of course I do not have that.

Mr. KERRY. That is what I said.

Mr. INHOFE. But I do have peer-reviewed studies that say specifically the amount of change that is attributable to human activity is so small it is not measurable, like .07 of 1 degree in 50 years. Now, that is significant. I have several peer-reviewed studies. I would be glad to respond to your question by reading those.

I have a peer-reviewed study published in the April 18, 2007, issue of the science journal Geophysical Research Letters, which found that if the world continues to warm, vertical wind shear—which literally tears apart storms—will also rise. These winds will decrease the number and severity of storms we would otherwise have.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, may I interrupt my friend from Oklahoma and reclaim my time.

Mr. INHOFE. We have approximately 20 peer-reviewed studies.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts controls the time at this point.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, again, the Senator is making my point. I conceded there are studies that will assert there is some change of a variation of what may or may not be happening but none that suggests it is not happening as a result of our activity or that it is not happening.

The Senator talks about this .07-of-a-degree change. What he says is a reduction. But what we are looking at is an automatic increase in rate of increase that is going to occur no matter what. So somebody can doubt whether you are going to have a reduction. That is not the point. The point is, there is

going to be a level of increase that goes up to a percentage which varies from about 2 degrees centigrade to 3 degrees centigrade, up to 7.7 degrees Fahrenheit. And .07 of a degree from that is not going to make a difference with respect to the fundamental issue of the Earth warming.

So again, let's debate apples and apples, not something else. I think that is important in this debate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, at this time, if the Senator wants, we can yield back our time.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I yield my time, except for 1 minute for the chairman of the committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to talk about something else for a moment to let Senators know where we are. We have been working staff to staff. We are so close to completing this WRDA bill. Once we vote on this 60-vote issue, we are down to a few amendments. There is a managers' package that has been signed off on by the leaders of the committee. We would like to get that done.

What we want to say to colleagues on both sides is, if you want to participate in this bill, tonight would be the night to do it because we are wrapping this thing up tomorrow. Our hope is we can complete it. We have this managers' package. If you have something you need to say about this bill, if you have a last-minute amendment you want to show us, this would be the time, this would be the moment.

I would be happy to yield some time to my colleague if he wishes to make some comments.

Mr. INHOFE. No. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the committee and the manager of this bill. Let me say I agree with everything the Senator said. I thought we were going to finish it tonight, but if it is tomorrow, it is tomorrow. It is too significant not to finish it.

I appreciate the Senator from Massachusetts joining me in yielding back the remainder of our time. We are going to be ready to take a vote here shortly.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 1094.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) would have voted ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 166 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Akaka	Feinstein	Mikulski
Bayh	Gregg	Murray
Biden	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Kennedy	Reed
Cantwell	Kerry	Reid
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sanders
Carper	Kohl	Schumer
Casey	Landrieu	Smith
Clinton	Lautenberg	Snowe
Coleman	Leahy	Specter
Collins	Levin	Stabenow
Dodd	Lieberman	Sununu
Domenici	Lincoln	Tester
Dorgan	Lugar	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Feingold	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—42

Alexander	Craig	McConnell
Allard	Crapo	Murkowski
Baucus	Ensign	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Enzi	Pryor
Bond	Graham	Roberts
Bunning	Grassley	Salazar
Burr	Hagel	Sessions
Byrd	Hatch	Shelby
Chambliss	Hutchison	Stevens
Coburn	Inhofe	Thomas
Cochran	Isakson	Thune
Conrad	Kyl	Vitter
Corker	Lott	Voinovich
Cornyn	Martinez	Webb

NOT VOTING—7

Brown	Dole	Rockefeller
Brownback	Johnson	
DeMint	McCain	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 42.

Under the previous order, requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is withdrawn.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, with the concurrence of the Republican leader, I now ask that the Senate turn to the consideration of H. R. 2206.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H. R. 2206) making emergency supplemental appropriations and additional supplemental appropriations for agriculture and other emergency assistance for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1123

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator REID and Senator MCCONNELL, I send a substitute amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL, proposes an amendment numbered 1123.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring)

That it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1124 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1123

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I call up an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL, proposes an amendment numbered 1124 to amendment No. 1123.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions)

In the amendment strike all after the first word and insert the following: under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

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

That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 1 day after the date of enactment.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask that it be reflected that this amendment is on behalf of Senator REID and Senator MCCONNELL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1125 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1124

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I call up a second-degree amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1125 to amendment No. 1124.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions)

The President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

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

That it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 2 days after date of enactment.

MOTION TO COMMIT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to commit H.R. 2206 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report back forthwith with the following amendment numbered 1126.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1126

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions)

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq an Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

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

That it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 5 days after date of enactment.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1127 TO THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE MOTION TO COMMIT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1127 to the instructions of the motion to commit H.R. 2206.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions)

In the amendment strike all after Congress in line 1 and insert the following:

''have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

''Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

''Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

''Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

''That it is the sense of Congress that—

''(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

''(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

''(3) the President and Congress should—

''(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

''(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.''

This section shall take effect 4 days after the date of enactment.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1128 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1127

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now send a second-degree amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1128 to amendment No. 1127.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions)

At the end of the amendment add the following:

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

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

That it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 3 days after date of enactment.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reid-McConnell amendment No. 1123 relating to Iraq to H.R. 2206, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Harry Reid, Debbie Stabenow, Daniel K. Inouye, Jon Tester, Bill Nelson (FL), Jeff Bingaman, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Frank R. Lautenberg, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Carper, Charles Schumer, Maria Cantwell, Carl Levin, Daniel K. Akaka, Ted Kennedy, Amy Klobuchar.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a second cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 146, H.R. 2206, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Harry Reid, Barbara Boxer, Jeff Bingaman, Patty Murray, Patrick Leahy, Carl Levin, Dianne Feinstein, Daniel K. Inouye, Byron L. Dorgan, Benjamin L. Cardin, Max Baucus, Bill Nelson (FL), Charles Schumer, Debbie Stabenow, Richard J. Durbin, Daniel K. Akaka, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote on the Reid-McConnell amendment to H.R. 2206 occur on Thursday 1 hour after the Senate convenes and notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, and that if cloture is invoked, the Senate remain on H.R. 2206 until it is disposed of, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me for my side of the aisle describe what we have just done. Senator REID and I have entered into an agreement, which I previously described to my conference, under which we will be able to smooth the passage of the supplemental appropriations bill into conference. The majority leader, with my concurrence, has filled up the tree and filed cloture. This should give us an opportunity Thursday afternoon on a broad bipartisan basis to move this troop funding bill into conference where we will continue our discussions.

The majority leader and I have had several meetings with the President's designee, Chief of Staff Josh Bolten, and we will have additional meetings—as well as with House Democrats and Republicans—and hopefully achieve what I think we all want to achieve at this point, which is a signed troop funding bill before Memorial Day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader and I have worked very closely in the past week or two on the process we are following this evening. We both agree it is imperative that we get to conference with the House as quickly as possible, and adoption of the Murray amendment, which is the amendment which was offered here, will allow us to do just that. This is a procedural step.

We are anxious to get to conference to work with the President's Chief of Staff Josh Bolten. He has been available any time we have asked for his presence. He realizes there is going to have to be some serious negotiations. We also understand that it is not just the Senate. The House has to be involved in these negotiations, and we

certainly understand that and Mr. Bolton understands that.

We have a long way to go, but this was a tremendous step forward. We may disagree on a lot of issues dealing with the policy in Iraq, but the one point on which we agree—both Democrats and Republicans—is that the troops must have everything they need and more, and we are going to make sure that is the case.

The Republican leader and I agree, and I have spoken with the Speaker of the House at 5 o'clock today, and she agrees with me, that we are going to finish this bill and this conference report prior to our leaving for the Memorial Day recess. Everyone should rest assured we are going to do that. I hope we can do that without causing a lot of discomfort to Senators and Members of the House if we finish this bill at a reasonable time a week from Thursday or Friday, but if we can't, we are going no place until we finish this legislation and it gets to the President's desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

CONCLUSION OF WRDA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to take less than a minute to tell colleagues where we are. I thank the majority leader for his assistance on the WRDA bill. Our understanding is that we have a managers' package with several amendments. There may be only one or two that are contentious. Our goal for tomorrow, once we complete the Iraq votes, is to go to the managers' package without the contentious one or two amendments in it. By the way, I don't think any of them are contentious, but one Senator is saying they are.

We will adopt that managers' package hopefully by a voice vote, and then if it is necessary to have a recorded vote on these one or two additional amendments, we will do that and then move to final passage of WRDA, something we can be very proud of after 7 long years of not having a bill.

I thank my colleagues in advance for their cooperation.

To the Senator who may have a problem with one or two of these amendments, please take another hard look because they are noncontroversial, and I hope that Senator can join with us. We can finish this bill tomorrow in the very early afternoon or the late morning, and both sides can be very proud.

Again, this is a bill that is endorsed by just about everyone in the country.

I say to my colleagues, our intention is to conclude this bill tomorrow. Senator INHOFE and I are very strongly interested in concluding it tomorrow. The bipartisan members of the committee are very strongly interested.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. REID. Objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The clerk will continue with the call of the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk continued with the call of the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT—Continued

WARNER AMENDMENT NO. 1134

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate return to consideration of H.R. 1495.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I think we have just seen an extraordinary chapter of how two leaders can come together and structure a procedure by which this Senate can go forward and achieve its objectives. I am totally supportive of the procedure enunciated by our two distinguished leaders because I strongly support the need for getting this appropriations legislation through and on to the President's desk so that we can fund adequately our Armed Forces, particularly those engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The leadership further decided that those Senators who wish to address the conferees could do so by adding amendments to this bill. My understanding is that there are two amendments that have been filed on the other side of the aisle: one by Mr. FEINGOLD and another by Mr. LEVIN. And in consultation with the distinguished Republican leader, I now file an amendment on this side of the aisle, although I am hopeful my amendment would not be viewed purely as a Republican amendment but that it could be a vehicle by which we can reach some level, hopefully a significant level, of bipartisan consensus on the several principles I have enunciated in this amendment.

Throughout the course of this debate on Iraq, since the President's announcement of a new strategy on January 10 of this year, there have been groups of Republicans and Democrats that have voiced our concerns about the strategies being employed in Iraq, and we continue to do so by virtue of this process now decided upon by the leadership whereby amendments to this bill can be brought up, which amendments reflect the sentiments of those who are sponsoring them.

At the present time, my amendment is sponsored by my principal cosponsor, the Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, although I have been in consultation with a number of other Senators on this side of the aisle, as well as Senators on the other side of the aisle.

Given the brevity of the time today, since Senators have returned from their constituencies largely this morning, and the fact that we have been trying to work out the procedure just adopted by the Senate by the two leaders, it has not been possible for me to isolate a fixed set of cosponsors. Nevertheless, I do know of a number, certainly on this side, and I am hopeful on the other side, and now that this amendment is filed tonight, it is my expectation and hope that Senators will be adding their names as cosponsors. I urge that be done at the earliest opportunity because, as I understand it, and the leadership will subsequently address, I think, the Senate tonight respecting the legislative program tomorrow as to when my amendment, with such cosponsors that are able to add their names, and the two amendments pending from the other side—and I believe a fourth that is to be brought up by our distinguished Republican leader sometime this evening—will be debated, voted upon, and subject to a cloture motion.

Let me now turn to addressing the specifics of this amendment at this time. This amendment, in its preamble, has the following: We entitle it the ''President's Strategy In Iraq.'' Section 1. Findings regarding progress in Iraq, the establishment of benchmarks to measure that progress, and reports to the Congress.

The recitation in the first section of this amendment is a series of statements factually describing the situation as we, the sponsors of this amendment, feel have taken place, largely since January 10 of this year. Foremost among those obligations is, of course, our recognition of the enormity of the sacrifice of the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families and others who have taken an active role in carrying out our strategies in Iraq, not just since January 10 of this year but prior thereto, in the regrettably long period of time that this conflict in Iraq has persisted.

Following those statements, we then go to section 2, which is entitled, ''Conditioning of Future United States Strategy in Iraq on the Iraqi Government's Record of Performance on its Benchmarks.''

> In General. The United States strategy in Iraq, hereafter, shall be conditioned on the Iraqi government meeting benchmarks as told to Members of Congress by the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and reflected in the Iraqi Government's commitments to the United States, and to the international community, including . . .

For example, benchmarks—and I shall read but several. First and foremost:

> Forming a Constitutional Review Committee and then completing the Constitutional review;
>
> Enacting and implementing legislation on de-baathification;
>
> Enacting and implementing legislation to ensure the equitable distribution of hydrocarbon resources of the people of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, and enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the energy resources of

Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner.

Enacting and implementing legislation on procedures to form semi-autonomous regions;

Enacting and implementing legislation establishing an Independent High Electoral Commission; provincial elections law; provincial council authorities; and a date for provincial elections.

I shall not read further from this document. It will be a matter of record. But these benchmarks were ones put forth by the Iraqi Government, in large measure. What we are doing now is requiring the following:

The President shall submit reports to the Congress on how the sovereign government of Iraq is, or is not, achieving progress towards accomplishing the aforementioned benchmarks, and shall advise the Congress on how that assessment requires, or does not require, changes to the strategy announced on January 10, 2007.

Reports Required.

(1) The President shall submit an initial report, in classified and unclassified format, to the Congress, not later than July 15, 2007, assessing the status of each of the specific benchmarks established above, and declaring, in his judgment, whether satisfactory progress towards meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

(2) The President, having consulted with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, and the Commander of U.S. Central Command, will prepare the report and submit the report to Congress.

(3) If the President's assessment of any of the specific benchmarks established above is unsatisfactory, the President shall include in that report a description of such revisions to the political, economic, regional, and military components of the strategy, as announced by the President on January 10, 2007. In addition, the President shall include in the report, the advisability of implementing such aspects of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, as he deems appropriate.

And, as is well documented in the Senate, and well-respected, if I may say, by the Senate—the work of the Iraq Study Group.

(4) The President shall submit a second report to the Congress, not later than September 15, 2007, following the same procedures and criteria outlined above.

(5) The reporting requirement detailed in section 1227 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 is hereby waived from the date of the enactment of this Act through the period ending September 15, 2007.

That is put in there for the reason that we believe these reports by the President will supplant whatever reports had been required by that act. The force and effect of the requirement for those reports will pick up and continue after September of this year.

(c) Testimony before Congress.

(1) Prior to the submission of the President's second report on September 15, 2007, and at a time to be agreed upon by the leadership of the Congress and the Administration, the United States Ambassador to Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq—

That is General Petraeus—

will be made available to testify in open and closed sessions before the relevant committees of the Congress.

I will now refer to the section titled ''Limitations on Availability of Funds'' in this appropriations bill.

Limitation. No funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the ''Economic Support Fund'' and available for Iraq may be obligated or expended unless and until the President of the United States certifies in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(1) above and makes a further certification in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(4) above that Iraq is making progress in each of the benchmarks set forth in section 2 above.

To give the President a certain amount of flexibility—and this is the provision I am particularly indebted to our distinguished colleague, Ms. COLLINS of Maine, who has worked with me on it, as well as Senator COLEMAN and others who have been working with me—we provide the following:

The President may waive the requirements of this section if he submits to Congress a written certification setting forth the detailed justification for the waiver, which shall include a detailed report describing the actions being taken by the United States to bring the Iraqi government into compliance with the benchmarks set forth in section 2 above. The certification shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

We proceed to a section entitled ''Redeployment of U.S. Forces from Iraq.'' There has been considerable publicity attached to certain actions having been taken by the Council of Representatives in Iraq—that is their basic name for their parliament—and to clarify that we have put in the following requirement:

The President of the United States, in respecting the sovereign rights of the nation of Iraq, shall direct the orderly redeployment of elements of U.S. forces from Iraq, if the components of the Iraqi government, acting in strict accordance with their respective powers given by the Iraqi Constitution, reach a consensus as recited in a resolution, directing a redeployment of U.S. forces.

Now, proceeding to another section, ''Independent Assessments.''

Assessment by the Comptroller General.

Not later than September 1, 2007, the Comptroller general of the United States shall submit to Congress an independent report setting forth—

(A) the status of the achievement of the benchmarks specified in section 2 above; and

(B) the Comptroller General's assessment whether or not each such benchmark has [or has not] been met.

(b) Assessment of the capabilities of Iraq Security forces.

This is a section which I worked on, now, for over 2 months, laying a foundation, with consultations with the White House senior staff, the Secretary of Defense, and indeed a private organization here, a well-respected organization, independent of any affiliation with the Government, to participate in performing this report, as well as a very senior and highly respected retired military officer who, hopefully, will be designated to head up this report.

I believed it was imperative that the Congress needed to have an independent report, and by ''independent,'' I mean a report performed by a private sector entity with the advice and participation of at least one senior retired military officer, and maybe others, so that we can have a report to put side by side with the periodic evaluations of the Department of Defense as to the military—professional ability, capability, training, and equipment of the Iraqi security forces. That is essential. So that is the essence of this provision which I now read.

(1) In General.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense, $750,000, that the Department, in turn, will commission an independent private sector entity which operates as a 501(c)(3) with recognized credentials and expertise in militarily affairs, to prepare an independent report assessing the following:

(A) The readiness of the Iraqi security forces—ISF [referred to] to assume responsibility for maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, and bringing greater security to Iraq's 18 provinces in the next 12–18 months, and bringing an end to sectarian violence to achieve national reconciliation.

(B) The training, equipping, command, control and intelligence capabilities and logistics capacity of the ISF [Iraqi Security Forces].

(C) The likelihood that given the ISF's record of preparedness to date, following years of training and equipping by U.S. forces, the continued supports of U.S. troops will contribute to the readiness of the ISF to fulfill the missions outlined in subparagraph (A).

(2) Report.—Not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act, the designated private sector entity shall provide an unclassified report, with a classified annex, containing its findings, to the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Relations/International Relations, and Intelligence.

Having worked on this report some 2 months now, I submitted it to colleagues in the House of Representatives. I am pleased to say that those colleagues saw fit to include that basic language on reporting and establishing this independent entity and individuals to study the Iraqi security forces. This provision which I have just read was contained in the House appropriations bill. It is my hope and expectation that it will be included by this Senate, the appropriators, in their bill such that it will emerge as part of the final conference report of the House and the Senate.

I once again thank many individuals who have worked with me and their respective staffs, who worked beginning last week on the final draft. They worked over the weekend, worked on Monday, worked today to create this document. I am hopeful a good number of our colleagues will see fit to cosponsor this document, which document and amendment will be discussed tomorrow in such brief period as outlined by the leadership. They will define it tonight, and then it will be voted upon.

I send the amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Virginia [Mr. WARNER], for himself and Ms. COLLINS, proposes an

amendment No. 1134 to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 1065.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Relating to the President's strategy in Iraq)

TITLE—PRESIDENT'S STRATEGY IN IRAQ

SEC. 1. FINDINGS REGARDING PROGRESS IN IRAQ, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BENCHMARKS TO MEASURE THAT PROGRESS, AND REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Over 145,000 American military personnel are currently serving in Iraq, like thousands of others since March 2003, with the bravery and professionalism consistent with the finest traditions of the United States armed forces, and are deserving of the strong support of all Americans;

(2) Many American service personnel have lost their lives, and many more have been wounded in Iraq; the American people will always honor their sacrifice and honor their families;

(3) The United States Army and Marine Corps, including their Reserve components and National Guard organizations, together with components of the other branches of the military, are performing their missions while under enormous strain from multiple, extended deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. These deployments, and those that will follow, will have a lasting impact on future recruiting, retention, and readiness of our Nation's all volunteer force;

(4) Iraq is experiencing a deteriorating problem of sectarian and intrasectarian violence based upon political distrust and cultural differences among factions of the Sunni and Shia populations;

(5) Iraqis must reach political and economic settlements in order to achieve reconciliation, for there is no military solution. The failure of the Iraqis to reach such settlements to support a truly unified government greatly contributes to the increasing violence in Iraq;

(6) The responsibility for Iraq's internal security and halting sectarian violence rests with the sovereign Government of Iraq;

(7) In December 2006, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group issued a valuable report, suggesting a comprehensive strategy that includes new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq, that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly;

(8) The President said on January 10, 2007, that ''I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended'' so as to dispel the contrary impression that exists;

(9) It is essential that the sovereign Government of Iraq set out measurable and achievable benchmarks and President Bush said, on January 10, 2007, that ''America will change our approach to help the Iraqi government as it works to meet these benchmarks'';

(10) As reported by Secretary of State Rice, Iraq's Policy Committee on National Security agreed upon a set of political, security, and economic benchmarks and an associated timeline in September 2006 that were (a) reaffirmed by Iraq's Presidency Council on October 6, 2006; (b) referenced by the Iraq Study Group; and (c) posted on the President of Iraq's Web site;

(11) On April 21, 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that ''our [American] commitment to Iraq is long-term, but it is not a commitment to have our young men and women patrolling Iraq's streets open-endedly'' and that ''progress in reconciliation will be an important element of our evaluation'';

(12) The President's January 10, 2007 address had three components: political, military, and economic. Given that significant time has passed since his statement, and recognizing the overall situation is ever changing, Congress must have timely reports to evaluate and execute its Constitutional oversight responsibilities.

SEC. 2. CONDITIONING OF FUTURE UNITED STATES STRATEGY IN IRAQ ON THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT'S RECORD OF PERFORMANCE ON ITS BENCHMARKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The United States strategy in Iraq, hereafter, shall be conditioned on the Iraqi government meeting benchmarks, as told to members of Congress by the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and reflected in the Iraqi Government's commitments to the United States, and to the international community, including:

(A) Forming a Constitutional Review Committee and then completing the Constitutional review;

(B) Enacting and implementing legislation on de-Baathification;

(C) Enacting and implementing legislation to ensure the equitable distribution of hydrocarbon resources of the people of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, and enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the energy resources of Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner;

(D) Enacting and implementing legislation on procedures to form semi-autonomous regions;

(E) Enacting and implementing legislation establishing an Independent High Electoral Commission; provincial elections law; provincial council authorities; and a date for provincial elections;

(F) Enacting and implementing legislation addressing amnesty;

(G) Enacting and implementing legislation establishing a strong militia disarmament program to ensure that such security forces are accountable only to the central government and loyal to the Constitution of Iraq;

(H) Establishing supporting political, media, economic, and services committees in support of the Baghdad Security Plan;

(I) Providing three trained and ready Iraqi brigades to support Baghdad operations;

(J) Providing Iraqi commanders with all authorities to execute this plan and to make tactical and operational decisions, in consultation with U.S commanders, without political intervention, to include the authority to pursue all extremists, including Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias;

(K) Ensuring that the Iraqi Security Forces are providing even handed enforcement of the law;

(L) Ensuring that, according to President Bush, Prime Minister Maliki said ''the Baghdad security plan will not provide a safe haven for any outlaws, regardless of [their] sectarian or political affiliation'';

(M) Reducing the level of sectarian violence in Iraq and eliminating militia control of local security;

(N) Establishing all of the planned joint security stations in neighborhoods across Baghdad;

(O) Increasing the number of Iraqi security forces units capable of operating independently;

(P) Ensuring that the rights of minority political parties in the Iraqi legislature are protected;

(Q) Allocating and spending $10 billion in Iraqi revenues for reconstruction projects, including delivery of essential services, on an equitable basis; and

(R) Ensuring that Iraq's political authorities are not undermining or making false accusations against members of the ISF.

(2) The President shall submit reports to Congress on how the sovereign Government of Iraq is, or is not, achieving progress towards accomplishing the aforementioned benchmarks, and shall advise the Congress on how that assessment requires, or does not require, changes to the strategy announced on January 10, 2007.

(b) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

(1) The President shall submit an initial report, in classified and unclassified format, to the Congress, not later than July 15, 2007, assessing the status of each of the specific benchmarks established above, and declaring, in his judgment, whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

(2) The President, having consulted with the Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, and the Commander of U.S. Central Command, will prepare the report and submit the report to Congress.

(3) If the President's assessment of any of the specific benchmarks established above is unsatisfactory, the President shall include in that report a description of such revisions to the political, economic, regional, and military components of the strategy, as announced by the President on January 10, 2007. In addition, the President shall include in the report, the advisability of implementing such aspects of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, as he deems appropriate.

(4) The President shall submit a second report to the Congress, not later than September 15, 2007, following the same procedures and criteria, outlined above.

(5) The reporting requirement detailed in Section 1227 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 is waived from the date of the enactment of this Act through the period ending 15 September, 2007.

(c) TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS.—

(1) Prior to the submission of the President's second report on September 15, 2007, and at a time to be agreed upon by the leadership of the Congress and the Administration, the United States Ambassador to Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq will be made available to testify in open and closed sessions before the relevant committees of the Congress.

SEC. 3. LIMITATIONS ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

(a) LIMITATION.—No funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the ''Economic Support Fund'' and available for Iraq may be obligated or expended unless and until the President of the United States certifies in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(1) above and makes a further certification in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(4) above that Iraq is making progress on each of the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above.

(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The President may waive the requirements of this section if he submits to Congress a written certification setting forth a detailed justification for the waiver, which shall include a detailed report describing the actions being taken by the Unites States to bring the Iraqi government into compliance with the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above, The certification shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex,

SEC. 4. REDEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES FROM IRAQ.

(a) The President of the United States, in respecting the sovereign rights of the nation of Iraq, shall direct the orderly redeployment of elements of U.S. forces from Iraq, if

the components of the Iraqi government, acting in strict accordance with their respective powers given by the Iraqi Constitution, reach a consensus as recited in a resolution, directing a redeployment of U.S. forces.

SEC. 5. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS.

(a) Assessment by the Comptroller General.

(1) Not later than September 1, 2007, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress an independent report setting forth—

(A) the status of the achievement of the benchmarks specified in Section 2 above; and

(B) the Comptroller General's assessment whether or not each such benchmark has been met.

(b) Assessment of the Capabilities of Iraqi Security Forces.

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense, $750,000,000, that the Department, in turn, will commission an independent, private sector entity, which operates as a 501(c)(3), with recognized credentials and expertise in military affairs, to prepare an independent report assessing the following:

(A) The readiness of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to assume responsibility for maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, and bringing greater security to Iraq's 18 provinces in the next 12–18 months, and bringing an end to sectarian violence to achieve national reconciliation.

(B) The training, equipping, command, control and intelligence capabilities, and logistics capacity of the ISF.

(C) The likelihood that, given the ISF's record of preparedness to date, following years of training and equipping by U.S. forces, the continued support of U.S. troops will contribute to the readiness of the ISF to fulfill the missions outlined in subparagraph (A).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act, the designated private sector entity shall provide an unclassified report, with a classified annex, containing its findings, to the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Relations/International Relations, and Intelligence.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what is the pending business now before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Warner amendment No. 1134 is the pending business.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding we are on WRDA, then, H.R. 1495?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Wednesday, May 16, when the Senate resumes consideration of H.R. 1495, the time until 10:30 a.m. be for debate prior to the votes on the motions to invoke cloture on the following amendments: Feingold second-degree amendment No. 1098, Levin amendment No. 1097, Warner amendment No. 1134, and the Cochran amendment No. 1135, with the time equally divided and controlled between the majority and Republican leaders or their designees; that the votes occur in the order listed above; and that there be 2 minutes of debate prior to each vote, equally divided and controlled, and that each vote in this sequence after the first be limited to 10 minutes; that if cloture is not invoked, then the amendment be withdrawn; that no other amendments be in order prior to the cloture votes; and that second-degree amendments may be filed until 9:30 a.m.; further, that the mandatory quorums, as required under rule XXII, be waived with respect to the cloture motions covered under this agreement; further, that the 20 minutes immediately prior to the first vote be under the control of the majority and Republican leaders, with the time equally divided, with the majority leader controlling the final 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of the amendments covered under this agreement, the Senate resume debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1348, comprehensive immigration legislation, with the time until 2 p.m. for debate prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed—Mr. President, I withdraw this aspect of the consent request at this time, and stop where I was where there was no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is withdrawn.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Feingold amendment No. 1098 to amendment No. 1097 to H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act.

Russell D. Feingold, Harry Reid, Barbara Boxer, Amy Klobuchar, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ted Kennedy, Patty Murray, Richard J. Durbin, Bernard Sanders, Daniel K. Inouye, Christopher S. Dodd, Ron Wyden, John Kerry, Debbie Stabenow, Ben Cardin, Jim Webb, Charles Schumer, Tom Harkin.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Levin amendment No. 1097 to H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act.

Carl Levin, Harry Reid, Barbara Boxer, Amy Klobuchar, Sheldon Whitehouse, Ted Kennedy, Patty Murray, Richard J. Durbin, Jon Tester, Max Baucus, Tom Carper, Daniel K. Inouye, Ben Nelson, Ron Wyden, Debbie Stabenow, Byron L. Dorgan, Claire McCaskill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1135

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment to the bill be set aside, and on behalf of Senator COCHRAN, I call up an amendment to the bill, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL], for Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BOND, proposes an amendment numbered 1135.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate that Congress must send to the President acceptable legislation to continue funds for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom by not later than May 28, 2007)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FUNDING FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The President is the commander in chief of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) The United States Armed Forces are currently engaged in military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom on behalf of the national security interests of the United States.

(3) The funds previously appropriated to continue military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom are depleted.

(4) The President requested more than 100 days ago supplemental appropriations to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

(5) Congress has not passed a supplemental appropriations bill to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the commander in chief believes gives the United States Armed Forces and the Iraqi people the best chance to succeed at establishing a safe, stable, and sustainable democracy in Iraq.

(6) A supplemental appropriations request to fund ongoing combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom should remain focused on the war effort by providing the resources necessary for United States troops abroad and in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that Congress should send legislation to the President providing appropriations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the President can sign into law by not later than May 28, 2007.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I now send a cloture motion to the pending Warner amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending Warner amendment No. 1134 to H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

Mitch McConnell, Judd Gregg, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Lisa Murkowski, Susan M. Collins, John Warner, Orrin G. Hatch, Craig Thomas, Larry E. Craig, John E. Sununu, Pete V. Domenici, James M. Inhofe, Trent Lott, John Thune, Christopher S. Bond.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk to the Cochran amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending Cochran amendment No. 1135 to H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Pete V. Domenici, Johnny Isakson, James M. Inhofe, Craig Thomas, Trent Lott, John E. Sununu, John Thune, Thad Cochran, Christopher S. Bond, Norm Coleman, John Warner, Richard G. Lugar, Jeff Sessions, Orrin G. Hatch, Gordon H. Smith.

SECTIONS 2006, 2007, AND 2008

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I would like to engage the distinguished chairman from California and the distinguished majority leader in a colloquy with respect to the provisions in section 2006, 2007, and 2008 (c) and (e) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, S.1248.

Mrs. BOXER. I would be happy to respond to the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. REID. I, too, am happy to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I appreciate the efforts and success of the chairman and the Environment and Public Works Committee in reporting a Water Resources Development Act that includes many important Corps of Engineers reforms. I would simply like to clarify that it is the intent of the committee and of the majority leader that these provisions be retained through conference and enacted into law. These provisions should be the minimum reforms coming out of conference.

Mrs. BOXER. I concur that this is the committee's intent.

Mr. REID. I support the understanding reached by the chairman and the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I would like to point out some of the critical elements to ensuring meaningful independent review of Corps of Engineers water resources projects that are contained in section 2007 of S.1248. Section 2007 is the same language that was adopted on the Senate floor during last summer's consideration of the Water Resources Development Act of 2006. Though the House of Representatives has an independent review provision in their bill, there are several important distinctions between the House and the Senate provisions.

The Senate provision houses responsibility for independent review in the Office of the Secretary of the Army and makes independent review mandatory for any project meeting the review triggers. The mandatory review triggers and placement of responsibility for carrying out independent reviews outside the Office of the Chief of Engineers are essential for ensuring full independence of the review process. The Senate provision gives the independent review panels the ability to review those issues deemed significant by the panel. This is essential for ensuring that all relevant study issues are examined by the panel. The House of Representatives provision gives the Chief of Engineers essentially unlimited authority to restrict the scope of a panel's review. The Senate provision places limits on the Corps' ability to ignore panel recommendations by requiring the Secretary of the Army to provide a written explanation regarding the rejection of any panel recommendations and by requiring the Corps to prove why it is appropriate to reject a panel's recommendation in any lawsuit that might be brought to challenge the project. The Senate bill does not create a new cause of action. This is essential for ensuring that the findings of an independent review panel are given appropriate consideration by the Corps of Engineers. In addition, the Senate provision establishes a critical safety assurance review of the detailed technical design of vital flood control projects. The House language does not include this essential provision.

Importantly, the Senate provision ensures that the independent review panel will review the draft study released for public comment and will have the benefit of public comment to help guide their review. The House bill in general requires that independent review be complete before there is a draft study for review. That would limit a fundamental purpose of independent review, which is to ensure review of draft studies and limit public participation in the independent review process.

I ask my colleagues to concur with the importance of retaining these critical elements of independent review contained in Section 2007.

Mrs. BOXER. I concur that these are fundamental elements of meaningful independent review and concur that it is the committee's intent to retain these elements and that we will strenuously support them in the conference.

Mr. REID. I support the understanding reached by the chairman and the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mitigation for Corps of Engineers civil works projects is another important area that must be improved. Despite the clear mitigation requirements established for water resources projects in the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, the Government Accountability Office reported in 2002 that the Corps of Engineers does not mitigate at all for almost 70 percent of its projects. To help address this problem, the Senate provision requires the Secretary to ensure that mitigation for water resources projects complies fully with the mitigation standards and policies established pursuant to section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. 1344. This will help protect the environment and is consistent with the fundamental principal that we will hold the Federal Government to the same environmental criteria as private enterprise.

In addition, in order to ensure that mitigation produces the same or greater ecosystem values as those lost to a water resources project, the Senate provision requires that the Corps of Engineers implement not less than in-kind mitigation. To ensure that mitigation will be effective, the Senate bill requires the preparation of detailed mitigation plans, requires that mitigation be monitored until ecological success criteria are met, and requires the Corps of Engineers to consult yearly with applicable Federal and State agencies on the status of individual mitigation efforts. The Senate provision applies the new mitigation standards to projects that the Corps of Engineers has determined must be reevaluated for other reasons. The Senate provision also requires the Corps to establish a publicly accessible mitigation tracking system.

The language of sections 2008(c) and (e) obtained bipartisan support from the Environment and Public Works Committee last Congress and was included in the Senate Water Resources Development Act of 2006.

I ask my colleagues to concur with the importance of retaining these key elements of mitigation reform contained in section 2008(c) and (e).

Mrs. BOXER. I concur that these are fundamental elements of meaningful mitigation reform and concur that it is the committee's intent to retain these elements and that we will strenuously support them in the conference.

Mr. REID. I support the understanding reached by the chairman and the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Lastly, section 2006 of S. 1248 would update the Corps' woefully out-of-date Principles and Guidelines, P&G, and related planning documents by establishing a Cabinet-level interagency working group to revise the guidelines and regulations and circulars, which have not been revised since their inception in 1983. Numerous

studies have called for updating the Corps' planning guidelines to provide an increased focus on protecting and restoring the environment and to modernize and incorporate new methods and more cost-effective approaches to solving water problems. More than a decade of reports from the National Academy of Sciences, Government Accountability Office, Army inspector general, U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, and independent experts have revealed a pattern of stunning flaws in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project planning and implementation and urged substantial changes to the Corps' project planning process. The most recent call for revising the Corps' planning guidelines came just 2 months ago from the National Academy of Public Administration.

These flaws have increased taxpayer costs and environmental degradation with antiquated economic analysis of projects and in some cases overly structural projects. It is vital that these planning guidelines be modernized so that they no longer promote projects that destroy healthy natural ecosystems and lure development in high risk areas. It is also essential that the provision to require the Corps to adopt those revisions, subject to public comment, be retained.

The language of section 2006 obtained bipartisan support from the Environment and Public Works Committee last Congress and was included in the Senate Water Resources Development Act of 2006.

I ask my colleagues to concur with the importance of retaining these elements.

Mrs. BOXER. I concur that these are fundamental elements of meaningful reform of the Corps of Engineers planning guidelines and concur that it is the committee's intent to retain these elements and that we will strenuously support them in the conference.

Mr. REID. I support the understanding reached by the chairman and the Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the chairman and the majority leader for engaging in this colloquy. Instituting meaningful reforms to the Corps of Engineers' planning process is essential for protecting public safety, the environment, and the taxpayers. I remain committed to ensuring that meaningful reforms are included in the next Water Resources Development Act that is enacted into law. I thank the chairman and the majority leader for their commitment as well.

MIDDLE CREEK PROJECT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I thank Chairman BOXER and the Committee on Environment and Public Works for their hard work on S. 1248, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 and the bill currently being considered by the Senate, H.R. 1495. The bill represents years of negotiations by her, members of the committee, and staff, and I appreciate her leadership in bringing a bill forward for this body's consideration.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank the leader for his comments. I appreciate the leader's continued support for this reauthorizing legislation and the authorization of the new projects for navigation, flood and coastal storm damage reduction, ecosystem restoration and environmental remediation, and water storage and water quality.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I generally support this bill and understand that many of the projects are necessary to improve and maintain safe communities. But I am concerned about the effects of one project on Indian lands.

Both S. 1248 and H.R. 1495 include authorizing language for a flood damage reduction and environmental restoration project on Middle Creek, located in Lake County, CA. I certainly defer to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California congressional delegation as to the project's importance and the most appropriate plan to implement it, but would my friend from California describe the impact of the project on Indian lands in the area?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. Leader, the Middle Creek Project will restore lands within the Middle Creek floodplain and study area. I believe the project will reconnect the floodplain of Middle Creek to the historic Robinson Lake wetland area by breaching the existing levee system and creating inlets that direct flows into the study area. The restoration will provide flood damage reduction by relocating residents of the Robinson Rancheria from the floodplain.

Mr. REID. Madam Chairman, I understand the Rancheria's current casino will not be affected by this project if implemented—that the Rancheria could continue, if it chooses, to operate this casino once the project is completed. Is this correct?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. Leader, that is correct.

Mr. REID. Madam Chairman, I understand that neither the Senate nor the House bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for purposes of gaming on behalf of the Rancheria?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. Leader, the bill under consideration would authorize the Middle Creek Project. The bill does not expressly authorize the United States to take land into trust for the Rancheria.

Mr. REID. Thank you for that clarification. Madam Chairman, in Senate Report 110–58, the committee recommends that, in exchange for the existing reservation lands that would be included in the floodplain, the Secretary of the Interior accept three parcels of land into trust for the benefit of the Rancheria. Would you describe these parcels and their location in relation to the Rancheria's current reservation boundaries?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I appreciate the interest of the Senator from Nevada in the effect of this project on the Rancheria. Since 1981, the Secretary of the Interior has held 37 acres in trust on behalf of the Rancheria. The parcels discussed in the committee report are currently owned by the Rancheria and are very close to their current reservation boundary. Two of the three parcels are along the Clear Lake shoreline. The committee believed it was appropriate to compensate the Rancheria by allowing them to add to their reservation lands that are approximately 1 mile away from their current reservation boundary and which the tribe already owns.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I thank my friend from California for describing the lands. While neither the House nor Senate bills would authorize the Secretary to take the transferred lands into trust as ''restored lands'' for the purpose of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, the report recommends the Secretary do so.

I understand the Rancheria can continue to operate its on-reservation casino should this project be implemented, and I do not oppose the Rancheria's right to do so because these lands are located within its traditional reservation boundary and were taken into trust before the enactment of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, IGRA, thus the casino was opened consistent with the requirements of IGRA. But as you know, I have long opposed off-reservation gaming, and while I understand that neither bill would authorize gaming on the transferred parcels, I do not support the committee's recommendation that the Secretary declare these parcels ''restored lands.'' As we know, should the Secretary declare the parcels as ''restored lands,'' the Rancheria would be allowed to conduct gaming on lands deemed outside of its reservation boundary and on lands acquired after enactment of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. I note that report language does not have the same legal status as legislative language.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the California delegation strongly supports the projects included in S. 1248. I hear the majority leader's concerns. Being chair of the committee, I, of course, support the language in the committee's recommendation with respect to the land transfer for the Robinson Rancheria, should the bill be enacted. While I may disagree with the leader's position as it concerns this particular project, I appreciate his comments and support for the legislation as a whole.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the clarifications and explanations that my friend from California has provided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today marks the 26th year that peace officers from around the country have gathered in the Nation's Capital to participate in the National Peace Officers Memorial Day Service. Every year, Peace Officers Memorial Day offers the people of the United States, in their communities, in their State capitals, and in the Nation's Capital, the opportunity to honor and reflect on the extraordinary service and sacrifice given year after year by our police forces. I welcome the visiting peace officers and their family members who are gathered in Washington today as we honor their services and those lost this past year.

Earlier this month, the Senate passed a resolution marking today National Peace Officers Memorial Day. This is now the 11th year running that I have sponsored this resolution to honor the sacrifice and commitment of those law enforcement officers who give their lives serving their communities. Senator SPECTER, himself a former prosecutor, former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and now our ranking member, was the lead Republican sponsor of this bipartisan measure this year. I thank the majority leader, himself a former police officer, and all Senators for their support in recognizing the sacrifices that law enforcement officers make each day for the American people.

Currently, more than 900,000 men and women who guard our communities do so at great risk. After the hijacked planes hit the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001, 72 peace officers died while trying to ensure that their fellow citizens in those buildings got to safety. That act of terrorism resulted in the highest number of peace officers ever killed in a single incident in the history of our country and is a tragic reminder of how important it is for the Congress to provide all of the resources necessary to protect officers in the line of duty.

Since the first recorded police death in 1792, there have been more than 17,900 law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We are fortunate in Vermont that we rank as the State with the fewest officer deaths. With 19 deaths, however, that is, of course, 19 deaths too many.

In 2006, 145 law enforcement officers died while serving in the line of duty, below the decade-long average of 165 deaths annually and a drop from 2005 when 156 officers were killed. That is still 145 officers too many. We need to continue our support for better equipment and the increased use of bullet-resistant vests, improved training, and advanced emergency medical care. I hope as the 110th Congress moves forward that all Senators can work together to ensure that all of our law enforcement officers and their families have the full support and the resources they need from the Federal Government.

I have been working to help make it safer on the beat for our officers. Back in 1998, Senator Campbell and I authored the Bulletproof Vest Grant Partnership Act, in part a response to the tragic Carl Drega shootout on the Vermont-New Hampshire border in which two State troopers who lacked bulletproof vests were killed. Since then, we have successfully reauthorized this program three times: In the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2000, in the State Justice Institute Reauthorization Act of 2004, and most recently as part of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005. It is now authorized at $50 million per year through fiscal year 2009 to help State, tribal, and local jurisdictions purchase armor vests for use by law enforcement officers. Senator SPECTER and I joined together to send a letter to other Senators last week to make sure that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program is fully funded this year. Bulletproof vests have saved the lives of thousands of officers and are a fundamental line of defense that no officer should be without. It is crucial that Congress provide the full funding authorized to the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program. Hundreds of thousands of police officers and local jurisdictions are counting on us.

I am disappointed that not all of Congress's actions to protect and help our law enforcement officers are implemented by this administration. President Bush has repeatedly proposed drastic cuts to the bulletproof vest initiative and other grant programs that directly assist State and local law enforcement. The Bush administration has spent more than $400 billion on a failed policy in Iraq, and yet the President continues to propose cuts in funding for programs here in the United States for first responders who protect our Nation's communities.

I will mention one other important example of a law I sponsored and helped pass in 2003, the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefit Act. This important, bipartisan legislation reflects the belief of Congress that the families of firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other first responders should be cared for when a public safety officer dies of a heart attack or stroke in the line of duty. To date, the Department of Justice has made only two positive determinations from the more than 230 applications it has received. It is inexcusable that the Department of Justice appears to be interpreting this law as narrowly as possible and is denying and delaying so many of these claims. Congress and the American people want to see fair and equitable treatment for the families of the brave individuals who lose their lives in the line of duty, not foot-dragging and excuses from the Justice Department.

We can all agree that the men and women in law enforcement who have sacrificed for our safety deserve our deep gratitude and respect. National Peace Officers Memorial Day recognizes real-life heroes. Our Nation's law enforcement officers deserve our commitment to provide for those who help keep us all safe. I support and respect our State and local police officers and all of our first responders and am proud to recognize their role in upholding the rule of law and keeping our Nation safe and secure.

FEDERAL CRACK COCAINE SENTENCING POLICY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. Presdient, today, the U.S. Sentencing Commission took another important step in addressing the wide disparity in our Federal cocaine sentencing laws.

The Commission released its fourth report to Congress in 12 years that, once again, provides a comprehensive review of our cocaine policies, and recommendations about how those policies can be improved. Almost 3 weeks ago, the Commission recommended to Congress a change in the Sentencing Guidelines that would lower the offense level for crack offenders across the board. Both of these actions are positive steps, but real progress in this area requires congressional action.

Under current law, an offender apprehended with 5 grams of crack cocaine faces the same 5 year mandatory minimum sentence as an offender with 500 grams of powder cocaine—that is the same sentence for 100 times more powder cocaine. In 2000, the average sentence for a crack cocaine defendant was nearly 4 years longer than the average sentence for a powder cocaine defendant.

Last week, the Commission announced it will issue a guideline change that lowers the offense level for crack offenders by 2 points across the board. As a result, 75 percent of Federal crack offenders will have their sentences reduced by approximately 16 months. This change represents a step in the right direction.

For far too long, the Federal crack-powder sentencing laws have created an injustice in our Nation. Over 20 years now, Congress has silently stood by as this policy swelled our prisons, disproportionately impacted African Americans, and misdirected precious Federal resources on low-level street dealers rather than on the worst offenders—drug kingpins who bring crack into our neighborhoods. Twenty years of irresponsible policy is enough.

I hope the Commission's report and recommendations will serve as a roadmap for the 110th Congress. Americans

deserve a Congress that will make Federal drug laws fair and proportional. We can, and should, fix this injustice on a bipartisan basis. It is time to act.

HONORING THE LATE SENATOR THOMAS J. DODD

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Thomas J. Dodd, the former Senator of the great State of Connecticut. As his son, my senior Senator, CHRIS DODD, said earlier, Thomas Dodd would have turned 100 years old today. He was a public servant of the highest order, working in an astounding number of capacities throughout his life. After graduating from Yale Law School, he became a special agent with the FBI, and eventually became an assistant for five Attorney Generals of the United States. In this capacity, Thomas Dodd played a key role in establishing the first civil rights division of the Justice Department.

Upon leaving the Justice Department, Senator Dodd became the U.S. chief counsel to prosecute Axis crimes at Nuremberg and handled the day-to-day strategies for our Nation's prosecution team. In recognition of his work, Senator Dodd received a Presidential Citation, the U.S. Medal of Freedom, and the Czechoslovakian Order of the White Lion.

I admire Senator Dodd for his bravery at Nuremberg. It was not an easy job. He spent over a year away from his family, but he did it because he believed the United States had a responsibility to show the world its resounding dedication to a fair legal process and the delivery of justice to the Nazi war criminals.

Senator Dodd's political career began in 1952 when he was elected from the First District of Connecticut in the House of Representatives. He won election to the Senate in 1958, serving as a leader on the Foreign Relations Committee throughout his tenure. Senator Dodd wholeheartedly opposed Soviet communism, and often stood as a maverick within the Democratic Party on foreign policy.

Thomas Dodd was an inspiration to me. He was a brilliant orator, and I would often find my way to see him speak when he would visit the New Haven area. He was a man who stood by his principles, oftentimes in the face of fierce opposition. Partisanship and politics always took a backseat to doing what was in the best interest of America.

Thomas Dodd never refrained from asking the tough questions, and I applaud him for his independence and the example he set as a distinguished Senator from my home State of Connecticut, a proud legacy of public service, which his son CHRIS has carried on.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING MURIEL GIBSON

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Muriel Gibson for her 19 years of service to the U.S. Senate and the people of Washington State. Ms. Gibson has been a caseworker on my staff since I was first elected to the Senate in 1993, and she is leaving at the end of this week to continue her public service in another capacity.

Ms. Gibson has spent the last 15 years on my staff and 4 years on Senator Brock Adams's staff serving Washington State's veterans and members of the armed services. She has been a tireless advocate for the men and women of our State who served us through military service. As a country, we promise our servicemembers and their families support in exchange for their commitment to protect our Nation. Ms. Gibson has made sure that these promises are kept to these brave men and women.

The needs of our veterans and soldiers can often be demanding, and Ms. Gibson met those demands with compassion and understanding. As the daughter of a career soldier, she knows the challenges facing our military families firsthand. Whether assisting a World War II veteran to receive his long delayed Purple Heart or ensuring that a returning soldier from Operation Iraqi Freedom gets the medical care needed, Ms. Gibson saw to it that everyone who approached my office for assistance received the guidance and attention they deserved.

I am also pleased to say that her service to our Nation's veterans will not end when she leaves my office. She will be working toward a master's degree in social work and hopes to work for the Department of Veterans Affairs upon completion of her degree. I am comforted by the knowledge that a new generation of veterans will gain from her experience and dedication in the years to come.

I would like to thank Ms. Gibson for her years of distinguished service to the Senate, and I wish her happiness in her future pursuits.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The following message from the President of the United States was transmitted to the Senate by one of his secretaries:

REPORT CERTIFYING THAT THE EXPORT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA OF CERTAIN MATERIALS, INCLUDING AN ISOSTATIC PRESS FOR MANUFACTURING AUTOMOTIVE SPARE PARTS, IS NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE U.S. SPACE LAUNCH INDUSTRY AND THAT THE MATERIAL WILL NOT MEASURABLY IMPROVE THE MISSILE OR SPACE LAUNCH CAPABILITIES OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA—PM 13

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1512 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–261), I hereby certify that the export to the People's Republic of China of the following items is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, and that the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that could be derived from such exports, will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China:

A four-axis filament winding machine for production of spare parts for China's water purification and treatment industries;

A computer control system upgrade to a three-axis filament winding machine for production of spare parts for China's water purification and treatment industries;

An isostatic press for manufacturing automotive spare parts; and

A four-axis filament winding machine to be used in production of graphite or glass composite golf clubs.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *May 15, 2007*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1124. An act to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999.

H.R. 1260. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6301 Highway 58 in Harrison, Tennessee, as the ''Claude Ramsey Post Office''.

H.R. 1335. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 508 East Main Street in Seneca, South Carolina, as the ''S/Sgt Lewis G. Watkins Post Office Building''.

H.R. 1617. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 561 Kingsland Avenue in University City, Missouri, as the ''Harriet F. Woods Post Office Building''.

H.R. 2025. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 11033 South State Street in Chicago, Illinois, as the ''Willye B. White Post Office Building''.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1260. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6301 Highway 58 in Harrison, Tennessee, as the ''Claude Ramsey Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1335. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 508 East Main Street in Seneca, South Carolina, as the ''S Sgt Lewis G. Watkins Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1617. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 561 Kingsland Avenue in University City, Missouri, as the ''Harriett F. Woods Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2025. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 11033 South State Street in Chicago, Illinois, as the ''Willye B. White Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 1124. An act to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with amendments:

S. 119. A bill to prohibit profiteering and fraud relating to military action, relief, and reconstruction efforts, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110–66).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WEBB, and Mrs. DOLE):

S. 1390. A bill to provide for the issuance of a ''forever stamp'' to honor the sacrifices of the brave men and women of the armed forces who have been awarded the Purple Heart; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1391. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants for the support of full-service community schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 1392. A bill to increase the authorization for the major medical facility project to consolidate the medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the University Drive and H. John Heinz III divisions, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1393. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to prescribe the binding oath or affirmation of renunciation and allegiance required to be naturalized as a citizen of the United States, to encourage and support the efforts of prospective citizens of the United States to become citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary .

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 1394. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to exclude from gross income of individual taxpayers discharges of indebtedness attributable to certain forgiven residential mortgage obligations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 1395. A bill to prevent unfair practices in credit card accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. 1396. A bill to authorize a major medical facility project to modernize inpatient wards at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Atlanta, Georgia; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 1397. A bill to increase the allocation of visas for certain highly skilled workers and to reduce fraud and abuse in certain visa programs for aliens working temporarily in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1398. A bill to expand the research and prevention activities of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with respect to inflammatory bowel disease; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 1399. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to combine the Hope Scholarship Credit and the deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses into a refundable college affordability and creating chances for educational success for students (ACCESS) credit, to establish an Early Federal Pell Grant Commitment Demonstration Program, and to increase the maximum Federal Pell Grant Award; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1400. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the information and repayment options to student borrowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ROBERTS, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1401. A bill to improve the National Student Loan Data System; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 1402. A bill to amend the Investment Advisors Act of 1940, with respect to the exemption to registration requirements; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. CONRAD, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1403. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to provide incentives for the production of bioenergy crops; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1404. A bill to provide for Congressional authority with respect to certain acquisitions, mergers, and takeovers under the Defense Production Act of 1950; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. Res. 199. A resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Haleh Esfandiari; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. Res. 200. A resolution commending Louisiana jockeys for their continued success in the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. NELSON of Nebraska):

S. Res. 201. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Life Insurance Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. Res. 202. A resolution designating the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as ''National Health Information Technology Week''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 117

At the request of Mr. OBAMA, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 117, a bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to improve benefits and services for members of the Armed Forces, veterans of the Global War on Terrorism, and other veterans, to require reports on the effects of the Global War on Terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 185

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to restore habeas corpus for those detained by the United States.

S. 206

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 206, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 430

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the national defense through empowerment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the enhancement of the functions of the National Guard Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 469

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions.

S. 506

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 506, a bill to improve efficiency in the Federal Government through the use of high-performance green buildings, and for other purposes.

S. 545

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to improve consumer access to passenger vehicle loss data held by insurers.

S. 579

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 579, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers regarding environmental factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer.

S. 625

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 625, a bill to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products.

S. 661

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 661, a bill to establish kinship navigator programs, to establish guardianship assistance payments for children, and for other purposes.

S. 667

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 667, a bill to expand programs of early childhood home visitation that increase school readiness, child abuse and neglect prevention, and early identification of developmental and health delays, including potential mental health concerns, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 667, supra.

S. 694

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 694, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to reduce the incidence of child injury and death occurring inside or outside of light motor vehicles, and for other purposes.

S. 755

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 755, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide diabetes screening tests under the Medicaid program for adult enrollees with diabetes risk factors, to ensure that States offer a comprehensive package of benefits under that program for individuals with diabetes, and for other purposes.

S. 773

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 773, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 805

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 805, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to assist countries in sub-Saharan Africa in the effort to achieve internationally recognized goals in the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases and the reduction of maternal and child mortality by improving human health care capacity and improving retention of medical health professionals in sub-Saharan Africa, and for other purposes.

S. 807

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 807, a bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 to provide that manure shall not be considered to be a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

S. 824

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 824, a bill to amend Public Law 106–348 to extend the authorization for establishing a memorial in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor veterans who became disabled while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.

S. 831

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 831, a bill to authorize States and local governments to prohibit the investment of State assets in any company that has a qualifying business relationship with Sudan.

S. 845

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 845, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to expand and intensify programs with respect to research and related activities concerning elder falls.

S. 866

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 866, a bill to provide for increased planning and funding for health promotion programs of the Department of Health and Human Services.

S. 897

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 897, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide more help to Alzheimer's disease caregivers.

S. 898

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 898, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to fund breakthroughs in Alzheimer's disease research while providing more help to caregivers and increasing public education about prevention.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) were added as cosponsors of S. 901, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide additional authorizations of appropriations for the health centers program under section 330 of such Act.

S. 902

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 902, a bill to provide support and assistance for families of members of the National Guard and Reserve who are undergoing deployment, and for other purposes.

S. 921

At the request of Mr. THOMAS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

921, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 935

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 935, a bill to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 970

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 970, a bill to impose sanctions on Iran and on other countries for assisting Iran in developing a nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 980

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 980, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to address online pharmacies.

S. 988

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 988, a bill to extend the termination date for the exemption of returning workers from the numerical limitations for temporary workers.

S. 991

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 991, a bill to establish the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation under the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961.

S. 999

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) were added as cosponsors of S. 999, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve stroke prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

S. 1136

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1136, a bill to promote the economic security and safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and for other purposes.

S. 1155

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAIG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1155, a bill to treat payments under the Conservation Reserve Program as rentals from real estate.

S. 1175

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1175, a bill to end the use of child soldiers in hostilities around the world, and for other purposes.

S. 1226

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1226, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to establish programs to improve the quality, performance, and delivery of pediatric care.

S. 1232

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1232, a bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, to develop a voluntary policy for managing the risk of food allergy and anaphylaxis in schools, to establish school-based food allergy management grants, and for other purposes.

S. 1237

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of S. 1237, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 1257

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1257, a bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

S. 1259

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1259, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the achievement of universal basic education in all developing countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes.

S. 1263

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1263, a bill to protect the welfare of consumers by prohibiting price gouging with respect to gasoline and petroleum distillates during natural disasters and abnormal market disruptions, and for other purposes.

S. 1310

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1310, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of increased payments for ground ambulance services under the Medicare program.

S. 1328

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1328, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in the immigration laws by permitting permanent partners of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in connection with permanent partnerships.

S. 1332

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1332, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend projects relating to children and violence to provide access to school-based comprehensive mental health programs.

S. 1350

At the request of Mr. GREGG, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1350, a bill to amend title II of the Immigration and Nationality Act to reform the diversity visa program and create a program that awards visas to aliens with an advanced degree.

S. 1351

At the request of Mr. GREGG, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1351, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to improve the competitiveness of the United States in the global economy and to protect against potential visa fraud and abuse.

S. 1359

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1359, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance public and health professional awareness and understanding of lupus and to strengthen the Nation's research efforts to identify the causes and cure of lupus.

S. 1379

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1379, a bill to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to strike the exception to the residency requirements for United States attorneys.

S. 1382

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1382, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide the establishment of an Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Registry.

S. 1386

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 1386, a bill to amend the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, to provide better assistance to low- and moderate-income families, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 118

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 118, a resolution urging the Government of Canada to end the commercial seal hunt.

S. RES. 197

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 197, a resolution honoring the accomplishments of AmeriCorps.

AMENDMENT NO. 1071

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1071 proposed to H.R. 1495, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1094

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1094 proposed to H.R. 1495, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1098

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1098 proposed to H.R. 1495, a bill to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

STATEMENT ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 1391. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants for the support of full-service community schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, today I join House Majority Leader STENY HOYER in introducing legislation seeking to strengthen our local communities through coordinated school-based efforts. The Full-Service Community Schools Act establishes an important grant program supporting a variety of community services, ranging from early childhood education and family literacy efforts to job training and nutrition services. Our schools have long served as the bedrock of local communities; and in a time when Federal dollars have been used as an invasive hand, I believe additional resources should be allocated to local areas supporting enterprising instruction, public health, job training and overall community and parental engagement.

The Full-Service Community Schools Act will direct the Department of Education to award grants to local educational agencies and one or more community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, or other public/private entities. These full-service community school dollars will improve the coordination, delivery, effectiveness, and efficiency of services provided to our children and families. Funds will be awarded to those grantees coordinating at least 3 services at a school site, including early childhood programs; literacy and reading programs for youth and families; parenting education activities; community service; job training and career counseling services; nutrition services; primary health and dental care; and preventive mental health and treatment services.

Priority will be given to grantees demonstrating a record of effectiveness and serving at least two schools in which at least 40 percent of the children are from low-income families. These targeted efforts will support a more efficient use of Federal, State, local, and private-sector dollars serving the needs of children and families. A synergy of community engagement, parental enthusiasm, and local leadership is what America needs to address the growing challenges of our time; and I will continue working with my colleagues to ensure such efforts have the support of Congress. I encourage Senators to join me by cosponsoring the Full-Service Community Schools Act of 2007.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1393. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to prescribe the binding oath or affirmation of renunciation and allegiance required to be naturalized as a citizen of the United States, to encourage and support the efforts of prospective citizens of the United States to become citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, Senators from both parties are working very hard these days to put together an immigration bill. The majority leader is working hard to create an environment in which that can happen, and I appreciate his doing that. It is not easy to do. But it is absolutely essential that we have a comprehensive immigration bill.

This is not something Members of the Congress can blame on anybody else. It is not the Governors' job, it is not the mayors' job, it is not the county commissioners' job, it is not the Sheriff's job, it is our job to decide what our immigration policy should be. It is our job to secure the border. It is our job to make certain that those who come here are legally here. It is also our job to make sure that those who come here legally have an opportunity to become Americans, a chance to become part of our country.

We have a motto above our wall that says, ''One from many.'' It doesn't say ''Many from one.'' We are very proud of our magnificent diversity in this country. People come here from virtually every country in the world. Anyone who has gone to the naturalization ceremonies can attest, where last year 650,000 new citizens stood in courthouses all across America, raised their right hands and swore their allegiance to this country—nothing is more moving than that. But as much as we prize that diversity, what we prize even more is our ability to turn all that diversity into one country.

Unity is harder than diversity. There are a lot of diverse countries in the world, and they are ripped apart by their differences. We have been fortunate. As other countries struggle with the idea of becoming French, becoming German, becoming Japanese—it is hard to do. But in this country, if you become a citizen, you have to become an American.

How do you do that? You don't do it by your race. In fact, our Constitution says that race cannot be used.

You don't do it by any other form of ancestry. It doesn't matter where your grandparents came from. What does matter is that you subscribe to a few principles and that you learn a common language. Those are the most basic elements of the unity, this fragile and important unity that makes us the United States of America instead of just another United Nations.

In anticipation of the immigration debate next week, I introduce today, along with Senators COCHRAN and CORNYN, what we call the Strengthening American Citizenship Act. It is an essential part of any immigration bill because it addresses what happens after one lawfully becomes a resident of this country and begins to think about lawfully becoming a citizen.

This legislation will help legal immigrants who are prospective American citizens learn our common language and learn about our ways of government. I introduced this legislation last year, in the 109th Congress, when we considered an immigration bill. It had several cosponsors and it passed this body 91 to 1. It was an amendment to the Senate immigration bill, in April of 2006.

I hope the Senate will agree again to make it a part of the bill. It might not make the most headlines, but it will make as much lasting difference in immigration legislation as possible.

Here, in brief, is what the legislation would do. First, it would help prospective citizens learn English and it would do that in two ways. It would provide education grants of up to $500 for English courses for immigrants who declare their intent to become American citizens. They might use these grants of $500, for example, to go to any accredited agency such as ''Fuentes,'' in Los Angeles, a place I happen to know about, which can do, for that amount of money, an excellent job of helping, in that case mostly Spanish-speaking citizens, learn also to speak English. So it is a $500 voucher, in effect, to help any lawful person learn English.

Second, it will change the citizenship rules to allow those who learn to speak English fluently to reduce from 5 to 4 years the amount of time they have to wait to become a citizen. These are two ways we are trying to help people learn English and by doing that value our common language.

There are other ways to do that. Senator KENNEDY and I have talked about the fact that there are lines of people in Boston, his State, and Nashville, in my State, of adults who want to learn English, but there is no room for them in the adult education programs we fund. Perhaps when we pass the Workforce Investment Act, or other appropriations bills, we can find other ways to help people who want to learn English, learn English. But this legislation focuses specifically on prospective citizens who want to learn English by giving them a grant to help them do it and by giving them an incentive to learn the language fluently. They can become a citizen then in 4 years instead of 5.

Also, it helps prospective citizens learn more about the American way of life. Albert Shanker, the late President of the American Federation of Teachers, said the common school was created in America, the public school, to help largely immigrant children learn reading and writing and arithmetic and what it means to be an American, with the hope they would go home and teach their parents.

The last time we had such a large percentage of foreign-born people in our country was in about 1900, the turn of that century. Organizations all over America got busy helping new arrivals learn about our country, learn about our Declaration of Independence, learn about our Constitution and the ideas that were part of it because they knew that, since you do not become a citizen based upon your race or your ancestry and you do it upon the idea of America, that someone needed to help these people learn about the idea of America. Many were very eager to do that.

The legislation I introduced today would establish a foundation to support the activities of the Office of Citizenship within the Department of Homeland Security so that organizations that want to support and cooperate in efforts to reach out to prospective citizens can do so.

It would provide grants to organizations to provide classes in American history and civics. We are talking about a lot of prospective citizens—650,000 or so last year. After this immigration bill it may be more, because if you become a citizen, you are going to have to be legally here. So we want to make sure we have plenty of help for these who want to do that.

Third, codify the oath of allegiance. One of the most remarkable oaths, I suppose, in the American language, is the oath of allegiance that the 650,000 new citizens take when they become Americans. It is an oath that goes all the way back to George Washington's time and Valley Forge. It was essentially the oath that Washington and his officers took at the beginning of the American revolution. It says that I, George Washington, or I, the new citizen, declare that we owe no allegiance or obedience—in that case, to King George;

> . . . and that we renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him and do swear that I will, to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States.

Essentially, that same oath of allegiance is the oath new citizens take. This elevates that oath of allegiance from a bureaucratic rule to a part of the law and gives it the same dignity that the Pledge of Allegiance has and the national anthem has. Finally, this legislation would celebrate new citizens by focusing on these hundreds of ceremonies that we have, in which people from all over the world wear their best clothes, prove that they have good character, that they have waited 5 years, that they have learned English, that they have passed a test about citizenship, and they are ready to say: As proud as I am of where I came from, I now pledge my allegiance to the United States of America.

We want to celebrate those events. This instructs the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and implement a strategy to make those naturalization ceremonies more important in the fabric of our everyday life, and establish an award for citizens who have been naturalized in the last 10 years who have made an outstanding contribution to the American Nation. We all know in our own experiences that new Americans are sometimes the best Americans. They make the largest contribution. They have the best understanding of our country. We want to celebrate what they have done.

This is legislation the Senate adopted before. Senator COCHRAN, Senator CORNYN, and I are introducing it to make sure we adopt it again when immigration comes up.

I also wish to mention that I intend on looking at a comprehensive effort toward the same goal, which I like to call the American citizenship agenda; learning English and what it means to becoming an American. I have identified several areas, and I may introduce amendments in many of these areas to the immigration bill.

These were not introduced the last time, but they would include clarifying the mission of the Office of Citizenship within the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, establishing State citizenship advisory boards in a number of States, coordinating efforts toward helping immigrants learning English, American history, and civics. It would create an employer tax credit for businesses that help their employees learn English. As I mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the 20th century, there were a great many businesses hiring new Americans who spent their money, their time, and their effort to make sure those new employees understood what it meant to become Americans.

One way to meet this need of a large percentage of foreign-born people in our country is to provide tax incentives to businesses that help their employees learn English. Another proposal is to require a demonstration of English language proficiency when an individual renews his or her green card; establishing a Presidential award for companies that go above and beyond in bringing their employees together as Americans; finally, asking for a Government Accountability Office study to identify the need of lawful permanent residents not speaking English and the associated costs; in other words, how many people living in our country do not speak English and what would be the cost and the most effective programs of helping them learn English.

That is my purpose today, to introduce the Strengthening American Citizenship Act, legislation that passed when we considered the immigration bill in 2006, and which Senators COCHRAN and CORNYN and I hope will be a part of this legislation; then to discuss what I call the Strengthening American Citizenship Agenda, which will be looking for a variety of other ways to help make sure we not only celebrate our diversity but we find ways to celebrate our unity.

We can look across the ocean at Europe and see the struggle in Turkey right now for that nation's identity. We can see the difficulty France and Germany are having as Muslim workers have a hard time integrating into their country. We do not want the United States of America to become a country where we have enclaves of people who have no loyalty to the idea of this Nation. We want to create an environment where everyone has an opportunity to think about loyalty to this country, where almost all have a chance to think about becoming a citizen one day, and where every single person who lives here has an opportunity to learn to speak our common language, not just for their benefit but so we do not become a tower of Babel or a United Nations, that we become a United States of America, as our Founders envisioned.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 1394. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to exclude from gross income of individual taxpayers discharges of indebtedness attributable to certain forgiven residential mortgage obligations; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, under current law, only two categories of individuals pay tax on the sale of their principle residence: the truly fortunate who have realized a capital gain of more than $250,000, $500,000 on a joint return, or the truly unfortunate who lose equity in their home and are forced to pay tax if the lender forgives some portion of the mortgage debt. Surely this is an anomalous result.

Nevertheless, newspaper and television reports describe the burdens families all over the country are facing as lenders foreclose on borrowers who cannot make their mortgage payments. In more and more circumstances, these borrowers, often minorities and the elderly, are unable to make the escalating payments associated with subprime loans and some complex adjustable rate mortgage products.

Other media reports focus on the challenges sellers face if they live in areas with declining home values. There are instances where the value of housing in a whole market occasionally falls through no fault of the homeowner. A plant closes, environmental degradations are found nearby, a regional economic slump hits hard. This happened during the 1980s in the oil patch and in southern California and New England at the beginning of the 90s.

This is happening right now in Michigan with the depressed automotive industry. The Detroit metropolitan area had the highest percentage of households in foreclosure in the 150 largest metropolitan areas, with an average of more than 10,000 foreclosures in each quarter. The foreclosures affected 1 out of every 21 households, nearly five times the national average. Over the first quarter of 2007, Michigan had over 29,000 foreclosures and Detroit was on pace to record 11,000 for that same time period.

One thing these news reports do not mention is the tax problem that sellers or those in foreclosure will face if lenders forgive and do not require payment on some or all of a mortgage debt at the time of disposition. What happens to these people who must sell their homes during a downturn or who cannot make their payments and go into foreclosure? They must pay taxes on the amount forgiven; it is treated as income.

Below are two hypothetical scenarios where owners must have to pay taxes on the amount forgiven and those estimated taxes. The first example is a situation where there has been a downturn in the housing market. The second example is where a family, possibly because of loss of job, illness, or decrease in income or significant changes in the mortgage rate, can neither refinance the property nor sustain the payments and the lender forecloses on the property.

Decrease in home prices or ''short sale''	
Mortgage	$100,000
Market Value at Purchase	100,000
Market Value at Sale	90,000
Sale Price	90,000
Debt Remaining After Sale	10,000
Taxes Due if forgiven by the lender @ 15 percent tax rate	1,500
Lender forecloses	
Mortgage	$100,000
Foreclosure Amount	80,000
Debt Remaining After Foreclosure	20,000
Taxes Due if forgiven by the lender @ 15 percent tax rate	3,000

In the ''short sale'' transaction, if the lender forgives the $10,000 of outstanding debt, the family will have taxable income of $10,000 on the transaction and owe $1,500, even though they have just sustained an economic loss and no cash gain.

In a second scenario, if the foreclosure sale does not cover the amount of outstanding debt on the property or $20,000, the lender might forgive remaining debt. Again, the borrower is treated as having received ''income'' when the debt is forgiven and in the example, would owe $3,000 in taxes on the $20,000 that was forgiven.

Clearly it is unfair to tax people on phantom income, particularly right at the time they have had a serious economic loss and have no cash with which to pay the tax. My bill, the Mortgage Relief Act, will relieve families of a tax burden when their lender forgives part of the mortgage on a principal residence.

None of us wants to learn that families in our own districts will be forced to pay taxes when they have no money and have incurred a substantial loss on what, for most, is the most significant asset they own, and possibly the only asset they have. While my legislation will not repair their credit or punish those who mislead them into inappropriate loans, it will prevent them from further financial harm.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, it is becoming more difficult for a middle class family to purchase a home. Last week the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on middle class economic issues. We learned from the witnesses that families are struggling because their fixed costs are greater and one of these fixed costs is housing. Professor Elizabeth Warren testified that houses purchased now are only slightly larger than those purchased in the 1970's, but the median mortgage payment is 76 percent larger than a generation ago.

Today, there are serious problems in our mortgage lending market which need to be addressed. Too many families are unable to make the monthly mortgage payments on their homes. Foreclosure rates are increasing. Some homeowners who are facing foreclosure have received what are known as ''subprime'' loans which allow an adjustable rate of mortgage interest or a break on payments during the first years of the mortgage. The ''subprime'' lending market has been an important tool to allow people with poor credit histories to obtain access to credit including mortgages. However, in recent years some lenders have used these ''subprime'' mortgage loans to put homeowners into mortgage products with high interest rates that increase after a short period of time. Additionally, some homeowners have opted to buy homes they could not afford by using the ''subprime'' loan market. In either case, too many homeowners have been unable to keep up with the changes in their mortgage payments and have been forced into foreclosure.

Last year, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had a record 19,487 foreclosure filings. One of every 92 U.S. households faced foreclosure and there are expected to be more disclosures in 2007. Published reports show that Massachusetts has had approximately 10,000 foreclosures filings already this year. Monthly payments on millions of loans are expected to increase dramatically as low introductory interest rates balloon as much as 50 percent. The Nonprofit Center for Responsible Lending predicts that one in five subprime mortgages done in the past 2 years will end up in foreclosure.

Today, Senators STABENOW, VOINOVICH and I are introducing the Mortgage Relief Cancellation Act of 2007. This legislation will help families who are faced with mortgages that they are unable to pay. Fortunately, some lenders are willing to modify loans and forgive some debt, but the borrower is required to pay income tax on the cancelled debt.

Under present law, the discharged debt is treated as income. Some homeowners are learning about this rule the hard way and find themselves owing a large tax bill on debt that was forgiven. The Mortgage Relief Cancellation Act of 2007 would exclude from income the debt that is forgiven for certain mortgage loans.

An example of this is a situation in which a homeowner sells their house to prevent disclosure and the proceeds do not cover the full mortgage obligation. The lender agrees to forgive the difference. Under the Mortgage Relief Cancellation Act of 2007, the amount forgiven would not be included in taxable income. This legislation also addresses forgiveness of debt as part of a restructuring arrangement.

I urge you to support this legislation.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 1395. A bill to prevent unfair practices in credit card accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am introducing today, along with Senator MCCASKILL, the Stop Unfair Practices in Credit Cards Act.

Credit cards are a fixture of American family life today. People use them to buy groceries, to rent a car, shop on the Internet, pay college tuition, and even pay their taxes. In 2005, the average family had five credit cards. American households used nearly 700 million

credit cards to buy goods and services worth $1.8 trillion. Credit cards fuel commerce, facilitate financial planning, help families deal with emergencies. But credit cards have also contributed to record amounts of household debt. Some credit card issuers have socked families with sky-high interest rates of 25 and 30 percent and higher. They have hit consumers with hefty fees for late payments, for exceeding a credit card limit, and other transactions. In too many cases, credit card issuers have made it all but impossible for working-class families to climb out of debt.

That is why in 2005, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chaired, on which Senator MCCASKILL serves, initiated an in-depth investigation into unfair and abusive credit card industry practices.

In the fall of 2006, the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, released a report which I had requested, which for the first time in years provided a comprehensive examination of the interest rates and fees being charged by credit card companies. Following the release of that report, and continuing through today, the subcommittee has been deluged with calls and letters from Americans expressing anger and frustration at the way they have been treated by their credit card companies, and sharing stories of unfair and often abusive practices. The subcommittee has been examining those allegations of unfair treatment and has identified many troubling credit card industry practices which should be banned or restricted.

Our first hearing in March focused on industry practices involving grace periods, interest rates, and fees. It revealed a number of unfair, often little-known, and sometimes abusive credit card practices, which prey upon families experiencing financial hardships, and squeezed even consumers who pay their credit card bills on time.

The legislation we are introducing today is aimed at stopping abusive credit card practices that trap too many hard-working families in a downward spiral of debt. American families deserve to be treated honestly and fairly by their credit card companies. Our bill would help ensure that fair treatment. Here are a few things our bill would do. It would stop credit card companies from charging interest on debt that is paid on time. It would crack down on abusive fees, including repeated late fees and over-the-limit fees, and fees to pay your bill.

It would also prohibit the charging of interest on those fees. It would establish guidelines on interest rate increases, including a cap on penalty interest rate hikes at no more than 7 percent. It would require that increased interest rates apply only to future credit card debt and not the debt already incurred.

Our bill will be referred to the Senate Banking Committee, which has primary jurisdiction over credit card legislation, and which has been holding its own hearing on unfair credit card practices. Our friend, Senator DODD, the committee chairman, has a long history of fighting credit card abuses. Senator SHELBY, the ranking Republican, as well as many other members of the committee, has also expressed concern about a number of credit card problems.

It is my hope our bill and the legislative record being compiled by our Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations will help the Banking Committee in its deliberations and help build momentum to enact legislation halting the unfair credit card practices that outrage American consumers. Credit card abuse is too harmful to American families, our economy, and our economic future to let these unfair practices continue.

Let me describe the key provisions of our bill in more detail. The first section of the bill would put an end to an indefensible practice that imposes little known and unfair interest charges on many unsuspecting, responsible consumers. Most credit cards today offer what is called a grace period. Cardholders are told that, if they pay their monthly credit card bill during this grace period, they will not be charged interest on the debt for which they are being billed. What many cardholders do not realize, however, is that this grace period typically provides protection against interest charges only if their monthly credit card bill is paid in full. If the cardholder pays less than 100 percent of the monthly bill—even if the cardholder pays on time—he or she will be charged interest on the entire billed amount, including the portion that was paid by the specified due date.

An example shows why this billing practice is unfair and should be stopped. Suppose a consumer who usually pays his or her credit card account in full and owes no money as of December 1 makes a lot of purchases in December. The consumer gets a credit card bill on January 1 for $5,020, due January 15. Suppose the consumer pays that bill on time, but pays $5,000 instead of the full amount owed.

Most people assume that the next bill would be for the $20 in unpaid debt, plus interest on that $20. But that commonsense assumption is wrong. That is because current industry practice is to charge the consumer interest not only on the $20 that wasn't paid on time, but also on the $5,000 that was paid on time. Let me say that again. Industry practice is to force the consumer to pay interest on the portion of the debt that was paid on time. In other words, the consumer would pay interest on the entire $5,020 from the first day of the billing month, January 1, until the day the $5,000 payment was made on January 15, compounded daily. So much for a grace period. After that, the consumer would be charged interest on the $20 past due, compounded daily, from January 15 to the end of the month.

The end result would be a February 1 bill that more than doubles the $20 debt. Using an interest rate of 17.99 percent, for example, in just one month, the $20 debt would rack up interest charges of more than $35.

Charging $35 of interest over one month on a $20 credit card debt is indefensible, especially when applied to a consumer who paid over 90 percent of their credit card debt on time during the grace period. Our legislation would end this unfair billing practice by amending the Truth in Lending Act to prohibit the charging of interest on any portion of a credit card debt that is paid on time during a grace period. Using our example, this prohibition would bar the charging of interest on the $5,000 that was paid on time, and result in a February balance that reflects what a rational consumer would have expected: the $20 past due, plus interest on the $20 from January 1 to January 31.

The second section of our bill would address a related unfair billing practice, which I call ''trailing interest.'' Charging trailing interest on credit card debt is another widespread, but little known industry practice that squeezes responsible and largely unsuspecting consumers for still more interest charges.

Going back to our example, you might think that once the consumer gets gouged in February by receiving a bill for $55 on a $20 debt, and pays that bill on time and in full, without making any new purchase, that would be the end of that credit card debt for the consumer. But you would be wrong. It would not be the end.

Even if, on February 15, the consumer paid the February 1 bill in full and on time—all $55—the next bill would likely have an additional interest charge related to the $20 debt. In this case, the charge would reflect interest that would have accumulated on the $55 from February 1 to 15, which is the time from when the bill was sent to the day it was paid. The total interest charge in our example would be about 38 cents. While some credit card issuers will waive trailing interest if the next month's bill is less than $1, a common industry practice is to fold the 38 cents into the next bill if a consumer makes a new purchase.

Now 38 cents isn't much in the grand scheme of things. That may be why many consumers don't notice this extra interest charge or bother to fight it. Even if someone had questions about the amount of interest on a bill, most consumers would be hard pressed to understand how the amount was calculated, much less whether it was correct. But by nickel and diming tens of millions of consumer accounts with trailing interest charges, credit card issuers reap large profits.

This little known billing practice, which squeezes consumers for a few more cents on the dollar, and targets responsible cardholders who pay their bills on time and in full, goes too far.

If a consumer pays a credit card bill on time and in full—paying 100 percent of the amount specified by the date specified in the billing statement—it is unfair to charge that consumer still more interest on the debt that was just paid. Our legislation would put an end to trailing interest by prohibiting credit card issuers from adding interest charges to a credit card debt which the consumer paid on time and in full in response to a billing statement.

A third problem examined by the subcommittee involves a widespread industry practice in which credit card issuers claim the right to unilaterally change the terms of a credit card agreement at any time for any reason with only a 15-day notice to the consumer under the Truth in Lending Act.

As the National Consumer Law Center testified at our hearing, this practice means that smart shoppers who choose a credit card after comparing a variety of card options are continually vulnerable to a change-in-terms notice that alters the favorable terms they selected, and provides them with only 15 days to accept the changes or find an alternative. By asserting the right to make unilateral changes to credit card terms on short notice, credit card issuers undermine not only the bargaining power of individual consumers, but also principles of fair market competition. Such unilateral changes are particularly unfair when they alter material terms in a credit card agreement such as the interest rate applicable to extensions of credit.

That is why our bill would impose two types of limits on credit card interest rate hikes. First, for consumers who comply with the terms of their credit card agreements, the bill would prohibit a credit card issuer from unilaterally hiking an interest rate that was represented to, and included in the disclosures provided, to a consumer under the Truth in Lending Act, unless the consumer affirmatively agreed in writing to the increase at the time it is proposed. This prohibition is intended to protect responsible consumers who play by the rules from a sudden hike in their interest rate for no apparent reason—a complaint that the subcommittee has heard all too often. Under our bill, issuers would no longer be able to unilaterally hike the interest rates of cardholders who play by the rules.

The bill's second limit would apply to consumers who, for whatever reason, failed to comply with the terms of their credit card agreement, perhaps by paying late or exceeding the credit limit. In that circumstance, credit card issuers would be permitted to impose a penalty interest rate on the account, but the bill would place a cap on how high that penalty interest rate could go.

Specifically, the bill would limit any such penalty rate hike to no more than a 7 percent increase above the interest rate in effect before the penalty rate was imposed. That means a 10 percent rate could rise no higher than 17 percent, and a 15 percent rate could not exceed 22 percent. This type of interest rate limit is comparable to the caps that today operate in many adjustable mortgages. The effect of the credit card cap would be to prohibit penalty interest rates from dramatically increasing the interest rate imposed on the cardholder, as happened in cases examined by the subcommittee where credit card interest rates jumped from 10 percent or 15 percent to as much as 32 percent. Penalty interest rate hikes that double or triple existing interest rates are simply unreasonable and unfair.

If a credit card account were opened with a low introductory interest rate followed by a higher interest rate after a specified period of time, it is intended that the penalty rate cap proposed in the bill would apply to each of those disclosed rates individually. For example, suppose the credit card account had a 0 percent introductory rate for 6 months and a 12 percent rate after that. Suppose further that, during the 6-month introductory period, the cardholder exceeded the credit limit. The bill would allow the card issuer to impose a penalty interest rate of up to 7 percent for the rest of the 6 month period. Once the 6-month period ended, it is intended that the 12 percent rate would take effect. If the consumer were to again exceed the limit, it is intended that any penalty rate imposed upon the account be no greater than 19 percent.

If a card issuer were to analyze an account and conclude that a penalty rate increase of up to 7 percent would be insufficient to protect against the risk of default on the account, the issuer could choose to reduce the credit limit on the account or cancel the account altogether. If the card issuer chose to cancel the account, it is intended that the consumer would retain the right to pay off any debt on the account using the interest rate that was in effect when the debt was incurred.

The point of the bill's penalty interest rate cap is to stop penalty interest rate hikes which are disproportional; which too often stick families with sky-high interest rates of 25 percent, 30 percent, and even 32 percent; and which too often make it virtually impossible for working American families to climb out of debt.

Still another troubling practice involving credit card interest rate hikes is the problem of retroactive application. Industry practice today is to apply an increased interest rate not only to new debt incurred by the cardholder, but also to previously incurred debt.

Retroactive application of a higher interest rate means that pre-existing credit card debt suddenly costs a consumer much more to repay. Take, for example, a $3,000 credit card debt that a consumer was paying down each month with timely payments. Suddenly, the cardholder falls ill, misses a payment or pays it late, and the card issuer increases the interest rate from 15 percent to 22 percent. If applied to the existing $3,000 debt, that higher rate would require the cardholder to make a much steeper minimum monthly payment and pay much more interest than originally planned. That is often enough to sink a working family into a deepening spiral of debt from which they cannot recover.

By making it a common practice to institute after-the-fact interest rate hikes for existing credit card debt—in effect unilaterally changing the terms of an existing loan—the credit card industry has unfairly positioned itself to reap greater profits at consumers' expense. Our bill would fight back by limiting the retroactive application of interest rate hikes to lessen the financial impact on American households. Specifically, our bill would provide that interest rate hikes could be applied only to future credit card debt and not to any credit card debt incurred prior to the rate increase. Instead, any earlier debt would continue to accrue interest at the rate previously in effect.

The first set of provisions in our bill addresses unfair practices related to interest rates. The next set of provisions targets unfair practices related to fees imposed on cardholders by credit card companies.

The need for proconsumer fee protections is illustrated by the story of Wes Wannemacher of Ohio, a witness featured at the subcommittee's March hearing. In 2001 and 2002, Mr. Wannemacher charged about $3,200 on a new Chase credit card to pay for expenses mostly related to his wedding. Over the next 6 years, he paid about $6,300 toward that debt, yet in February 2007, Chase said that he still owed them about $4,400.

How could Mr. Wannemacher pay nearly double his original credit card debt and still owe $4,400? As he explained in his testimony, in addition to repaying the original debt of $3,200, Mr. Wannemacher was socked with $4,900 in interest charges, $1,100 in late fees, and 47 over-limit fees totaling $1,500, despite going over his $3,000 credit limit by a total of $200. These facts show that Mr. Wannemacher paid $2,600 in fees on a $3,200 debt. In addition, those fees were added to his outstanding credit card balance, and he was charged interest on the fee amounts, increasing his debt by hundreds if not thousands of additional dollars. There is something so wrong with this picture, that Chase didn't even defend its treatment of the account at the subcommittee hearing; instead, Chase forgave the $4,400 debt that it said was still owing on the Wannemacher credit card.

It is no secret that credit card companies are making a great deal of money off the fees they are imposing on consumers. According to GAO, fee income now produces about 10 percent of all income obtained by credit card issuers. The GAO report which I commissioned on this subject identified a

host of different fees that have become common practice, including fees for transferring balances, making a late payment, exceeding a credit limit, paying a bill by telephone, and exchanging foreign currency. According to GAO, late fees now average $34 per month and over-limit fees average $31 per month, with some of these fees climbing as high as $39 per month. As Mr. Wannemacher discovered, these hefty fees are not only added to the credit card's outstanding balance, they also incur interest. The higher the fees climb, the higher the balances owed, and the higher the interest charges on top of that.

Charging interest on money borrowed is certainly justified, but squeezing additional dollars from consumers by charging interest on transaction fees goes too far. Steep fees already deepen household debt from credit cards; those fees should not also generate interest income for the credit card issuer. Our bill would ban this industrywide practice by prohibiting credit card issuers from charging or collecting interest on the fees imposed on consumers.

Mr. Wannemacher exceeded the $3,000 limit on his credit card on three occasions in 2001 and 2002 for a total of $200. Over the following 6 years, however, he was charged over-the-limit fees on 47 occasions totaling about $1,500. In other words, Chase tried to collect over-the-limit fees from Mr. Wannemacher that were seven times larger than the amount he went over the limit.

At our March hearing, Chase did not attempt to defend the 47 over-the-limit fees it imposed; instead, it announced that it was changing its policy and would join with others in the industry in imposing no more than three over-the-limit fees in a row on a credit card account with an outstanding balance that exceeded the credit limit. While Chase's voluntary change in policy is welcome, it doesn't go far enough in curbing abusive practices related to over-the-limit fees.

First, if a credit card issuer approves the extension of credit that allows the cardholder to exceed the account's established credit limit, the issuer should be allowed to impose only one over-the-limit fee for that credit extension. One fee for one violation—especially when the card issuer facilitated the violation by approving the excess credit charge.

Second, the fee should be imposed only if the account balance is over the credit limit at the end of the billing cycle. If a cardholder exceeds the limit in the middle of the billing cycle and then takes prompt action to reduce the balance below the limit, perhaps by making a payment or obtaining a credit for returning a purchase, there is no injury to the creditor and no justification for an over-the-limit fee.

Third, a credit card issuer should impose an over-the-limit fee only when an action taken by the cardholder causes the credit limit to be exceeded, and not when a penalty imposed by the card issuer causes the excess charge. The card issuer should not be able to pile penalty upon penalty, such as by assessing a late fee on an account and then, if the late fee pushes the credit card balance over the credit limit, also imposing an over-the-limit fee.

In addition, the bill would require credit card issuers to offer consumers the option of establishing a true credit limit on their account—a credit limit that could not be exceeded, because the account would be programmed to refuse approval of any extension of credit over the established limit. In too many cases, credit card issuers no longer provide consumers with the option of having a fixed credit limit, preferring instead to enable all of their cardholders to exceed their credit limits only to be penalized by a hefty fee, added interest, and, possibly, a penalty interest rate.

There is more. Another unfair but common fee is what I call the ''pay-to-pay fee.'' It is the $5 to $15 fee that many issuers charge consumers to pay their credit card bill on time by using the telephone. To me, charging folks a fee to pay their bills is a travesty. My bill would prohibit a credit card issuer from charging a separate fee to allow a credit cardholder to pay all or part of a credit card balance.

Another fee that has raised eyebrows is the one charged by credit card issuers to exchange dollars into or from a foreign currency. A number of issuers today charge an amount equal to 2 percent of the amount of currency being exchanged in addition to a 1-percent ''conversion fee'' charged by Visa or Master Card, for a total of 3 percent Our bill responds by requiring foreign currency exchange fees to reasonably reflect the actual costs incurred by the creditor to perform the currency exchange, and requiring regulators to ensure compliance with that standard.

In addition to unfair practices involving interest rates and fees, the subcommittee investigation uncovered several unfair industry practices involving how credit cardholder payments are applied to satisfy finance charges and other credit card debt. One such practice that has caught the subcommittee's attention is the industrywide practice of applying consumer payments first to the balances with the lowest interest rates.

Right now, a single credit card account often carries balances subject to multiple interest rates. Credit cards typically use one interest rate for purchases, another for cash advances, and a third for balance transfers. Many card issuers also offer new customers low introductory interest rates, such as 0 or 1 percent, but limit these ''come on'' rates to a short time period or to a balance transferred from another card. Moreover, many of these interest rates may vary over time, since it is a common practice to offer variable interest rates that rise and fall according to a specified rate or index.

When a consumer payment is made, credit card issuers currently have complete discretion on how to apply that payment to the various balances bearing different interest rates. Consumers are typically given no option to direct where their payments are applied. Today, virtually all credit card issuers apply a consumer payment first to the balance with the lowest interest rate. After that balance is paid off, card issuers apply the payment to the balance with the next lowest interest rate, and so on.

This payment practice clearly favors creditors over consumers. It allows the card issuers to direct payments first to the balances that provide them with the lowest returns, and minimize payments to the balances bearing the highest interest rates so those balances can accumulate more interest for a longer period. Consumers who want to pay off a cash advance bearing a 20 percent interest rate, for example, are told that they cannot make that payment until they first pay off all other balances with a lower interest rate.

Our bill would replace this unfair industrywide practice with a proconsumer approach. Reversing current industry practice, the bill would require cardholder payments to be applied first to the balance bearing the highest interest rate, and then to each successive balance bearing the next highest rate, until the payment is used up. The bill would also require credit card issuers to apply cardholder payments in the most effective way to minimize the imposition of any fees or interest charges to the account.

In addition, the bill would prohibit credit card issuers from imposing late fees on consumers if the issuer was itself responsible for the delay in crediting the payment. For example, if a card issuer changed the mailing address for payments, had to shut down its mail sorting equipment for repairs, or mistakenly routed a consumer payment to the wrong department, the issuer would not be allowed to assess a late fee on the cardholder for the resulting late payment. Instead, if the card issuer caused the late payment, it would be barred from assessing a late fee on the consumer.

In addition to provisions to improve practices related to interest rates, fees, and consumer payments, the bill would add two new definitions to the Truth in Lending Act, intended to further address concerns related to unfair credit card practices.

The first definition involves use of the term, ''prime rate.'' Many credit card issuers today use variable interest rates that are linked to the ''prime rate'' or ''prime interest rate'' and vary over time. For example, a disclosure may indicate that a credit card will bear an interest rate equal to the prime rate plus a specified number of percentage points. Since the 1950s, the term ''prime rate'' has been commonly understood to mean the lowest interest rate offered by U.S. banks to their

most creditworthy borrowers. That is how the term is defined, for example, in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

The problem, however, is that no current statute or regulation defines the prime rate referenced in credit card disclosures under the Truth in Lending Act, and some card issuers have stated expressly that the prime rate used in credit card agreements does not necessarily match the lowest interest rates they provide to their most creditworthy borrowers. Litigation has also arisen between cardholders and card issuers as to what is meant by the term and whether cardholders are being misled. A cite is *Lum* v. *Bank of America*, 361 F.3d 217 (3d Cir. 2004).

To remedy this gap in the law, the bill would require credit card disclosures under the Truth in Lending Act that reference the prime rate to use the bank prime loan rate published by the Federal Reserve Board. This published rate is widely accepted in the financial community as an accurate depiction of the lowest interest rate offered by U.S. banks to their most creditworthy borrowers, and the rate is readily available to the public on the Federal Reserve Web site. By mandating use of this published rate, the bill will ensure that consumers are not deceived by a credit card issuer using a misleading definition of the commonly used term ''prime rate.''

The second definition added by the bill to the Truth in Lending Act involves specifying the ''primary federal regulator'' of a credit card issuer. Today, many credit card issuers are federally chartered or regulated banks subject to one or more Federal bank regulators. The bill would make it clear that when a card issuer is a Federal bank, its primary Federal regulator is the same primary regulator assigned to the bank under Federal banking law. The provision would also make it clear that the primary Federal regulator is responsible for overseeing the bank's credit card operations, ensuring compliance with credit card statutes and regulations, and enforcing the prohibition against unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the Federal Trade Commission Act. Another provision in the bill would make it clear that Federal regulators are expected to conduct at least annual audits to ensure card issuer compliance with the statutes and regulations seeking to ensure fair and effective credit card operations.

The next section of the bill would improve current credit card data collection efforts. Right now, credit card issuers file periodic reports with the Federal Reserve providing information about credit card interest rates and profits. This data plays a critical role in credit card oversight efforts, as well as financial and economic analyses related to consumer spending and household debt. The bill would strengthen current data collection efforts by requiring more specific information on interest rates and fees. For example, current data reports cannot be used to determine how many credit card accounts have interest rates of 25 percent or greater, what types of fees are imposed on consumers, or how many cardholders are affected by such interest rates and fees. The new bill would ensure that regulators, credit card users, and the public have the information needed to answer those basic questions.

The bill would also require the development of credit card industrywide estimates of the approximate relative income derived from interest rates, fees imposed on cardholders, fees imposed on merchants, and any other material source of income. GAO provided this information for the first time in its 2006 report, estimating that the credit card industry now derives about 70 percent of its income from interest charges, 20 percent from interchange fees imposed on merchants, and 10 percent from fees imposed on consumers. This valuable information should continue to be collected so that regulators, credit card users, and the public gain a more informed understanding of the credit card industry.

The bill's data collection requirements are largely modeled upon and intended to replicate key interest rate, fee, and revenue data presented by GAO in its 2006 report, ''Credit Cards: Increased Complexity in Rates and Fees Heightens Need for More Effective Disclosures to Consumers.'' Credit card experts were also consulted to determine what information would be most helpful to strengthen credit card oversight.

The final provision in the bill would provide a 6-month transition period for credit card issuers to implement the bill's provisions.

Credit card issuers like to say that they are engaged in a risky business, lending unsecured debt to millions of consumers, and that's why they have to set interest rates so high and impose so many fees. But the data shows that, typically, 95 to 97 percent of U.S. cardholders pay their bills. And it is clear that credit card operations are enormously profitable. For the last decade, credit card issuers have reported year after year of solid profits, maintained their position as the most profitable sector in the consumer lending field, and reported consistently higher rates of return than commercial banks. Credit card issuers make such a hefty profit that they sent out 8 billion pieces of mail last year soliciting people to sign up.

With profits like those, credit card issuers can afford to stop treating American families unfairly. They can give up charging interest on debt that was paid on time, give up charging consumers a fee to pay their bills, give up hiking interest rates from 15 percent to 32 percent, and give up imposing repeated over-the-limit fees for a single over-the-limit purchase. As one Michigan businessman expressed it to the subcommittee, ''I don't blame the credit card issuers for putting me into debt, but I do blame them for keeping me there.''

Some argue that Congress doesn't need to ban unfair credit card practices; they contend that improved disclosure alone will empower consumers to seek out better deals. Sunlight can be a powerful disinfectant, which is why I have strongly urged the Federal Reserve Board to expedite its regulatory effort to strengthen credit card disclosure and help consumers understand and compare how various credit cards work. But credit cards have become such complex financial products that even improved disclosure will frequently not be enough to curb the abuses—first because some practices are so complex that consumers can't easily understand them, and second because better disclosure does not always lead to greater market competition, especially when virtually an entire industry is using and benefiting from practices that disadvantage consumers.

So when we find credit card practices that are inherently unfair, consumers are often best served, not by greater disclosure, but by stopping the unfair practices that take advantage of them. Among those practices identified in this bill are unfair interest charges that squeeze consumers who pay their credit card debt on time; unilateral and retroactive interest rate hikes that deepen and prolong credit card debt; unreasonable fees; and payment allocation practices that prevent consumers from paying off the credit card debts bearing the highest interest rates first.

Congress needs to enact proconsumer legislation that puts an end to unfair credit card practices. I am afraid that these practices are too entrenched, too profitable to the credit card companies, and too immune to consumer pressure for the companies to change them on their own. Our bill offers measures that would combat a host of unfair practices that plague consumers and unfairly deepen and prolong their debt. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these problems.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1395

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 ''Stop Unfair Practices in Credit Cards Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. STOP UNFAIR INTEREST RATES AND FEES.

Section 163 of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1666b) is amended—

(1) by striking the section title and all that follows through ''If an open'' and inserting the following:

''§ 163. Billing period and finance charges

''(a) BILLING PERIOD.—

''(1) FOURTEEN-DAY MINIMUM.—If an open'';

(2) by striking ''(B) Subsection (a)'' and inserting the following:

''(2) EXCUSABLE CAUSE.—Subsection (a)''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) NO INTEREST CHARGE ON DEBT THAT IS PAID ON TIME.—If an open end consumer credit plan provides a time period within which an obligor may repay any portion of the credit extended without incurring an interest charge, and the obligor repays all or a portion of such credit within the specified time period, the creditor may not impose or collect an interest charge on the portion of the credit that was repaid within the specified time period.

''(c) NO INTEREST ON DEBT THAT IS PAID ON TIME AND IN FULL.—In an open end consumer credit plan, if a billing statement requests an obligor to repay within a specified time period all of the credit extended under the plan and related finance charges, and the obligor pays all of the specified amount within the specified time period, the creditor may not impose or collect an additional interest charge on the amount that was paid in full and within the specified time period.

''(d) LIMITS ON INTEREST RATE INCREASES.——

''(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, the creditor shall not increase the periodic rate of interest applicable to extensions of credit while such account remains open, unless—

''(A) such increase is pursuant to the expiration of an introductory rate which was disclosed under section 127(c)(6);

''(B) such increase is pursuant to the application of a variable rate which was disclosed under section 127(c)(1)(A)(i)(II);

''(C) such increase is pursuant to the application of a penalty rate which was disclosed under subsections (a)(4) and (c)(1)(A)(i) of section 127; or

''(D) the obligor has provided specific written consent to such increase at the time such increase was proposed.

''(2) LIMIT ON PENALTY INTEREST RATE.—If an obligor fails to repay an extension of credit in accordance with the terms of a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, and the creditor determines to apply a penalty rate, as described in paragraph (1)(C), notwithstanding paragraph (1)(D), such penalty rate may not, while such account is open, exceed 7 percentage points above the interest rate that was in effect with respect to such account on the date immediately preceding the first such penalty increase for such account.

''(e) INTEREST RATE INCREASES LIMITED TO FUTURE CREDIT EXTENSIONS.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, if the creditor increases the periodic interest rate applicable to an extension of credit under the account, such increased rate shall apply only to extensions of credit made on and after the date of such increase under the account, and any extension of credit under such account made before the date of such increase shall continue to incur interest at the rate that was in effect on the date prior to the date of the increase.

''(f) NO INTEREST CHARGES ON FEES.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, if the creditor imposes a transaction fee on the obligor, including a cash advance fee, late fee, over-the-limit fee, or balance transfer fee, the creditor may not impose or collect interest with respect to such fee amount.

''(g) FIXED CREDIT LIMIT.—With respect to each credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, the creditor shall offer to the obligor the option of obtaining a fixed credit limit that cannot be exceeded, and with respect to which any request for credit in excess of such fixed limit must be refused, without exception and without imposing an over-the-limit fee or other penalty on such obligor.

''(h) OVER-THE-LIMIT FEE RESTRICTIONS.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, an over-the-limit fee, as described in section 127(c)(1)(B)(iii)—

''(1) may be imposed on the account only when an extension of credit obtained by the obligor causes the credit limit on such account to be exceeded, and may not be imposed when such credit limit is exceeded due to a penalty fee, such as a late fee or over-the-limit fee, that was added to the account balance by the creditor; and

''(2) may be imposed only once during a billing cycle if, on the last day of such billing cycle, the credit limit on the account is exceeded, and no additional over-the-limit fee shall be imposed in a subsequent billing cycle with respect to such excess credit, unless the obligor has obtained an additional extension of credit in excess of such credit limit during such subsequent cycle.

''(i) OTHER FEES.—

''(1) NO FEE TO PAY A BILLING STATEMENT.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, the creditor may not impose a separate fee to allow the obligor to repay an extension of credit or finance charge, whether such repayment is made by mail, electronic transfer, telephone authorization, or other means.

''(2) REASONABLE CURRENCY EXCHANGE FEE.—With respect to a credit card account under an open end consumer credit plan, the creditor may impose a fee for exchanging United States currency with foreign currency in an account transaction, only if—

''(A) such fee reasonably reflects the actual costs incurred by the creditor to perform such currency exchange;

''(B) the creditor discloses publicly its method for calculating such fee; and

''(C) the primary Federal regulator of such creditor determines that the method for calculating such fee complies with this paragraph.

''(j) ANNUAL AUDIT.—The primary Federal regulator of a card issuer shall audit, on at least an annual basis, the credit card operations and procedures used by such issuer to ensure compliance with this section and section 164, including by reviewing a sample of billing statements to determine when they were mailed and received, and by reviewing a sample of credit card accounts to determine when and how payments and finance charges were applied. Such regulator shall promptly require the card issuer to take any corrective action needed to comply with this section.''.

SEC. 3. STOP UNFAIR APPLICATION OF CARD PAYMENTS.

Section 164 of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1666c) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and all that follows through ''Payments'' and inserting the following:

''§ 164. Prompt and fair crediting of payments

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Payments''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) APPLICATION OF PAYMENT.—Upon receipt of a payment from a cardholder, the card issuer shall—

''(1) apply the payment first to the card balance bearing the highest rate of interest, and then to each successive balance bearing the next highest rate of interest, until the payment is exhausted; and

''(2) after complying with paragraph (1), apply the payment in the most effective way to minimize the imposition of any finance charge to the account.

''(c) CHANGES BY CARD ISSUER.—If a card issuer makes a material change in the mailing address, office, or procedures for handling cardholder payments, and such change causes a material delay in the crediting of a cardholder payment made during the 60-day period following the date on which such change took effect, the card issuer may not impose any late fee or finance charge for a late payment on the credit card account to which such payment was credited.''.

SEC. 4. STOP DECEPTIVE DISCLOSURE.

Section 127(e) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1637(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) INTEREST RATE LINKED TO PRIME RATE.—If a credit card solicitation, application, agreement, or plan specifies use of a variable interest rate established by reference to a 'prime rate', 'prime interest rate', or similar rate or index, the referenced rate shall be disclosed and defined as the bank prime loan rate posted by a majority of the top 25 (by assets in domestic offices) United States chartered commercial banks, as published by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. To avoid an unfair or deceptive act or practice, a card issuer may not use the term 'prime rate' to refer to any other type of interest rate.''.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

Section 103 of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1602) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(cc) PRIMARY FEDERAL REGULATOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'primary Federal regulator', when used with respect to a card issuer that is a depository institution, has the same meaning as the term 'appropriate Federal banking agency', under section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act.

''(2) AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY.—For each card issuer within its regulatory jurisdiction, the primary Federal regulator shall be responsible for overseeing the credit card operations of the card issuer, ensuring compliance with the requirements of this title, and enforcing the prohibition against unfair or deceptive acts or practices.''.

SEC. 6. STRENGTHEN CREDIT CARD INFORMATION COLLECTION.

Section 136(b) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1646(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''The Board shall'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED.—The information under subparagraph (A) shall include, as of a date designated by the Board—

''(i) a list of each type of transaction or event for which one or more of the card issuers has imposed a separate interest rate upon a cardholder, including purchases, cash advances, and balance transfers;

''(ii) for each type of transaction or event identified under clause (i)—

''(I) each distinct interest rate charged by the card issuer to a cardholder, as of the designated date; and

''(II) the number of cardholders to whom each such interest rate was applied during the calendar month immediately preceding the designated date, and the total amount of interest charged to such cardholders at each such rate during such month;

''(iii) a list of each type of fee that one or more of the card issuers has imposed upon a cardholder as of the designated date, including any fee imposed for obtaining a cash advance, making a late payment, exceeding the credit limit on an account, making a balance transfer, or exchanging United States dollars for foreign currency;

''(iv) for each type of fee identified under clause (iii), the number of cardholders upon whom the fee was imposed during the calendar month immediately preceding the designated date, and the total amount of fees imposed upon cardholders during such month;

''(v) the total number of cardholders that incurred any interest charge or any fee during the calendar month immediately preceding the designated date; and

''(vi) any other information related to interest rates, fees, or other charges that the Board deems of interest.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Board shall, on an annual basis, transmit to Congress and make public a report containing an assessment by the Board of the profitability of credit card operations of depository institutions. Such report shall include estimates by the Board of the approximate, relative percentage of income derived by such operations from—

''(A) the imposition of interest rates on cardholders, including separate estimates for—

''(i) interest with an annual percentage rate of less than 25 percent; and

''(ii) interest with an annual percentage rate equal to or greater than 25 percent;

''(B) the imposition of fees on cardholders;

''(C) the imposition of fees on merchants; and

''(D) any other material source of income, while specifying the nature of that income.''.

SEC. 7. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

Section 8 of the Fair Credit and Charge Card Disclosure Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 1637 note) is repealed.

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall become effective 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1398. A bill to expand the research and prevention activities of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with respect to inflammatory bowel disease; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation focused on a devastating condition known as inflammatory bowel disease, IBD.

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease, IBD, are chronic disorders of the gastrointestinal tract which afflict approximately 1.4 million Americans, 30 percent of whom are diagnosed in their childhood years. IBD can cause severe abdominal pain, fever, and intestinal bleeding. Complications related to the disease include; arthritis, osteoporosis, anemia, liver disease, growth and developmental challenges, and colorectal cancer. Inflammatory bowel disease represents a major cause of morbidity from digestive illness and has a devastating impact on patients and families.

In the 108th Congress, I sponsored bipartisan legislation focused on IBD. Several important provisions of that bill were incorporated into legislation known as the Research Review Act which was enacted in 2005.

The legislation I am introducing today builds on the progress made in 2005 by calling for an increased Federal investment in biomedical research on IBD. The hope for a better quality of life for patients and families depends on basic and clinical research sponsored by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, NIDDK, at the National Institutes of Health. The Inflammatory Bowel Disease Research Act calls for an expansion of NIDDK's research portfolio on Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis in order to capitalize on several exciting discoveries that have broadened our understanding of IBD in recent years. By increasing our investment in this area, we will maximize the possibility that we will be able to offer hope to millions of Americans who suffer from this debilitating disease. At the same time, progress in this area could also mean we would save millions of dollars in net health care expenditures through reduced hospitalizations and surgeries.

In addition to biomedical research, this legislation also calls on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to expand its IBD epidemiology program to include additional studies focused on pediatric IBD. As I mentioned earlier, 30 percent of individuals with IBD are diagnosed in their childhood years. Children with IBD often miss school activities for reasons related to IBD and run the risk of having delayed puberty and impaired growth as a result of this illness. It is therefore appropriate that we also dedicate resources to efforts that will allow us to better understand pediatric IBD.

Mr. President, I urge all Senators to join me in this important cause by cosponsoring the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Research Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1398

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 ''Inflammatory Bowel Disease Research Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are serious inflammatory diseases of the gastrointestinal tract.

(2) Crohn's disease may occur in any section of the gastrointestinal tract but is predominately found in the lower part of the small intestine and the large intestine. Ulcerative colitis is characterized by inflammation and ulceration of the innermost lining of the colon. Complete removal of the colon in patients with ulcerative colitis can potentially alleviate and cure symptoms.

(3) Because Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis behave similarly, they are collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease. Both diseases present a variety of symptoms, including severe diarrhea, abdominal pain with cramps, fever, and rectal bleeding. There is no known cause of inflammatory bowel disease, or medical cure.

(4) It is estimated that up to 1,400,000 people in the United States suffer from inflammatory bowel disease, 30 percent of whom are diagnosed during their childhood years.

(5) Children with inflammatory bowel disease miss school activities because of bloody diarrhea and abdominal pain, and many adults who had onset of inflammatory bowel disease as children had delayed puberty and impaired growth and have never reached their full genetic growth potential.

(6) Inflammatory bowel disease patients are at high risk for developing colorectal cancer.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES; INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE RESEARCH EXPANSION.

Subpart 3 of part C of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 285c et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 434B. INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Institute shall expand, intensify, and coordinate the activities of the Institute with respect to research on inflammatory bowel disease. Such research may be focused on, but not limited to, the following areas:

''(1) Genetic research on susceptibility for inflammatory bowel disease, including the interaction of genetic and environmental factors in the development of the disease.

''(2) Research targeted to increase knowledge about the causes and complications of inflammatory bowel disease in children.

''(3) Animal model research on inflammatory bowel disease, including genetics in animals.

''(4) Clinical inflammatory bowel disease research, including clinical studies and treatment trials.

''(5) Expansion of the Institute's Inflammatory Bowel Disease Centers program with a focus on pediatric research.

''(6) The training of qualified health professionals in biomedical research focused on inflammatory bowel disease, including pediatric investigators.

''(7) Other research priorities identified by the scientific agendas 'Challenges in Inflammatory Bowel Disease Research' (Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America) and 'Chronic Inflammatory Bowel Disease' (North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition).

''(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out subsection (a), there are authorized to be appropriated $80,000,000 for fiscal year 2008, $90,000,000 for fiscal year 2009, and $100,000,000 for fiscal year 2010.''.

SEC. 4. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION; EXPANSION OF INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAM.

Part A of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 310A. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION; EXPANSION OF INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAM.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall expand the Inflammatory Bowel Disease Epidemiology Program within the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion to include additional studies focused on—

''(1) the incidence and prevalence of pediatric inflammatory bowel disease in the United States;

''(2) genetic and environmental factors associated with pediatric inflammatory bowel disease;

''(3) age, race or ethnicity, gender, and family history of individuals diagnosed with pediatric inflammatory bowel disease; and

''(4) treatment approaches and outcomes in pediatric inflammatory bowel disease.

''(b) CONSULTATION.—The Director shall carry out subsection (a) in consultation with a national voluntary patient organization with experience serving the population of individuals with pediatric inflammatory bowel

disease and organizations representing physicians and other health professionals specializing in the treatment of such populations.

''(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2008, and such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2009 and 2010.''.

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 1399. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to combine the Hope Scholarship Credit and the deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses into a refundable college affordability and creating chances for educational success for students (ACCESS) credit, to establish an Early Federal Pell Grant Commitment Demonstration Program, and to increase the maximum Federal Pell Grant Award; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the College Affordability and Creating Chances for Educational Success for Students Act of 2007, or College ACCESS Act. It will make a 2-year or 4-year college degree affordable for every student.

The United States is the largest economy in the world, and our skills, our brains, are the foundation of our economic strength. However, if we do not substantially expand access to higher education, we will not be able to count on continued dominance. Consider the facts: China and India both produce twice as many engineers a year as we produce. One out of five U.S. scientists and engineers are foreign-born. An Indian engineer costs only 20 percent of an American engineer. By 2010, the U.S. will produce about 15 percent of the world's science and engineering doctorate degrees. This is down from 50 percent, half the world total, in 1970. High-speed access to information has leveled the playing field, radiologists in India are reading x-rays from American hospitals.

This is a global economy. In a world where America's competitive advantage gap is closing fast, we should be ensuring guaranteeing that every student can pursue higher education. The importance of a college degree has never been greater, but over the next decade 2 million students will forgo college because of cost. The price tag of a degree at a four year public college has risen 35 percent in the last 5 years, the largest increase in tuition and fees in any 5-year period in the last 30 years. We can not approach college as if it is a luxury, rather than a necessity. And we should be worried about the rising costs that are putting college out of reach for more and more Americans. We aren't giving students and their families enough financial support to obtain their educational goals, it is that simple.

We need to act, and we need to act now, and that is why I am introducing the College ACCESS Act. This legislation addresses some of the disparities in our current system with innovative new ways to help Americans pay for college.

First, my College ACCESS Plan fully covers the average cost of tuition and fees at a 2-year public college and covers more than half of the average cost of tuition and fees at a public 4-year college.

Right now, students and their families can take advantage of either the Hope Credit or the tuition and fees deduction, obtaining a maximum benefit of $1,120 or $1,650, respectively. Although these incentives help to make college more affordable, they fall far short of providing the level of relief needed to ensure that all students can afford college.

By replacing the Hope Credit and the tuition and fees deduction with a single $3,000 credit, the equivalent of a $12,000 deduction, and making it refundable, middle class and low income families will get real help with college costs. My College ACCESS tax credit simplifies this process and is indexed annually for inflation. So, when the cost of college goes up, the amount of assistance goes up as well.

Second, my College ACCESS proposal increases Pell Grants. When this program was established, it covered most of the cost of tuition at a 4-year public college. This is no longer the case. Currently, the maximum annual Pell Grant award is $4,310, and the average annual cost of tuition and fees at a 4-year public college is $5,800. Students are seeing their tuition costs rise every year while the levels of Federal funding fail to keep up. This reality is one that more and more students are facing every day, a reality that says, you can go to college, but only if you can afford it, and you won't get much help from us.

My College ACCESS Act seeks to remedy this by raising the maximum Pell Grant award to $5,100 for 2007–2008, followed by increases of $300 per year for the next 5 years, for a maximum Pell Grant in 2011–2012 of $6,300.

Finally, the College ACCESS Plan would provide funding for a demonstration program in four states that would commit a maximum Federal Pell Grant award to eligible 8 grade students so they know they're going to get this assistance when they graduate. By using the same eligibility criteria as the National School Lunch Program, students would be identified based on need, and then provided with information on the Pell Grant program, the costs of college, and what Federal and State financial assistance is available to them.

Right now, students don't find out if they are eligible for Federal aid until their senior year, much less how much they will receive. If you've ever put kids through college, like I have, you know that this time frame doesn't allow much leeway for planning ahead. An earlier promise of Federal aid will begin the conversation about college early and continue it through high school. That way, students and their families can visualize college in their future, and this goal can sustain them through the moment they open that acceptance letter.

My mother has an expression that I think rings true in the larger scope of America: ''Children tend to become that which you expect of them.'' I want a country where we expect much from America's children. Our future, and our economic security, depend on it.

I ask unanimous consent that a summary of this bill be included in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE COLLEGE ACCESS ACT OF 2007

TITLE I—COLLEGE ACCESS TAX CREDIT

Consolidate two existing tax incentives—the Hope Scholarship Credit and the tuition and fees deduction—and replaces them with a single $3,000 refundable tax credit that is the equivalent of a $12,000 deduction. The College ACCESS Tax Credit would fully cover the average cost of tuition and fees at a public two-year college, $2,300, and would cover more than half of the average cost of tuition and fees at a public four-year college, $5,800. Currently, the tuition and fees deduction has a maximum value of $1,120, about 20 percent of the average cost of tuition and fees at a public four-year college. The Hope Scholarship Credit is more valuable, with a maximum value of $1,650, about 28 percent of the average cost of tuition and fees at a public four-year college.

Expand eligibility for the tax credit to ease the burden of paying for college for more families. Currently, the Hope Scholarship Credit is phased out for married couples earning $90,000 to $110,000, $45,000 to $55,000 for individuals. Married couples earning $130,000 to $160,000, $65,000–$80,000 for individuals, are eligible only for a reduced tuition and fees deduction. The College ACCESS Tax Credit expands eligibility, providing the full credit to married couples whose adjusted gross income is less than $130,000, $65,000 for individuals and phasing out the credit for married couples with incomes between $130,000 and $166,000, $65,000 and $83,000 for individuals. Broadening the income limits for this credit would result in approximately 4 million more hard working American families being eligible for this assistance than under the current tax incentives and limits. Recognizing that the cost of college rises each year, both the income limits and phase-out range for the credit would be adjusted annually for inflation. Furthermore, families could claim a credit for more than one eligible dependent in a school year. In pursuing their education, individuals will be eligible for credits totaling up to $12,000 toward an undergraduate degree, associate's degree, certificate, or continuing education as well as credits totaling up to $6,000 toward a graduate degree; as long as they are enrolled at least half-time.

Make the tuition tax credit refundable. Making the College ACCESS Tax Credit refundable would expand this incentive to the very students and families that need it the most, low income families. This credit would allow low income families to qualify for up to $3,000 to cover tuition payments that aren't covered by Pell Grants. Low income students who do attend college often face prohibitive costs even after receiving aid from the government and their institution.

TITLE II—EARLY FEDERAL PELL GRANT COMMITMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Fund a demonstration program that would commit Pell Grants to students in 8 grade. Currently, most students find out whether or not they will receive a Pell Grant during their senior year of high school. Starting the financial aid process earlier would allow

families and students to plan ahead for college and develop an expectation that the future includes higher education. The proposal provides funding for an Early Pell Grant Commitment Demonstration Program in four States, each of which would commit Pell Grants to two cohorts of up to 10,000 8 grade students, one in school year 2007–2008, and one in school year 2008–2009. Participation would be contingent on students' 8 grade eligibility for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program. Participants would qualify for the Automatic Zero Expected Family Contribution on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA, guaranteeing them a maximum Pell Grant, $4,310 for 2007–08. Additionally, the act requires an independent evaluation to be conducted to determine the impact and effectiveness of the program.

Provide students with essential information regarding the costs of college as well as available State and Federal assistance. The Early Pell Grant Demonstration Project would provide funding for States, in conjunction with the participating local education agencies, to conduct targeted information campaigns beginning in the 8 grade and continuing through students' senior year. These campaigns would inform students and their families of the program and provide information about the cost of a college education, State and Federal financial assistance, and the average amount of aid awards. A targeted information campaign, along with a guarantee of a maximum Pell Grant, would provide information essential to the college-planning process and would help break down the barriers that cost and information often form.

TITLE III—INCREASE FEDERAL PELL GRANT MAXIMUM AWARD

Expand the maximum Pell Grant from $4,310 to $5,100. In 1975, the maximum Pell Grant covered 84 percent of the cost of tuition, fees, room, and board at a four-year public college (Pell Grants, unlike tax incentives, can be used to pay for the cost of room and board). The maximum Pell Grant this year covered 33 percent of the average cost of tuition, fees, room, and board at a public four-year college, $12,115. While Congress increased the maximum Pell Grant for 2007–2008 to $4,310, a more substantial increase is long overdue, as the cost of tuition has outpaced the growth in family income for the last two decades. The College ACCESS Act would increase the maximum Pell Grant to $5,100 for 2007–2008, followed by increases of $300 per year for the next five years, for a maximum Pell Grant in 2011–12 of $6,300.

ESTIMATED FIVE-YEAR COSTS

Title I—$24.1 Billion
Title II—$35 billion
Title III—$36.5 million

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1400. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the information and repayment options to student borrowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Student Information Means a Positive Loan Experience Act, the SIMPLE Act, which I, along with Senators ALEXANDER, ALLARD, BURR and ISAKSON, am introducing today. With the increasing debt level of many students, it is important to make sure borrowers have good options for managing their debt and good information on the available options so they make wise, informed decisions.

We are calling this the SIMPLE Act for a reason. We have heard testimony from experts and comments from borrowers and other stakeholders about the information borrowers receive currently. On the one hand, borrowers receive so much information that they have ''information overload,'' which leads to confusion. On the other hand, many borrowers do not receive good information about the full range of tools available to help them repay their loans. What has come through loud and clear is that we need to simplify the information and spell out the impact of selecting various options. Borrowers need better, clearer information to help them make better decisions, not more repayment plans and confusing choices.

There are already four repayment plans in the Federal Family Education Loan program and four in Direct Loans. From the data we have obtained, it is clear that the vast majority of borrowers with Stafford loans have a standard repayment plan. Many borrowers are not taking advantage of the graduated, extended or income sensitive/income contingent repayment plans currently available.

Rather than adding another repayment plan, this bill makes the existing repayment plans more flexible, by providing borrowers with the option to pay only the interest on their loans for the first 2 years they are in repayment, regardless of their repayment plan. The bill also expands access to the extended repayment plan to borrowers with $20,000 of student loan debt, instead of the $30,000 currently needed to qualify for extended repayment plans.

The bill also revises the definition of economic hardship, raising the eligibility cut-off point to 150 percent of the poverty line and taking family size into account when making the determination of eligibility.

To make sure borrowers understand the availability of the various options, and the impact different repayment plans would have on their payments, the bill expands and clarifies the information to be provided to borrowers during their exit interview. Information on repayment plans available will include a discussion of the different features of each plan, average anticipated monthly payment amounts, and the ability of the borrower to prepay their loans or to change repayment plans.

The bill requires borrowers to be provided with clear information on the availability of deferment and forbearance. These are two excellent debt management tools, but borrowers must understand the potential impact on their loan principal and total interest paid on their loans when they choose these options.

During exit counseling, borrowers must also be provided with information on the effect of consolidating student loans on the borrower's underlying loan benefits, including grace periods, loan forgiveness and cancellation. Borrowers must be informed that different lenders offering consolidation loans may offer different borrower benefits.

Last, but not least, borrowers must be given notice that information on their student loans is housed in the National Student Loan Database and they must be told how to access their information. It will help them keep track of the status of their loans and the outstanding principal.

All of this is designed to help borrowers ask questions first, then make decisions that are right for them. The concept is simple, and requires a few, but essential changes to the Higher Education Act to put them into effect.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1400

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 ''Student Information Means a Positive Loan Experience Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to improve—

(1) the repayment plans available to borrowers of loans under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.); and

(2) borrowers' understanding of—

(A) the repayment plans available for such loans;

(B) the conditions under which such loans may be cancelled or forgiven; and

(C) the availability of deferments, forbearance, and consolidation for such loans, and the impact on the balance of such loans and total interest paid of using those options.

SEC. 3. FLEXIBLE REPAYMENT PLANS.

(a) STUDENT LOAN REQUIREMENTS.—Section 427(a)(2)(H) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1077(a)(2)(H)) is amended by inserting '', and, if applicable, the option of electing to delay repayment or principal for the first 2 years of the repayment period'' before the semicolon at the end.

(b) FFEL REPAYMENT PLANS.—Section 428(b)(9) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(b)(9)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in the first sentence of the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting '', and the election described in subparagraph (C)'' after ''thereon'';

(B) in clause (ii), by inserting '', which plan shall be established by the lender with the informed agreement of the borrower'' before the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by striking clause (iv) and inserting the following:

''(iv) for new borrowers on or after October 7, 1998, who accumulate outstanding loans under this part totaling more than $20,000, an extended repayment plan, with a fixed annual or graduated repayment amount paid over an extended period, not to exceed 25 years, except that the borrower shall repay annually a minimum amount determined in accordance with paragraph (1)(L)(i).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) OPTION FOR FIRST 2 YEARS.—A lender shall offer each new borrower of loans on or

after October 7, 1998, the opportunity to elect, for the first 2 years of repayment of such loans, to delay the repayment of principal, regardless of the repayment plan selected under this paragraph.''.

(c) DIRECT LOAN REPAYMENT PLANS.—Section 455(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the first sentence, by inserting '', and the election described in paragraph (6)'' after ''the loan''; and

(ii) in the third sentence, by striking ''may choose'' and inserting ''shall choose from''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''428(b)(9)(A)(v)'' and inserting ''428(b)(9)(A)(iv)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) OPTION FOR FIRST 2 YEARS.—The Secretary shall offer each new borrower of loans on or after October 7, 1998, the opportunity to elect, for the first 2 years of repayment of such loans, to delay the repayment of principal, consistent with section 428(b)(9)(C).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to loans for which the first disbursement is made on or after October 7, 1998.

SEC. 4. REVISED DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP.

Section 435(o)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1085(o)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking ''100 percent of the poverty line for a family of 2'' and inserting ''150 percent of the poverty line applicable to the borrower's family size''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''to a family of 2'' and inserting ''to the borrower's family size''.

SEC. 5. USEFUL AND COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT LOAN INFORMATION FOR BORROWERS.

(a) INSURANCE PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.—Section 428(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (X), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (Y)(ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(Z) provides that the lender shall, at the time the lender grants a deferment to a borrower who received a loan under section 428H and is eligible for a deferment under section 427(a)(2)(C), provide information to the borrower to enable the borrower to understand the impact of capitalization of interest on the borrower's loan principal and total amount of interest to be paid during the life of the loan.''.

(b) GUARANTY AGREEMENTS.—Section 428(c)(3)(C) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(c)(3)(C)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

''(iii) the lender shall, at the time of granting a borrower forbearance, provide information to the borrower to enable the borrower to understand the impact of capitalization of interest on the borrower's loan principal and total amount of interest to be paid during the life of the loan; and

''(iv) the lender shall contact the borrower not less often than once every 180 days during the period of forbearance to inform the borrower of—

''(I) the amount of unpaid principal and the amount of interest that has accrued since the last statement of such amounts provided to the borrower by the lender;

''(II) the fact that interest will accrue on the loan for the period of forbearance;

''(III) the amount of interest that will be capitalized, and the date on which capitalization will occur;

''(IV) the ability of the borrower to pay the interest that has accrued before the interest is capitalized; and

''(V) the borrower's option to discontinue the forbearance at any time; and''.

(c) LENDER AGREEMENTS.—Section 428C(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078–3(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (G); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following:

''(F) that the lender shall, upon application for a consolidation loan, provide the borrower with information about the possible impact of loan consolidation, including—

''(i) the total interest to be paid and fees to be paid on the consolidation loan, and the length of repayment for the loan;

''(ii) whether consolidation would result in a loss of loan benefits under this part or part D, including loan forgiveness, cancellation, and deferment;

''(iii) in the case of a borrower that plans to include a Federal Perkins Loan under part E in the consolidation loan, that once the borrower adds the borrower's Federal Perkins Loan to a consolidation loan—

''(I) the borrower will lose all interest–free periods that would have been available for such loan under part E, such as the periods during which no interest accrues on the Federal Perkins Loan while the borrower is enrolled in school at least half-time, the grace period, and the periods during which the borrower's student loan repayments are deferred under section 464(c)(2); and

''(II) the borrower will no longer be eligible for cancellation of part or all of a Federal Perkins loan under section 465(a);

''(iv) the ability of the borrower to prepay the consolidation loan, pay such loan on a shorter schedule, and to change repayment plans;

''(v) that borrower benefit programs for a consolidation loan may vary among different lenders;

''(vi) the consequences of default on the consolidation loan; and

''(vii) that by applying for a consolidation loan, the borrower is not obligated to agree to take the consolidation loan; and''.

(d) INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.—Subparagraph (M) of section 485(a)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092(a)(1)(M)) is amended to read as follows:

''(M) the terms and conditions of the loans that students receive under parts B, D, and E;''.

(e) EXIT COUNSELING.—Subparagraph (A) of section 485(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092(b)(1)(A)) is amended by striking the subparagraph designation and all that follows through ''465.'' and inserting the following: ''(A) Each eligible institution shall, through financial aid offices or otherwise, provide counseling to borrowers of loans that are made, insured, or guaranteed under part B (other than loans made pursuant to section 428C or loans made to parents pursuant to section 428B), or made under part D (other than Federal Direct Consolidation Loans or Federal Direct PLUS Loans made to parents) or E, prior to the completion of the course of study for which the borrower enrolled at the institution or at the time of departure from such institution. The counseling required by this subsection shall include—

''(i) information on the repayment plans available, including a discussion of the different features of each plan and sample information showing the difference in interest paid and total payments under each plan;

''(ii) the average anticipated monthly repayments under the standard repayment plan and, at the borrower's request, the other repayment plans for which the borrower is eligible;

''(iii) such debt and management strategies as the institution determines are designed to facilitate the repayment of such indebtedness;

''(iv) an explanation that the borrower has the ability to prepay each such loan, pay the loan on a shorter schedule, and change repayment plans;

''(v) the terms and conditions under which the student may obtain full or partial forgiveness or cancellation of principal or interest under sections 428J, 460, and 465 (to the extent that such sections are applicable to the student's loans);

''(vi) the terms and conditions under which the student may defer repayment of principal or interest or be granted forbearance under subsections (b)(1)(M) and (o) of section 428, 428H(e)(7), subsections (f) and (l) of section 455, and section 464(c)(2), and the potential impact of such deferment or forbearance;

''(vii) the consequences of default on such loans;

''(viii) information on the effects of using a consolidation loan to discharge the borrower's loans under parts B, D, and E, including, at a minimum—

''(I) the effects of consolidation on total interest to be paid, fees to be paid, and length of repayment;

''(II) the effects of consolidation on a borrower's underlying loan benefits, including all grace periods, loan forgiveness, cancellation, and deferment opportunities;

''(III) the ability of the borrower to prepay the loan or change repayment plans; and

''(IV) that borrower benefit programs may vary among different loan holders; and

''(ix) a notice to borrowers about the availability of the National Student Loan Data System and how the system can be used by a borrower to obtain information on the status of the borrower's loans.''.

(f) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 455(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(g)) is amended by striking ''428C(b)(1)(F)'' and inserting ''428C(b)(1)(G)''.

SEC. 6. REPORT REQUIRED.

Section 141(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1018(c)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking ''PLAN AND REPORT'' and inserting ''PLAN, REPORT, AND BRIEFING''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) BRIEFING ON ENFORCEMENT OF STUDENT LOAN PROVISIONS.—The Chief Operating Officer shall provide an annual briefing to the members of the authorizing committees on the steps the PBO has taken and is taking to ensure that lenders are providing the information required under clauses (iii) and (iv) of section 428(c)(3)(C) and sections 428(b)(1)(Z) and 428C(b)(1)(F).''.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. BURR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. ROBERTS, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 1401. A bill to improve the National Student Loan Data System; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Student Financial Aid Data Privacy Protection Act, which I, along with Senators ALEXANDER, ALLARD, BURR, ISAKSON and ROBERTS, am

introducing today. In a climate where our personal financial information is at risk, it is now more important than ever to ensure that the Department of Education is providing appropriate safeguards around one of the world's largest databases, National Student Loan Data System.

The Department of Education has not inspired confidence in its ability to protect its data systems from those bad actors who would misuse the financial information of students and parents. Indeed in 2006 the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform gave the Department of Education a failing grade for its efforts to improve the security of its data systems in compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act.

More recently, on April 17 of this year the Department of Education suspended the access of lenders, services and guaranty agencies to the National Student Loan Data System. While I am pleased to see that the Department of Education is monitoring this database, it is clear from the information provided by the Department of Education that this unprecedented restriction of access was done without having in place clear standard operating procedures for limiting and restoring access to the database.

The National Student Loan Data System is a vital tool for lenders, universities and students. It is a system that is absolutely essential to the efficient functioning of our country's higher education loan and grant programs. When the operation of this system suffers, students suffer.

Students and parents depend on this system to consolidate their loans. Lenders and guaranty agencies depend on this system to verify whether students should be entering their repayment period. And our institutions of higher education depend on this system to determine whether students are exceeding caps on how much they should be borrowing to attend college.

This bill sets out operating principles for the National Student Loan Data System, to ensure that the Department of Education continues to manage this database in manner that advances the best interests of students. The bill requires the Department of Education establish protocols for limiting access to the database when there are suspicions that the system is being used inappropriately, and the steps to be taken in order to restore access.

This bill also requires the Department of Education, lenders and guaranty agencies to assist students and parents in better understanding how their sensitive, financial information is entered into the National Student Loan Data System and then accessed by thousands of lenders, consolidators and guaranty agencies across the country.

Finally, the bill prohibits nongovernmental researchers and policy analysts from accessing sensitive borrower-specific information, and directs the Secretary of Education to explore ways to empower students and parents to control which lenders are accessing their sensitive, financial information.

We must help the 14.3 million students and their families who trust the Department of Education to protect their personal financial information. Action is needed to restore confidence in the ability of the Department of Education to manage the National Student Loan Data System. I want to thank Senators ALEXANDER, ALLARD, BURR, ISAKSON and ROBERTS for joining me in this effort, and look forward to this bill being included in our efforts to reauthorize the Higher Education Act.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1401

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 ''Student Financial Aid Data Privacy Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL STUDENT LOAN DATA SYSTEM.

Section 485B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092b) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) through (g) as subsections (e) through (h), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

''(d) PRINCIPLES FOR ADMINISTERING THE DATA SYSTEM.—In managing the National Student Loan Data System, the Secretary shall take actions necessary to maintain confidence in the data system, including, at a minimum—

''(1) ensuring that the primary purpose of access to the data system by guaranty agencies, eligible lenders, and eligible institutions of higher education is for legitimate program operations, such as the need to verify the eligibility of a student, potential student, or parent for loans under part B, D, or E;

''(2) prohibiting nongovernmental researchers and policy analysts from accessing personally identifiable information;

''(3) creating a disclosure form for students and potential students that is distributed when such students complete the common financial reporting form under section 483, and as a part of the exit counseling process under section 485(b), that—

''(A) informs the students that any title IV grant or loan the students receive will be included in the National Student Loan Data System, and instructs the students on how to access that information;

''(B) describes the categories of individuals or entities that may access the data relating to such grant or loan through the data system, and for what purposes access is allowed;

''(C) defines and explains the categories of information included in the data system;

''(D) provides a summary of the provisions of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and other applicable Federal privacy statutes, and a statement of the students' rights and responsibilities with respect to such statutes;

''(E) explains the measures taken by the Department to safeguard the students' data; and

''(F) includes other information as determined appropriate by the Secretary;

''(4) requiring guaranty agencies, eligible lenders, and eligible institutions of higher education that enter into an agreement with a potential student, student, or parent of such student regarding a loan under part B, D, or E, to inform the student or parent that such loan shall be—

''(A) submitted to the data system; and

''(B) accessible to guaranty agencies, eligible lenders, and eligible institutions of higher education determined by the Secretary to be authorized users of the data system;

''(5) regularly reviewing the data system to—

''(A) delete inactive users from the data system;

''(B) ensure that the data in the data system are not being used for marketing purposes; and

''(C) monitor the use of the data system by guaranty agencies and eligible lenders to determine whether an agency or lender is accessing the records of students in which the agency or lender has no existing financial interest; and

''(6) developing standardized protocols for limiting access to the data system that include—

''(A) collecting data on the usage of the data system to monitor whether access has been or is being used contrary to the purposes of the data system;

''(B) defining the steps necessary for determining whether, and how, to deny or restrict access to the data system; and

''(C) determining the steps necessary to reopen access to the data system following a denial or restriction of access.''; and

(3) by striking subsection (e) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) and inserting the following:

''(e) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

''(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than September 30 of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing—

''(A) the results obtained by the establishment and operation of the National Student Loan Data System authorized by this section;

''(B) the effectiveness of existing privacy safeguards in protecting student and parent information in the data system;

''(C) the success of any new authorization protocols in more effectively preventing abuse of the data system;

''(D) the ability of the Secretary to monitor how the system is being used, relative to the intended purposes of the data system; and

''(E) any protocols developed under subsection (d)(6) during the preceding fiscal year.

''(2) STUDY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a study regarding—

''(i) available mechanisms for providing students and parents with the ability to opt in or opt out of allowing eligible lenders to access their records in the National Student Loan Data System; and

''(ii) appropriate protocols for limiting access to the data system, based on the risk assessment required under subchapter III of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code.

''(B) SUBMISSION OF STUDY.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of the Student Financial Aid Data Privacy Protection Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit a report on the findings of the study to the appropriate committees of Congress.''.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 1402. A bill to amend the Investment Advisors Act of 1940, with respect

to the exemption to registration requirements; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to introduce an important piece of legislation aimed at closing a loophole in our securities laws. This bill, The Hedge Fund Registration Act, is pretty simple. It's only two pages long. All it does is clarify that the Securities and Exchange Commission has the authority to require hedge funds to register, so the government knows who they are and what they're doing.

Technically speaking, this bill would amend section 203(b)(3) of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. It would narrow the current exemption from registration for certain investment advisers. This exemption is used by large, private pooled investment vehicles, commonly referred to as ''hedge funds.'' Hedge funds are operated by advisers who manage billions of dollars for groups of wealthy investors in total secrecy. They should at least have to register with the SEC, like other investment advisors do.

Currently, the exemption applies to any investment adviser who had fewer than 15 clients in the preceding year and who does not hold himself out to the public as an investment adviser. The Hedge Fund Registration Act narrows this exemption and closes a loophole in the securities laws these hedge funds use to avoid registering with the SEC and operate in secret.

Much has been reported during the last few years regarding hedge funds and the market power they yield because of the large amounts of capital they invest. In fact, some estimates are that these pooled investment vehicles account for nearly 30 percent of the daily trades in U.S. financial markets. The power and influence of that amount of volume is not some passing fad. It represents a new element in our financial markets. Congress needs to ensure that the SEC knows who is controlling these massive pools of money to ensure the integrity and security of the markets.

The failure of Amaranth and the increasing interest in hedge funds as investment vehicles for public pension money means that this is not just a high stakes game for the super rich. Hedge funds affect regular investors. They affect the markets as a whole.

My recent oversight of the SEC has convinced me that the Commission and the Self-Regulatory Organizations, SROs, need much more information about the activities of hedge funds in order to protect the markets from institutional insider trading and other potential abuses.

This legislation is one small, simple step toward greater transparency. All it does is require that hedge funds register and tell the regulators who they are. This is not a burden. It is just common sense. Organizations that wield hundreds of billions of dollars in market power every day need to register with the agency that Americans rely on to regulate the financial markets.

The SEC has already attempted to do this by regulation. Congress needs to act because of a decision made last year by a Federal appeals court. In 2006, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals overturned an SEC administrative rule that required registration of hedge funds. That decision effectively ended all registration of hedge funds with the SEC, unless and until Congress takes action.

The Hedge Fund Registration Act would respond to that court decision by narrowing the current registration exemption and bring much needed transparency to hedge funds.

Most people say the devil is in the details. Well here they are. This bill would authorize the SEC to require all investment advisers, including hedge fund managers, to register with the SEC. Only those that meet all four of the following criteria would be exempt: 1. managed less than $50 million, 2. had fewer than 15 clients, 3. did not hold himself out to the public as an investment advisor, and 4. managed the assets for fewer than 15 investors, regardless of whether investment is direct or through a pooled investment vehicle, such as a hedge fund.

The Hedge Fund Registration Act is a first step in ensuring that the SEC simply has clear authority to do what it already tried to do. Congress must act to ensure that our laws are kept up to date as new types of investments appear.

That said, this legislation didn't have many friends the last time I introduced it as an amendment. These funds don't want people to know what they do and have fought hard to keep it that way. Well, I think that is all the more reason to shed some sunlight on them to see what they're up to.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor and support this legislation, as we work to protect all investors, large and small.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1404. A bill to provide for Congressional authority with respect to certain acquisitions, mergers, and takeovers under the Defense Production Act of 1950; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this is an important issue, one I have raised many times over the years. I have testified before the Banking Committee, and introduced numerous bills.

It is not a new issue. There have been at least four high-profile times in the last 12 years where proposed foreign acquisitions in the U.S. have threatened our security.

In 1998, President Clinton tried to turn over management of a 144-acre terminal at the former U.S. Naval Station in Long Beach to the Chinese Ocean Shipping Company, COSCO—a subsidiary of the People's Liberation Army.

I am going to quote from an LA Times article from that time:

> The embattled COSCO deal came to an end Thursday night, when congressional conferees submitted to Congress the 1998–99 Defense Authorization Bill . . . Leading the effort to block COSCO from the facility were Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK) and Rep. Duncan Hunter [of the] San Diego area.

That was one battle that we won.

Since working in 1995 to prevent Los Angeles ports from being controlled by Chinese interests, I have continued my pressure on the issue. For example, I expressed my concern with the CFIUS process over 2 years ago in the spring of 2005 when I delivered four speeches on China. While examining this issue I came across a disturbing example of China buying the U.S. company, Magnequench Inc., and moving it piecemeal back to mainland China.

Let me read from the floor speech I gave on April 4, 2005:

> I believe that CFIUS does not have a broad enough conception of U.S. security. One example of CFIUS falling short is with Magnequench International Incorporated. In 1995 Chinese corporations bought GM's Magnequench, a supplier of rare earth metals used in the guidance systems of smart-bombs. Over twelve years, the company has been moved piecemeal to mainland China, leaving the U.S. with no domestic supplier of a critical component of rare-earth magnets. CFIUS approved this transfer.

The United States now has no domestic supplier of rare earth metals, which are essential for precision-guided munitions.

That was one we lost.

Following this series of four speeches that spring, on July 20, 2005, I introduced Senate amendment No. 1311 as an amendment to the annual National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006. My amendment prompted the very beginning of the legislative pursuit of this issue in recent years. For example, my amendment prompted another, later, second-degree amendment, Senate amendment No. 1335, by Senator SHELBY, then the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee.

I also testified before the U.S.-China Commission on July 21, 2005. The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission is a bipartisan committee created in 2000 to monitor, investigate, and submit to Congress an annual report on the national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

The Commission is composed of 12 members, 3 of whom are selected by each of the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, and the Speaker and the minority leader of the House. The Commissioners serve 2-year terms.

Their recommendations are consistent with the amendment I introduced to the Defense authorization bill that would have made some of the necessary changes to CFIUS.

On September 28, 2005, the Government Accountability Office issued a report on CFIUS that is right in line with the recommendations of the US-China Commission. So this has not just been me saying that CFIUS is in need of

critical change—it's the U.S.-China Commission and the GAO as well.

When my amendment stalled over a committee jurisdictional point, on September 29, 2005, I chose to introduce the changes as a stand-alone bill, the Foreign Investment Security Act of 2005, S. 1797, which was referred to the Banking Committee. That bill was the first bill introduced in recent years on this topic.

Later the Banking Committee held a hearing on the GAO report, and I testified before them on October 20, 2005, at that hearing.

In all of these ways I have just mentioned, the Banking Committee was prompted by me to pursue this topic.

In the past couple of years, several high profile business deals have been approved by CFIUS that would allow foreign-owned companies, in particular companies that are owned or controlled by foreign governments, to acquire other companies doing business in the United States.

More recently I was concerned with China's state-owned CNOOC attempted to buyout Unocal, a US oil company. We won this one because of Congressional pressure, and CNOOC withdrew its bid. Over the past 2 years, I have been pointing out that the CFIUS process has ignored some major issues which threaten our national security.

The most publicized deal was the state owned Dubai Ports World, DPW, purchase of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation, P&O, that would have allowed DPW to take over the operations at various east coast ports in the United States. The public outcry against this deal lead DPW to abandon its plans to operate the U.S. ports and that portion of the takeover was sold to U.S. based companies. However since the DPW-P&O deal was canceled, other transactions have been approved by CFIUS that are just as questionable.

CFIUS has received over 1,600 notifications and investigated under 40. Of those, only one acquisition has been stopped by the President.

This is a critical issue at a critical time. CFIUS seems to only get scrutiny when some major deal is in the papers. I have been paying attention to it all along. It needs reform, and I hope we can make some progress.

I am glad that Congress is now taking a closer look at CIFIUS reform. Rest assured that I continue to push for this badly needed reform and as Congress addresses this issue, I will keep your thoughts in mind.

Note too that I will ensure in particular that the national security aspects of this work are appropriately attended to. I will not stand idly by and allow a bill that is weak on national defense to pass.

Let us all work together to ensure that the legislative process performs appropriately to defend our Nation, and let this bill I am introducing today be a new start.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 199—CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF DR. HALEH ESFANDIARI

Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

S. RES. 199

Whereas Dr. Haleh Esfandiari is one of the United States's most distinguished analysts of Iranian politics and is the Director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars;

Whereas Dr. Esfandiari is a dual citizen of Iran and the United States;

Whereas Dr. Esfandiari has served as a communications bridge between the United States and Iran, advocating diplomacy and dialogue;

Whereas Dr. Esfandiari travels to Iran twice a year to visit with her mother;

Whereas, in late December 2006, Dr. Esfandiari traveled to Iran to visit her ailing 93 year old mother for 1 week;

Whereas the current Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has initiated a crackdown on scholars and journalists including Dr. Esfandiari, Canadian-Iranian philosopher Ramin Jahanbegloo, and journalist Parnaz Azima;

Whereas, on December 30, 2006, Dr. Esfandiari was robbed of her Iranian and American passports and travel documents at knife-point by 3 masked men on the way to the airport to return to the United States;

Whereas Dr. Esfandiari was held in Iran under house arrest for 4 months, interrogated under conditions of intimidation and threat, and, on May 8, 2007, was imprisoned in the notorious Evin prison in Tehran;

Whereas Dr. Esfandiari has been falsely accused by a news agency in Iran of being a spy for Mossad, of serving as the head of the Iran section of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, and of encouraging an uprising against the regime in Tehran; and

Whereas senior government officials have conveyed the United States's opposition to this unjustified imprisonment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the arrest, interrogation, and imprisonment of Dr. Haleh Esfandiari as a deliberately provocative and illegal act;

(2) deplores the continuing crackdown in Iran on journalists and scholars and the deliberate dissemination of misinformation regarding their activities; and

(3) demands the immediate, safe, and unconditional release of Dr. Haleh Esfandiari from custody, the reissuance of appropriate travel documents for Dr. Esfandiari, and the provision of safe passage out of Iran.

SENATE RESOLUTION 200—COMMENDING LOUISIANA JOCKEYS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUCCESS IN THE KENTUCKY DERBY AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

Mr. VITTER. (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Commitee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 200

Whereas jockey Calvin Borel successfully won the 133rd running of the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs on May 5, 2007;

Whereas Calvin Borel rallied Street Sense from 19th place to pass the pacesetting Hard Spun in the stretch and draw away to a 2¼-length victory;

Whereas the victory was Calvin Borel's first in the Kentucky Derby;

Whereas Calvin Borel was born on November 7, 1966, in St. Martinsville, Louisiana;

Whereas Calvin Borel hails from South Louisiana, the heart of Cajun Country, famous for its production of many top jockeys during the last 20 years; and

Whereas Calvin Borel's victory in the 133rd running of the Kentucky Derby solidifies his place in a tradition of Louisiana jockeys who have won the Kentucky Derby, such as Eric Guerin (1947), Edward Delahoussaye (1982, 1983), Craig Perret (1990), and Kent Desormeaux (1998, 2000): Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends Louisiana jockeys for their continued success at one of America's most heralded thoroughbred horseracing events, the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs;

(2) recognizes jockey Calvin Borel for winning the 133rd running of the Kentucky Derby on May 5, 2007;

(3) recognizes the achievements of all the owners, trainers, and support staff who were instrumental in helping Calvin Borel and Street Sense to victory; and

(4) recognizes the achievements of all current and former Louisiana jockeys in the Kentucky Derby.

SENATE RESOLUTION 201—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF ''NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. CHAMBLISS. (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Commitee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

S. RES. 201

Whereas life insurance is an essential part of a sound financial plan;

Whereas life insurance provides financial security for families by helping surviving members meet immediate and long-term financial obligations and objectives in the event of a premature death in their family;

Whereas approximately 68,000,000 United States citizens lack the adequate level of life insurance coverage needed to ensure a secure financial future for their loved ones;

Whereas life insurance products protect against the uncertainties of life by enabling individuals and families to manage the financial risks of premature death, disability, and long-term care;

Whereas individuals, families, and businesses can benefit from professional insurance and financial planning advice, including an assessment of their life insurance needs; and

Whereas numerous groups supporting life insurance have designated September 2007 as ''National Life Insurance Awareness Month'' as a means to encourage consumers to—

(1) become more aware of their life insurance needs;

(2) seek professional advice regarding life insurance; and

(3) take the actions necessary to achieve financial security for their loved ones: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of ''National Life Insurance Awareness Month''; and

(2) calls on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the citizens of the United States to observe the month with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 202—DESIGNATING THE PERIOD BEGINNING ON MAY 14, 2007, AND ENDING ON MAY 18, 2007, AS ''NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WEEK''

Ms. STABENOW. (for herself and Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 202

Whereas the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society has worked collaboratively with more than 48 stakeholder organizations for more than 45 years to transform health care with improved uses of information technology and management systems;

Whereas the Center for Information Technology Leadership estimated that the implementation of national standards for interoperability and the exchange of health information would save the United States approximately $77,000,000,000 in expenses relating to health care each year;

Whereas the RAND Corporation estimated that, if the health care system of the United States implemented the use of computerized medical records, the system could save the United States more than $81,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas health care information technology has been shown to improve the quality and safety of the delivery of health care in the United States;

Whereas health care information technology and management systems have been recognized as essential tools for improving the quality and cost efficiency of the health care system;

Whereas the President and Secretary of Health and Human Services have made a commitment to leveraging the benefits of the health care information technology and management systems by establishing the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology and the American Health Information Community;

Whereas Congress has placed an emphasis on improving the quality and safety of the delivery of health care in the United States; and

Whereas organizations across the country have come together to support National Health Information Technology Week to improve public awareness relating to the potential benefits of improved quality and cost efficiency that the health care system could achieve if health information technology were better utilized: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the value of information technology and management systems in transforming health care for all people in the United States;

(2) designates the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as ''National Health Information Technology Week''; and

(3) encourages the use of information technology and management systems to transform the health care system in the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1112. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. LEVIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1113. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1114. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1115. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1116. Mr. ALLARD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1117. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. KERRY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1065 proposed by Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1118. Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1065 proposed by Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1119. Mr. HARKIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1120. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1121. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1122. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1123. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

SA 1124. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1123 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the bill H.R. 2206, supra.

SA 1125. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1124 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the amendment SA 1123 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the bill H.R. 2206, supra.

SA 1126. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2206, supra.

SA 1127. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1126 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 2206, supra.

SA 1128. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1127 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 1126 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 2206, supra.

SA 1129. Mr. INOUYE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1130. Mr. OBAMA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1131. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1132. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1133. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1134. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, supra.

SA 1135. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BOND)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1495, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1112. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. LEVIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3_____. SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MICHIGAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1149 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 4254) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 1149. SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MICHIGAN.

''The Secretary shall construct, at Federal expense, a second lock, with a width of not less than 110 feet and a length of not less than 1,200 feet, adjacent to the lock at Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, in existence on the date of enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, generally in accordance with the report of the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors dated May 19, 1986, and the limited reevaluation report dated February 2004, at a total cost of $341,714,000.''.

(b) CONFORMING REPEALS.—The following provisions of law are repealed:

(1) Paragraph (8) of section 107(a) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1990 (104 Stat. 4620).

(2) Section 330 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (110 Stat. 3717).

(3) Section 330 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (113 Stat. 305).

SA 1113. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. CATASTROPHIC FLOODING RECOVERY.

(a) DEFINITION OF CATASTROPHIC FLOODING EVENT.—In this section, the term ''catastrophic flooding event'' includes a flooding event caused by—

(1) the failure of a levee;

(2) a natural disaster declared by the Federal Government; or

(3) inadequate flood damage reduction measures.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a catastrophic flooding event occurs, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that contains specific project recommendations relating to flood damage reduction, hurricane protection, and environmental restoration to be carried out in response to the catastrophic flooding event.

(c) FEASIBILITY STUDIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a report described in subsection (b) is submitted to Congress, the Secretary shall initiate a feasibility study on each project included in the report.

(2) DEADLINE.—A feasibility study initiated under paragraph (1) shall be completed by not later than 3 years after the date of initiation.

(d) PRECONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall begin development of preconstruction engineering and document design activities for a project on the later of—

(1) the date on which the feasibility report relating to the project is completed under subsection (c); and

(2) the date on which the Chief of Engineers submits to the Secretary a report approving the project.

SA 1114. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, insert the following:

Subtitle D—8/29 Commission

SEC. 2061. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''8/29 Commission Act''.

SEC. 2062. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which struck the United States in 2005, caused almost $200,000,000,000 in total economic losses, including insured and uninsured losses;

(2) multiple reviews have been conducted, and multiple commissions have been established, with respect to assessing the failure of levee systems and related infrastructure beginning in August 2005, but few definitive recommendations have been offered, and Congress has not been provided with specific proposals for action regarding the levees;

(3) to the extent the United States continues to face the possibility of another significant levee failure and the possible resulting devastation and damage, a proper technical and investigative review is needed; and

(4) the most efficient and effective approach to assessing the failure of the levees and subsequent devastation is—

(A) to establish a bipartisan commission of experts to study—

(i) the management, construction, and funding of levee, flood control, and hurricane protection projects; and

(ii) the means by which the Federal Government responds to catastrophic disasters and by which the Federal Government prepares and develops contingency plans and disaster preparations; and

(B) to require the Commission to timely report the recommendations of the Commission to Congress so that Congress can quickly identify any outstanding issues and determine a solution to protect residents of the United States.

SEC. 2063. ESTABLISHMENT OF 8/29 COMMISSION.

There is established a commission, to be known as the ''8/29 Commission'', to examine the events beginning on August 29, 2005, with respect to the failure of levees in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (referred to in this subtitle as the ''Commission'').

SEC. 2064. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be composed of 12 members, of whom—

(1) 2 members shall be appointed by the President;

(2) 2 members shall be appointed by the Chairperson, in consultation with the Ranking Member, of the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

(3) 2 members shall be appointed by the Chairperson, in consultation with the Ranking Member, of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(4) 2 members shall be appointed by the Chairperson, in consultation with the Ranking Member, of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives;

(5) 2 members shall be appointed by the Chairperson, in consultation with the Ranking Member, of the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives; and

(6) 2 members shall be appointed by the Governor of the State of Louisiana, subject to confirmation by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate.

(b) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

(1) ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The Commission shall, by a majority of the members of the Commission, elect a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson from among the members of the Commission.

(2) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—The Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson elected by the members of the Commission under paragraph (1) shall not both be affiliated with the same political party.

(c) PROHIBITION.—No elected official of the Federal Government shall serve as a member of the Commission.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING QUALIFICATIONS.—It is the sense of Congress that individuals appointed to the Commission should be—

(1) prominent United States citizens; and

(2) individuals who are nationally recognized for a significant depth of experience in professions such as—

(A) governmental service;

(B) engineering;

(C) public works;

(D) wetlands restoration;

(E) public administration;

(F) disaster planning and recovery; and

(G) environmental planning.

(e) MEETINGS; QUORUM; VACANCIES.—

(1) INITIAL MEETING.—If, on the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, at least 8 members of the Commission have been appointed under subsection (a), the members may meet and, if necessary, select a temporary chairperson, who may begin the operations of the Commission, including the hiring of staff.

(2) SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.—After the initial meeting, the Commission shall meet at the call of the chairperson or a majority of the members of the Commission.

(3) QUORUM.—7 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

(4) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Commission—

(A) shall not affect the powers of the Commission; and

(B) shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

SEC. 2065. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.

The Commission shall—

(1) review findings and recommendations contained in all public and private studies conducted in the aftermath of the levee failures in the State of Louisiana on or after August 29, 2005, including—

(A) the study entitled ''The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina'' and dated February 2006;

(B) the study entitled ''Performance Review of FEMA's Disaster Management Activities in Response to Hurricane Katrina'', numbered OIG–06–32, and dated March 2006;

(C) the study entitled ''A Failure of Initiative: Final Report of the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina'' (Report No. 109–377) and dated February 15, 2006;

(D) the study entitled ''Hurricane Katrina: A Nation Still Unprepared'' (S. Rept. 109–322);

(E) the study entitled ''Interagency Task Force Report'' and dated June 1, 2006; and

(F) the study entitled ''Prioritizing America's Water Resources'', published by the National Associations of Public Administrators, and dated February 2007;

(2) examine and review the ongoing exposure of the United States to the levee failures described in paragraph (1) and other potential future levee failures; and

(3) submit to the President and Congress a report that contains recommendations for any necessary legislative or regulatory change that will—

(A) improve the functioning of the Corps of Engineers to prevent a catastrophic levee failure;

(B) ensure proper planning and review of Federal and State agencies to prevent such a failure in the future;

(C) provide for environmental management and recovery during and after a disaster;

(D) provide for the identification of each party that was responsible for each error that helped cause the events of August 29, 2005; and

(E) outline each proposal that is necessary to revise the management, planning, funding, and oversight of the levees and flood control projects that are located in the disaster affected areas.

SEC. 2066. POWERS OF COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) HEARINGS AND EVIDENCE.—In carrying out the duties of the Commission under this subtitle, the Commission, and any subcommittee or member acting under the authority of the Commission, may—

(A) hold such hearings and sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and administer such oaths as the Commission, subcommittee, or member, as applicable, determines to be appropriate; and

(B) require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents, as the Commission, subcommittee, or member, as applicable, determines to be appropriate.

(2) SUBPOENAS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A subpoena issued under paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) may be issued under the signature of the Chairperson of the Commission, with the concurrence of the Vice Chairperson of the Commission; and

(ii) may be served by any person designated by the Chairperson of the Commission.

(B) APPLICABILITY OF REVISED STATUTES.—Sections 102 through 104 of the Revised Statutes (2 U.S.C. 192 et seq.) shall apply in the case of a failure of any witness to comply

with a subpoena or to testify when summoned under authority of this section.

(b) CONTRACTING.—The Commission may, to such extent and in such amounts as are provided in appropriation Acts, enter into contracts to enable the Commission to carry out the duties of the Commission under this subtitle.

(c) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may secure directly from a Federal agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this Act.

(2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—On request of the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of the agency shall provide the information to the Commission.

(d) ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(1) GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—The Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, administrative support and other services to assist the Commission in carrying out the duties of the Commission under this subtitle.

(2) OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—In addition to the assistance prescribed under paragraph (1), any other Federal department or agency may provide to the Commission such services, funds, facilities, staff, and other support services as the head of the department or agency determines to be appropriate and in accordance with applicable law.

(e) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other agencies of the Federal Government.

(f) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

SEC. 2067. STAFF OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws (including regulations), appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as are necessary to enable the Commission to perform the duties of the Commission.

(2) CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(3) COMPENSATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Chairperson of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates.

(B) MAXIMUM RATE OF PAY.—The rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel shall not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) PERSONNEL AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The executive director and any personnel of the Commission who are employees shall be employees under section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, for purposes of chapters 63, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, and 90 of that title.

(2) MEMBERS OF COMMISSION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any member of the Commission.

(c) DETAIL OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An employee of the Federal Government may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement.

(2) CIVIL SERVICE STATUS.—The detail of the employee shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(d) CONSULTANT SERVICES.—The Commission may procure the services of any expert or consultant, in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, at a rate not to exceed the daily rate of pay of an individual occupying a position at level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 2068. REPORT.

Not later than 120 days after the date on which all members of the Commission are appointed under section 2064(a), the Commission shall submit to the President and Congress a final report that contains—

(1) a detailed statement of the findings of the Commission; and

(2) any recommendations of the Commission for legislative or administrative action that the Commission determines to be appropriate.

SEC. 2069. TERMINATION.

The Commission shall terminate on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Commission submits the final report under section 2068.

SEC. 2070. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 to carry out this subtitle.

SA 1115. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3_____. SANDBRIDGE BEACH, VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA.

The project for beach erosion control and hurricane protection, Sandbridge Beach, Virginia Beach, Virginia, authorized by section 101(22) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 (106 Stat. 4804; 114 Stat. 2612), is modified to authorize the Secretary to review the project to determine whether any additional Federal interest exists with respect to the project, taking into consideration conditions and development levels relating to the project in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1116. Mr. ALLARD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, COLORADO.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary may establish a pilot program to provide environmental assistance to non-Federal interests in the State of Colorado (referred to in this section as the ''State'').

(b) FORM OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under this section may be provided in the form of design and construction assistance for water-related environmental infrastructure and resource protection and development projects in the State, including projects for—

(1) wastewater treatment and related facilities;

(2) water supply and related facilities;

(3) water conservation and related facilities;

(4) stormwater retention and remediation;

(5) environmental restoration; and

(6) surface water resource protection and development.

(c) PUBLIC OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may provide assistance for a project under this section only if the project is publicly owned.

(d) LOCAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Before providing assistance under this section, the Secretary shall enter into a local cooperation agreement with a non-Federal interest to provide for design and construction of the project to be carried out with the assistance.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Each local cooperation agreement entered into under this subsection shall provide for the following:

(A) PLAN.—Development by the Secretary, in consultation and coordination with appropriate Federal and State officials, of a facilities or resource protection and development plan, including appropriate engineering plans and specifications.

(B) LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES.—Establishment of such legal and institutional structures as are necessary to ensure the effective long-term operation of the project by the non-Federal interest.

(3) COST SHARING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of project costs under each local cooperation agreement entered into under this subsection—

(i) shall be 75 percent; and

(ii) may be in the form of grants or reimbursements of project costs.

(B) PRE-COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT ACTIVITIES.—The Federal share of the cost of activities carried out by the Secretary under this section before the execution of a local cooperative agreement shall be 100 percent.

(C) CREDIT FOR DESIGN WORK.—The non-Federal interest shall receive credit, not to exceed 6 percent of the total construction costs of a project, for the reasonable costs of design work completed by the non-Federal interest before entering into a local cooperation agreement with the Secretary for the project.

(D) CREDIT FOR INTEREST.—In case of a delay in the funding of the Federal share of the costs of a project that is the subject of an agreement under this section, the non-Federal interest shall receive credit for reasonable interest incurred in providing the Federal share of the costs of the project.

(E) LAND, EASEMENTS, AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY CREDIT.—The non-Federal interest shall receive credit for land, easements, rights-of-way, and relocations toward the non-Federal share of project costs (including all reasonable costs associated with obtaining permits necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the project on publicly owned or controlled land), but not to exceed 25 percent of total project costs.

(F) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.—The non-Federal share of operation and maintenance costs for projects constructed with assistance provided under this section shall be 100 percent.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS.—Nothing in this section waives, limits, or otherwise affects the applicability of any provision of Federal or State law that would otherwise apply to a project to be carried out with assistance provided under this section.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $50,000,000 for the period beginning with fiscal year 2008, to remain available until expended.

SA 1117. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. KERRY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1065 proposed by Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 64, after line 23, insert the following, and redesignate the subsequent paragraphs accordingly:

(5) LAWRENCE GATEWAY, MASSACHUSETTS.—Project for aquatic ecosystem restoration at the Lawrence Gateway quadrant project along the Merrimack and Spicket Rivers in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in accordance with the general conditions established by the project approval of the Environmental Protection Agency, Region I, including filling abandoned drainage facilities and making improvements to the drainage system on the Lawrence Gateway to prevent continued migration of contaminated sediments into the river systems.

SA 1118. Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1065 proposed by Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 4028 (relating to Jasper County port facility study, South Carolina) and insert the following:

SEC. 4028. PROJECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT, SAVANNAH RIVER, SOUTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall determine the feasibility of carrying out projects—

(1) to improve the Savannah River for navigation and related purposes that may be necessary to support the location of container cargo and other port facilities to be located in Jasper County, South Carolina, in the vicinity of Mile 6 of the Savannah Harbor entrance channel; and

(2) to remove from the proposed Jasper County port site the easements used by the Corps of Engineers for placement of dredged fill materials for the Savannah Harbor Federal navigation project.

(b) FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.—In making a determination under subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into consideration—

(1) landside infrastructure;

(2) the provision of any additional dredged material disposal area as a consequence of removing from the proposed Jasper County port site the easements used by the Corps of Engineers for placement of dredged fill materials for the Savannah Harbor Federal navigation project; and

(3) the results of the proposed bistate compact between the State of Georgia and the State of South Carolina to own, develop, and operate port facilities at the proposed Jasper County port site, as described in the term sheet executed by the Governor of the State of Georgia and the Governor of the State of South Carolina on March 12, 2007.

SA 1119. Mr. HARKIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3_____. PERRY CREEK, IOWA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—On making a determination described in subsection (b), the Secretary shall increase the Federal contribution for the project for flood control, Perry Creek, Iowa, authorized under section 401(a) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 4116; 117 Stat. 1844).

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination referred to in subsection (a) is a determination that a modification to the project described in that subsection is necessary for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to certify that the project provides flood damage reduction benefits to at least a 100-year level.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $4,000,000.

SA 1120. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. SOUTHWEST FLOOD DAMAGE AND SEDIMENT TRANSPORT RESEARCH PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish within the Corps of Engineers Engineering Research and Development Center the Southwest Flood Damage and Sediment Transport Research Program (referred to in this section as the ''program''), under which the Secretary shall carry out research, development, and demonstration projects on arid systems with respect to—

(1) sediment transport, erosion, and deposition;

(2) geomorphology;

(3) flooding;

(4) channel restoration; and

(5) related activities.

(b) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate projects carried out under the program with—

(1) the New Mexico District Office of the Corps of Engineers;

(2) the University of New Mexico; and

(3) the Desert Research Institute.

SA 1121. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. COMPUTER-ASSISTED DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish within the Corps of Engineers Institute for Water Resources a computer-assisted dispute resolution program (referred to in this section as the ''program'') to develop and advance the integration of computer-based modeling tools for multistakeholder public decision processes, including through—

(1) the conduct of research and development of necessary computer tools;

(2) the implementation of appropriate demonstration projects;

(3) the establishment of applicable training programs; and

(4) the conduct of other outreach activities.

(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

(1) in cooperation with other applicable Federal agencies, establish an interagency center for computer-assisted dispute resolution; and

(2) consult with—

(A) other Federal agencies;

(B) State and local agencies;

(C) private nonprofit and for-profit organizations; and

(D) research facilities at institutions of higher education.

(c) EVALUATION.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a comprehensive evaluation of the program.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

SA 1122. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3_____. JACKSON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

(a) MODIFICATION.—Section 331 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (113 Stat. 305) is amended by striking ''$5,000,000'' and inserting ''$9,000,000''.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF CREDIT.—The credit provided by section 331 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (113 Stat. 305) (as modified by subsection (a)) shall apply to costs incurred by the Jackson County Board of Supervisors during the period beginning on February 8, 1994, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act for projects authorized by section 219(c)(5) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 (106 Stat. 4835; 110 Stat. 3757; 113 Stat. 334; 113 Stat. 1494; 114 Stat. 2763A–219).

SA 1123. Mr REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2206, making

emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

SA 1124. Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1123 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the bill H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

Under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 1 day after the date of enactment.

SA 1125. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1124 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the amendment SA 1123 proposed by Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) to the bill H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after Constitution in line 1 and insert the following:

The President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our. troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 2 days after date of enactment.

SA 1126. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 5 days after date of enactment.

SA 1127. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1126 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment strike all after Congress in line 1 and insert the following:

have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and

the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined By the Senate (the House of Representatives) Concurring), that it is the Sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 4 days after the date of enactment.

SA 1128. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 1127 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 1126 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

Since under the Constitution, the President and Congress have shared responsibilities for decisions on the use of the Armed Forces of the United States, including their mission, and for supporting the Armed Forces, especially during wartime;

Since when the Armed Forces are deployed in harm's way, the President, Congress, and the Nation should give them all the support they need in order to maintain their safety and accomplish their assigned or future missions, including the training, equipment, logistics, and funding necessary to ensure their safety and effectiveness, and such support is the responsibility of both the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of Government; and

Since thousands of members of the Armed Forces who have fought bravely in Iraq and Afghanistan are not receiving the kind of medical care and other support this Nation owes them when they return home: Now, therefore, be it

Determined by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President and Congress should not take any action that will endanger the Armed Forces of the United States, and will provide necessary funds for training, equipment, and other support for troops in the field, as such actions will ensure their safety and effectiveness in preparing for and carrying out their assigned missions;

(2) the President, Congress, and the Nation have an obligation to ensure that those who have bravely served this country in time of war receive the medical care and other support they deserve; and

(3) the President and Congress should—

(A) continue to exercise their constitutional responsibilities to ensure that the Armed Forces have everything they need to perform their assigned or future missions; and

(B) review, assess, and adjust United States policy and funding as needed to ensure our troops have the best chance for success in Iraq and elsewhere.

This section shall take effect 3 days after the date of enactment.

SA 1129. Mr. INOUYE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title V, insert the following:

SEC. 5_____. COST SHARING PROVISIONS FOR THE TERRITORIES.

Section 1156 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2310) is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting the following:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS BY NON-FEDERAL INTERESTS.—A non-Federal interest may use Federal funds to provide the non-Federal share of the costs of a study or project carried out at a location referred to in subsection (a), if the agency or department that provides the Federal funds determines that the funds are eligible to be used for that purpose.''.

SA 1130. Mr. OBAMA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Iraq War De-Escalation Act of 2007'.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Congress and the Nation honor the courage, sacrifices, and efforts of the members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families.

(2) In his speech to the Nation on January 10, 2007, President George W. Bush said that 'I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. If the Iraqi government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose the support of the American people . . . The Prime Minister understands this'.

(3) In that speech, President George W. Bush also told the Nation that 'America will hold the Iraqi government to the benchmarks it has announced . . . [T]o take responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November. To give every Iraqi citizen a stake in the country's economy, Iraq will pass legislation to share oil revenues among all Iraqis. To show that it is committed to delivering a better life, the Iraqi government will spend $10,000,000,000 of its own money on reconstruction and infrastructure projects that will create new jobs. To empower local leaders, Iraqis plan to hold provincial elections later this year. And to allow more Iraqis to re-enter their nation's political life, the government will reform deBaathification laws, and establish a fair process for considering amendments to Iraq's constitution'.

(4) In that speech, President George W. Bush also told the Nation that 'only Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people'.

(5) On December 18, 2006, former Secretary of State Colin Powell stated: '[s]o we have tried this surge of troops over the summer. I am not persuaded that another surge of troops in Baghdad for the purpose of suppressing this communitarian violence, this civil war, will work'.

(6) On November 15, 2006, General John Abizaid, Commander of the United States Central Command, stated before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate that 'I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey. We all talked together. And I said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no. And the reason is, because we want the Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future'.

(7) In testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate on January 11, 2007, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated that unless the Government of Iraq has met certain benchmarks and reestablishes the confidence of the Iraqi people over the next several months, 'this plan is not going to work'.

(8) In a statement on January 11, 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated '[a]nd we will probably have a better view a couple of months from now in terms of whether we are making headway in terms of getting better control of Baghdad, with the Iraqis in the lead and with the Iraqis beginning to make better progress on the reconciliation process'.

(9) The bipartisan Iraq Study Group headed by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Representative Lee Hamilton reached a bipartisan consensus on 79 separate recommendations for a new approach in Iraq. Among those recommendations were calling for a new diplomatic offensive in the region and conditioning American economic assistance to Iraq on specific benchmarks, with the expectation that 'by the first quarter of 2008, subject to unexpected developments in the security situation on the ground, all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq'.

(10) In reaction to the speech of President George W. Bush of January 10, 2007, former Secretary of State Baker and former Representative Hamilton wrote that '[t]he President did not suggest the possibility of a transition that could enable U.S. combat forces to begin to leave Iraq. The President did not state that political, military, or economic support for Iraq would be conditional on the Iraq government's ability to meet benchmarks. Within the region, the President did

not announce an international support group for Iraq including all of Iraq's neighbors.

(b) PURPOSE.—Ihe purposes of this Act are as follows:

(1) To formulate and provide for the implementation of an effective United States policy towards Iraq and the Middle East region that employs military, political, diplomatic, and economic assets to promote and protect the national security interests of the United States.

(2) To provide for the implementation of a responsible, phased redeployment of the Armed Forces of the United States from Iraq in a substantial and gradual manner that places the highest priority on protecting the lives of members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the United States and on promoting the national security interests of the United States in the Middle East region.

(3) To urge the political parties and leaders of Iraq to reach the political solution necessary to promote stability in Iraq and enhance the safety of innocent Iraqi civilians.

(4) To condition future economic assistance to the Government of Iraq on significant progress toward the achievement of political and economic measures to be taken by the Government of Iraq.

(5) To provide for the initiation of a wider and sustained diplomatic strategy aimed at promoting a political settlement in Iraq, thereby ending the civil war in Iraq, preventing a humanitarian catastrophe in Iraq, and preventing a wider regional conflict.

(6) To provide, through sections 4 through 7, for the implementation of key recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel of experts cochaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Representative Lee Hamilton.

SEC. 3. APPROPRIATE FORCE LEVELS FOR UNITED STATES MILITARY FORCES IN IRAQ.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the levels of the Armed Forces of the United States in Iraq after the date of the enactment of this Act shall not exceed the levels of such forces in Iraq as of January 10, 2007, without specific authority in statute enacted by Congress after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. REDEPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES MILITARY FORCES FROM IRAQ.

(a) REDEPLOYMENT.—

(1) DEADLINE FOR COMMENCEMENT OF REDEPLOYMENT.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, the phased redeployment of the Armed Forces of the United States from Iraq shall commence as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after enactment of this Act.

(2) SCOPE AND MANNER OF REDEPLOYMENT.—The redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section shall be substantial, shall occur in a gradual manner, and shall be executed at a pace to achieve the goal of the complete redeployment of all United States combat brigades from Iraq by March 31, 2008, consistent with the expectation of the Iraq Study Group, if all the matters set forth in subsection (b)(1)(B) are not met by such date, subject to the exceptions for retention of forces for force protection, counter-terrorism operations, training of Iraqi forces, and other purposes as contemplated by subsection (g).

(3) FORMULATION OF PLAN WITH MILITARY COMMANDERS.—The redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section should be conducted pursuant to a plan formulated by United States military commanders that is developed, if practicable, in consultation with the Government of Iraq.

(4) PROTECTION OF UNITED STATES FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL.—In carrying out the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section, the highest priority shall be afforded to the safety of members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the United States in Iraq.

(b) SUSPENSION OF REDEPLOYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may suspend, on a temporary basis as provided in paragraph (2), the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section if the President certifies to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives that—

(A) doing so is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(B) the Government of Iraq—

(i) has lifted all restrictions concerning non-interference in operations of the Armed Forces of the United States in Iraq and does so on a continuing basis;

(ii) is making significant progress in reducing sectarian violence in Iraq and in reducing the size and operational effectiveness of sectarian militias in Iraq;

(iii) is making significant progress towards removing militia elements from the Iraqi Army, National Police, Facilities Protection Services, and other security forces of the Government of Iraq;

(iv) has enacted legislation or established other binding mechanisms to ensure the sharing of all Iraqi oil revenues among all segments of Iraqi society in an equitable manner;

(v) is making significant progress towards making available not less than $10,000,000,000 for reconstruction, job creation, and economic development in Iraq, with safeguards to prevent corruption, by January 10, 2008;

(vi) has deployed at least 18 Iraqi Army and National Police brigades to Baghdad and is effectively ensuring that such units are performing their security and police functions in all Baghdad neighborhoods, regardless of their sectarian composition;

(vii) has enacted legislation or established other binding mechanisms to revise its de-Baathification laws to encourage the employment in the Government of Iraq of qualified Iraqi professionals, irrespective of ethnic or political affiliation, including ex-Baathists who were not leading figures of the Saddam Hussein regime;

(viii) has established a fair process for considering amendments to the constitution of Iraq that promote lasting national reconciliation in Iraq;

(ix) is making significant progress towards assuming full responsibility for security in all the provinces of Iraq by November 30, 2007;

(x) is making significant progress towards holding free and fair provincial elections in Iraq at the earliest date practicable, but not later than December 31, 2007;

(xi) is making substantial progress towards increasing the size and effectiveness of Ministry of Defense forces as described on page 11 of 'Highlights of the Iraq Strategy Review' published by the National Security Council in January 2007;

(xii) is making significant progress in reforming and strengthening the civilian ministries and other government institutions that support the Iraqi Army and National Police; and

(xiii) is making significant progress towards reforming its civilian ministries to ensure that they are not administered on a sectarian basis and that government services are delivered in an even-handed and non-sectarian manner.

(2) PERIOD OF SUSPENSION.—A suspension of the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this subsection, including any renewal of the suspension under paragraph (3), shall be for a period not to exceed 90 days.

(3) RENEWAL.—A suspension of the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this subsection may be renewed. Any such renewal shall include a certification to the officers referred to in paragraph (1) on the matters set forth in clauses (i) through (xiii) of subparagraph (B) of that paragraph.

(c) DISAPPROVAL OF SUSPENSION.—

(1) DISAPPROVAL.—If Congress enacts a joint resolution disapproving the suspension of the redeployment of the Armed Forces under subsection (b), or any renewal of the suspension, the suspension shall be discontinued, and the redeployment of the Armed Forces from Iraq under this section shall resume.

(2) PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF JOINT RESOLUTIONS.—

(A) JOINT RESOLUTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'joint resolution' means only a joint resolution introduced not later than 10 days after the date on which a certification of the President under subsection (b) is received by Congress, the matter after the resolving clause of which is as follows: 'That Congress disapproves the certification of the President submitted to Congress under section 4(b) of the Iraq War De-Escalation Act of 2007, on XXXXXXX.', the blank space being filled in with the appropriate date.

(B) PROCEDURES.—A joint resolution described in paragraph (1) shall be considered in a House of Congress in accordance with the procedures applicable to joint resolutions under paragraphs (3) through (8) of section 8066(c) of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1985 (as enacted by section 101 (h) of Public Law 98–473; 98 Stat. 1936).

(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter, the President shall submit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report describing and assessing—

(A) the progress made by the Government of Iraq on each of the matters set forth in subsection (b)(1)(B); and

(B) the progress of the redeployment required by subsection (a).

(2) FORM.—Each report under this subsection shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(e) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON LOCATION OF REDEPLOYMENT.—It is the sense of Congress that, in redeploying the Armed Forces from Iraq under this section, appropriate units of the Armed Forces should be redeployed—

(1) to the United States;

(2) to Afghanistan, in order to enhance United States military operations in that country;

(3) elsewhere in the region, to serve as an over-the-horizon force to prevent the conflict in Iraq from becoming a wider war, to reassure allies of the United States of the commitment of the United States to remain engaged in the region, and to position troops to strike directly at al-Qaeda; and

(4) elsewhere, to meet urgent United States security needs.

(f) POLITICAL SOLUTION IN IRAQ.—The United States should use the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section, and the possible suspension of such redeployment if the benchmarks set forth in subsection (b)are met, as a tool to press the Iraqi leaders to promote national reconciliation among ethnic and religious groups in Iraq in order to establish stability in Iraq.

(g) RETENTION OF CERTAIN FORCES IN IRAQ.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the requirement for the redeployment of the Armed Forces under subsection (a) and subject to the provisions of this subsection, personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States may be in Iraq after the completion of the redeployment of the Armed Forces under this section for the following purposes:

(A) To protect United States personnel and facilities in Iraq.

(B) To conduct targeted counter-terrorism operations.

(C) To provide training for Iraqi security forces.

(D) To conduct the routine functions of the Office of Defense Attache.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—Personnel of the Armed Forces may not be retained in Iraq under this subsection unless the President certifies to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives that—

(A) the retention of the Armed Forces in Iraq is necessary for one or more of the purposes set forth in paragraph (1); and

(B) the utilization of Armed Forces positioned outside Iraq could not result in the effective achievement of such purpose or purposes.

(3) DISAPPROVAL OF RETENTION.—If Congress enacts a joint resolution disapproving the retention of personnel of the Armed Forces in Iraq under this subsection, or any renewal of the retention, the retention of such personnel in Iraq shall be discontinued, and such personnel shall be redeployed from Iraq.

(4) PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF JOINT RESOLUTIONS.—

(A) JOINT RESOLUTION DEFINED.—For purposes of paragraph (3), the term 'joint resolution' means only a joint resolution introduced not later than 10 days after the date on which a certification of the President under paragraph (2) is received by Congress, the matter after the resolving clause of which is as follows: 'That Congress disapproves the certification of the President submitted to Congress under section 4(g)(2) of the Iraq War De-Escalation Act of 2007, on XXXXXXX.', the blank space being filled in with the appropriate date.

(B) PROCEDURES.—A joint resolution described in subparagraph (A) shall be considered in a House of Congress in accordance with the procedures applicable to joint resolutions under paragraphs (3) through (8) of section 8066(c) of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1985 (as enacted by section 101(h) of Public Law 98–473; 98 Stat. 1936).

(h) NO PERMANENT BASES.—Congress hereby reaffirms section 1519 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109–364; 120 Stat. 2444), and related provisions of law, that prohibit the establishment of military installations or bases for the purpose of providing for the permanent stationing of United States Armed Forces in Iraq.

SEC. 5. INTENSIFICATION OF TRAINING OF IRAQI SECURITY FORCES.

It shall be the policy of the United States to immediately formulate and implement a plan that—

(1) with the Government of Iraq—

(A) removes militia elements from the Iraqi Army, National Police, and other security forces of the Government of Iraq; and

(B) puts such forces in charge of maintaining security in Iraq;

(2) focuses and intensifies United States efforts on training such forces; and

(3) presses the Government of Iraq to reform the civilian ministries and other government institutions that support the Iraqi Army, National Police, local police, and judicial system.

SEC. 6. AVAILABILITY OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR IRAQ.

(a) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), economic assistance may not be furnished to the Government of Iraq beginning 30 days from the date of enactment of this Act until the President submits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a certification that the Government of Iraq—

(1) is making measurable progress toward providing not less than $10,000,000,000 of Iraqi funds for reconstruction, job creation, and economic development in Iraq, with safeguards to prevent corruption, by January 10, 2008;

(2) is making progress toward meeting the conditions set forth in the International Compact for Iraq and in the stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Fund; and

(3) is making progress toward reducing sectarian violence and promoting national reconciliation.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—The limitation in subsection (a) shall not apply to assistance for Iraq as follows:

(1) Humanitarian assistance.

(2) Assistance to address urgent security and employment needs.

(c) ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction shall submit to Congress a report describing the progress of the Government of Iraq on each matter set forth in subsection (a).

SEC. 7. REGIONAL DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES ON IRAQ.

(a) POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.—It shall be the policy of the United States to undertake comprehensive regional and international initiatives, involving key nations, that will assist the Government of Iraq in achieving the purposes of this Act, including promoting a political settlement among the Iraqi people, ending the civil war in Iraq, preventing a humanitarian catastrophe in Iraq, and preventing a regional conflict.

(b) SPECIAL ENVOY.—The President should, not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, appoint a special envoy for Iraq to carry out the policy set forth in subsection (a).

(c) STRATEGY ON PREVENTING WIDER REGIONAL WAR.—

(1) STRATEGY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a strategy for preventing the conflict in Iraq from becoming a wider regional war.

(2) FORM.—The report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SA 1131. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike paragraph (42) of section 1001 and insert the following:

(42) CRANEY ISLAND EASTWARD EXPANSION, VIRGINIA.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall design and construct a project for navigation, Craney Island Eastward Expansion, Virginia, in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Report of the Chief of Engineers dated October 24, 2006, at a total cost of $721,103,000, with an estimated non-Federal share of not more than 50 percent of the total cost of construction of the project.

SA 1132. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2_____. LIST OF CERTAIN AUTHORIZED PROJECTS THAT HAVE NOT RECEIVED FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall develop, and publish in the Federal Register and on the Internet, a list, to be known as the ''Project Transparency List'', of projects of the Corps of Engineers that—

(1) have been authorized in a water resources Act; but

(2) have not received Federal funds for purposes of construction of the project as of the date that is 4 years after the date on which the project is authorized.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The list under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to each project included on the list—

(1) a description of—

(A) the date on which the project was authorized;

(B) the primary purpose of the project;

(C) each allocation of Federal funds made to the project as of the date on which the list is published, including a description of the amount and type of the allocation;

(D) the percentage of construction completed for the project;

(E) the estimated total amount that has been obligated to the project as of the date on which the list is published;

(F) a benefit-cost analysis of the project, expressed as a ratio that represents—

(i) current discount rates; and

(ii) includes the estimated annual benefits and costs of the project;

(G) the date of collection of any economic data used to justify the project;

(H) the date of completion of the most recent feasibility study, reevaluation report, and environmental review, as applicable, relating to the project;

(I) in any case in which a portion of construction of the project is completed, a benefit-cost analysis of each remaining activity required to complete the construction; and

(J) the projected potential date of deauthorization of the project under subsection (c); and

(2) a brief explanation of any reason why Federal funds have not been obligated for construction of the project.

(c) REQUIRED DEAUTHORIZATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each project of the Corps of Engineers that has been authorized in a water resources Act, but has not received Federal funds for purposes of construction of the project as of the date that is 7 years after the date on which the project is authorized, shall be deauthorized, regardless of whether the project is included in the list under subsection (a).

(2) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN FUNDS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), funds shall not be considered to be Federal funds for purposes of construction if the funds were provided to carry out any activity for a project relating to—

(A) a study;

(B) planning;

(C) engineering and design;

(D) relocation or an acquisition of land; or

(E) an easement or a right-of-way.

SA 1133. Mr. DEMINT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2____. LIST OF CERTAIN AUTHORIZED PROJECTS THAT HAVE NOT RECEIVED FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall develop, and publish in the Federal Register and on the Internet, a list, to be known as the ''Project Transparency List'', of projects of the Corps of Engineers that—

(1) have been authorized in a water resources Act; but

(2) have not received Federal funds for purposes of construction of the project as of the date that is 4 years after the date on which the project is authorized.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The list under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to each project included on the list—

(1) a description of—

(A) the date on which the project was authorized;

(B) the primary purpose of the project;

(C) each allocation of Federal funds made to the project as of the date on which the list is published, including a description of the amount and type of the allocation;

(D) the percentage of construction completed for the project;

(E) the estimated total amount that has been obligated to the project as of the date on which the list is published;

(F) a benefit-cost analysis of the project, expressed as a ratio that represents—

(i) current discount rates; and

(ii) includes the estimated annual benefits and costs of the project;

(G) the date of collection of any economic data used to justify the project;

(H) the date of completion of the most recent feasibility study, reevaluation report, and environmental review, as applicable, relating to the project; and

(I) in any case in which a portion of construction of the project is completed, a benefit-cost analysis of each remaining activity required to complete the construction; and

(2) a brief explanation of any reason why Federal funds have not been obligated for construction of the project.

(c) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN FUNDS.—For purposes of this section, funds shall not be considered to be Federal funds for purposes of construction if the funds were provided to carry out any activity for a project relating to—

(1) a study;

(2) planning;

(3) engineering and design;

(4) relocation or an acquisition of land; or

(5) an easement or a right-of-way.

SA 1134. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—PRESIDENT'S STRATEGY IN IRAQ

SEC. 1. FINDINGS REGARDING PROGRESS IN IRAQ, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BENCHMARKS TO MEASURE THAT PROGRESS, AND REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Over 145,000 American military personnel are currently serving in Iraq, like thousands of others since March 2003, with the bravery and professionalism consistent with the finest traditions of the United States armed forces, and are deserving of the strong support of all Americans;

(2) Many American service personnel have lost their lives, and many more have been wounded in Iraq; the American people will always honor their sacrifice and honor their families;

(3) The United States Army and Marine Corps, including their Reserve components and National Guard organizations, together with components of the other branches of the military, are performing their missions while under enormous strain from multiple, extended deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. These deployments, and those that will follow, will have a lasting impact on future recruiting, retention, and readiness of our nation's all volunteer force;

(4) Iraq is experiencing a deteriorating problem of sectarian and intrasectarian violence based upon political distrust and cultural differences among factions of the Sunni and Shia populations;

(5) Iraqis must reach political and economic settlements in order to achieve reconciliation, for there is no military solution. The failure of the Iraqis to reach such settlements to support a truly unified government greatly contributes to the increasing violence in Iraq;

(6) The responsibility for Iraq's internal security and halting sectarian violence rests with the sovereign Government of Iraq;

(7) In December 2006, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group issued a valuable report, suggesting a comprehensive strategy that includes new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq, that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly;

(8) The President said on January 10, 2007, that ''I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not openended'' so as to dispel the contrary impression that exists;

(9) It is essential that the sovereign Government of Iraq set out measurable and achievable benchmarks and President Bush said, on January 10, 2007, that ''America will change our approach to help the Iraqi government as it works to meet these benchmarks'';

(10) As reported by Secretary of State Rice, Iraq's Policy Committee on National Security agreed upon a set of political, security, and economic benchmarks and an associated timeline in September 2006 that were (a) reaffirmed by Iraq's Presidency Council on October 6, 2006; (b) referenced by the Iraq Study Group; and (c) posted on the President of Iraq's website;

(11) On April 21, 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that ''our [American] commitment to Iraq is long-term, but it is not a commitment to have our young men and women patrolling Iraq's streets openendedly'' and that ''progress in reconciliation will be an important element of our evaluation'';

(12) The President's January 10, 2007 address had three components: political, military, and economic. Given that significant time has passed since his statement, and recognizing the overall situation is ever changing, Congress must have timely reports to evaluate and execute its Constitutional oversight responsibilities.

SEC. 2. CONDITIONING OF FUTURE UNITED STATES STRATEGY IN IRAQ ON THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT'S RECORD OF PERFORMANCE ON ITS BENCHMARKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The United States strategy in Iraq, hereafter, shall be conditioned on the Iraqi government meeting benchmarks, as told to members of Congress by the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and reflected in the Iraqi Government's commitments to the United States, and to the international community, including:

(A) Forming a Constitutional Review Committee and then completing the Constitutional review;

(B) Enacting and implementing legislation on de-Baathification;

(C) Enacting and implementing legislation to ensure the equitable distribution of hydrocarbon resources of the people of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, and enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the energy resources of Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner;

(D) Enacting and implementing legislation on procedures to form semi-autonomous regions;

(E) Enacting and implementing legislation establishing an Independent High Electoral Commission; provincial elections law; provincial council authorities; and a date for provincial elections;

(F) Enacting and implementing legislation addressing amnesty;

(G) Enacting and implementing legislation establishing a strong militia disarmament program to ensure that such security forces are accountable only to the central government and loyal to the Constitution of Iraq;

(H) Establishing supporting political, media, economic, and services committees in support of the Baghdad Security Plan;

(I) Providing three trained and ready Iraqi brigades to support Baghdad operations;

(J) Providing Iraqi commanders with all authorities to execute this plan and to make tactical and operational decisions, in consultation with U.S. commanders, without political intervention, to include the authority to pursue all extremists, including Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias;

(K) Ensuring that the Iraqi Security Forces are providing even-handed enforcement of the law;

(L) Ensuring that, according to President Bush, Prime Minister Maliki said ''the Baghdad security plan will not provide a safe haven for any outlaws, regardless of [their] sectarian or political affiliation'';

(M) Reducing the level of sectarian violence in Iraq and eliminating militia control of local security;

(N) Establishing all of the planned joint security stations in neighborhoods across Baghdad;

(O) Increasing the number of Iraqi security forces units capable of operating independently;

(P) Ensuring that the rights of minority political parties in the Iraqi legislature are protected;

(Q) Allocating and spending $10 billion in Iraqi revenues for reconstruction projects,

including delivery of essential services, on an equitable basis; and

(R) Ensuring that Iraq's political authorities are not undermining or making false accusations against members of the ISF.

(2) The President shall submit reports to Congress on how the sovereign Government of Iraq is, or is not, achieving progress towards accomplishing the aforementioned benchmarks, and shall advise the Congress on how that assessment requires, or does not require, changes to the strategy announced on January 10, 2007.

(b) REPORTS REQUIRED.—

(1) The President shall submit an initial report, in classified and unclassified format, to the Congress, not later than July 15, 2007, assessing the status of each of the specific benchmarks established above, and declaring, in his judgment, whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

(2) The President, having consulted with the Secretary of State, The Secretary of Defense, The Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, and the Commander of U.S. Central Command, will prepare the report and submit the report to Congress.

(3) If the President's assessment of any of the specific benchmarks established above is unsatisfactory, the President shall include in that report a description of such revisions to the political, economic, regional, and military components of the strategy, as announced by the President on January 10, 2007. In addition, the President shall include in the report, the advisability of implementing such aspects of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, as he deems appropriate.

(4) The President shall submit a second report to the Congress, not later than September 15, 2007, following the same procedures and criteria, outlined above.

(5) The reporting requirement detailed in Section 1227 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 is waived from the date of the enactment of this Act through the period ending 15 September, 2007.

(c) TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS.—

(1) Prior to the submission of the President's second report on September 15, 2007, and at a time to be agreed upon by the leadership of the Congress and the Administration, the United States Ambassador to Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq will be made available to testify in open and closed sessions before the relevant committees of the Congress.

SEC. 3. LIMITATIONS ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

(a) LIMITATION.—No funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the ''Economic Support Fund'' and available for Iraq may be obligated or expended unless and until the President of the United States certifies in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(1) above and makes a further certification in the report outlined in subsection (2)(b)(4) above that Iraq is making progress on each of the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above.

(b) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The President may waive the requirements of this section if he submits to Congress a written certification setting forth a detailed justification for the waiver, which shall include a detailed report describing the actions being taken by the Unites States to bring the Iraqi government into compliance with the benchmarks set forth in Section 2 above. The certification shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 4. REDEPLOYMENT OF U.S. FORCES FROM IRAQ.

(a) The President of the United States, in respecting the sovereign rights of the nation of Iraq, shall direct the orderly redeployment of elements of U.S. forces from Iraq, if the components of the Iraqi government, acting in strict accordance with their respective powers given by the Iraqi Constitution, reach a consensus as recited in a resolution, directing a redeployment of U.S. forces.

SEC. 5. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS.

(a) Assessment by the Comptroller General.

(1) Not later than September 1, 2007, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress an independent report setting forth—

(A) the status of the achievement of the benchmarks specified in Section 2 above; and

(B) the Comptroller General's assessment whether or not each such benchmark has been met.

(b) Assessment of the Capabilities of Iraqi Security Forces.

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense, $750,000.000, that the Department, in turn, will commission an independent, private-sector entity, which operates as a 501 (c)(3), with recognized credentials and expertise in military affairs, to prepare an independent report assessing the following:

(A) The readiness of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to assume responsibility for maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, and bringing greater security to Iraq's 18 provinces in the next 12–18 months, and bringing an end to sectarian violence to achieve national reconciliation.

(B) The training, equipping, command, control and intelligence capabilities, and logistics capacity of the ISF.

(C) The likelihood that, given the ISF's record of preparedness to date, following years of training and equipping by U.S. forces, the continued support of U.S. troops will contribute to the readiness of the ISF to fulfill the missions outlined in subparagraph (A).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act, the designated private sector entity shall provide an unclassified report, with a classified annex, containing its findings, to the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Relations/International Relations, and Intelligence.

SA 1135. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. BOND)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON FUNDING FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) The President is the commander in chief of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) The United States Armed Forces are currently engaged in military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom on behalf of the national security interests of the United States.

(3) The funds previously appropriated to continue military operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom are depleted.

(4) The President requested more than 100 days ago supplemental appropriations to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

(5) Congress has not passed a supplemental appropriations bill to continue funding for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the commander in chief believes gives the United States Armed Forces and the Iraqi people the best chance to succeed at establishing a safe, stable, and sustainable democracy in Iraq.

(6) A supplemental appropriations request to fund ongoing combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom should remain focused on the war effort by providing the resources necessary for United States troops abroad and in the United States.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that Congress should send legislation to the President providing appropriations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a manner that the President can sign into law by not later than May 28, 2007.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, May 17, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct an oversight hearing on law enforcement in Indian Country.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224–2251.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship will hold a hearing entitled ''Minority Entrepreneurship: Assessing the Effectiveness of SBA's Programs for the Minority Business Community,'' on Tuesday, May 22, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 22, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on S. 645, a bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to provide an alternate sulfur dioxide removal measurement for certain coal gasification project goals; S. 838, a bill to authorize funding joint ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons; S. 1089, a bill to amend the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act to follow the Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation projects to hire employees more efficiently, and for other purposes; S. 1203, a bill to enhance the management of electricity programs at

the Department of Energy; H.R. 85, a bill to provide for the establishment of centers to encourage demonstration and commercial application of advanced energy methods and technologies; and H.R. 1126, a bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510–6150, or by email to Amanda_Kelly@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Jonathan Epstein at (202) 224–4971 or Amanda Kelly at (202) 224–6836.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on Short-Term Energy Outlook Summer 2007: Oil and Gasoline.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in Room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Agenda: Hearing on ''Green Buildings: Benefits to Health, the Environment, and the Bottom Line.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 10 a.m. for a hearing titled ''Equal Representation in Congress: Providing Voting Rights to the District of Columbia.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on ''Preserving Prosecutorial Independence: Is the Department of Justice Politicizing the Hiring and Firing of U.S. Attorneys?—Part IV'' on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in Dirksen Senate Office Building room 226.

Witness List: James B. Comey, Former Deputy Attorney General, United States Department of Justice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the following bills: S. 553, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Eightmile River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; S. 800, to establish the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area in the State of New York; S. 916, to modify the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument, to establish the Minidoka National Historic Site, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land and improvements of the Gooding Division of the Minidoka Project, Idaho; S. 1057, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the New River in the States of North Carolina and Virginia as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; S. 1209, to provide for the continued administration of Santa Rosa Island, Channel Islands National Park, in accordance with the laws (including regulations) and policies of the National Park Service; S. 1281, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain rivers and streams of the headwaters of the Snake River System as additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System; H.R. 161, to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial in Bainbridge Island, Washington; H.R. 247, to designate a Forest Service trail at Waldo Lake in the Willamette National Forest in the State of Oregon as a national recreation trail in honor of Jim Weaver, a former Member of the House of Representatives; and H.R. 376, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of including the battlefields and related sites of the First and Second Battles of Newtonia, Missouri, during the Civil War as part of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield or designating the battlefields and related sites as a separate unit of the National Park System.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT AND AGING

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions' Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging, be authorized to hold a hearing on Alzheimer's disease during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 10 a.m. in room 628 of the Senate Dirksen Office building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STATEMENTS IN TRIBUTE TO SENATOR STEVENS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the tribute to Senator STEVENS in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD be printed as a Senate document and that Senators be permitted to submit statements for inclusion in the RECORD until June 1 of this year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DESIGNATING MAY 14, 2007, THROUGH MAY 18, 2007, AS ''NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WEEK''

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 202.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 202) designating the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as ''National Health Information Technology Week.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 202) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 202

Whereas the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society has worked collaboratively with more than 48 stakeholder organizations for more than 45 years to transform health care with improved uses of information technology and management systems;

Whereas the Center for Information Technology Leadership estimated that the implementation of national standards for interoperability and the exchange of health information would save the United States approximately $77,000,000,000 in expenses relating to health care each year;

Whereas the RAND Corporation estimated that, if the health care system of the United States implemented the use of computerized medical records, the system could save the United States more than $81,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas health care information technology has been shown to improve the quality and safety of the delivery of health care in the United States;

Whereas health care information technology and management systems have been recognized as essential tools for improving the quality and cost efficiency of the health care system;

Whereas the President and Secretary of Health and Human Services have made a

commitment to leveraging the benefits of the health care information technology and management systems by establishing the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology and the American Health Information Community;

Whereas Congress has placed an emphasis on improving the quality and safety of the delivery of health care in the United States; and

Whereas organizations across the country have come together to support National Health Information Technology Week to improve public awareness relating to the potential benefits of improved quality and cost efficiency that the health care system could achieve if health information technology were better utilized: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the value of information technology and management systems in transforming health care for all people in the United States;

(2) designates the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as ''National Health Information Technology Week''; and

(3) encourages the use of information technology and management systems to transform the health care system in the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL-BASED MUSIC EDUCATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of H. Con. Res 121 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 121) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first of all, let me express my appreciation to the Presiding Officer, for you and all the staff. I am sorry things take so long. Believe me, I wish we would have done it more quickly myself. Sometimes you can't. It takes a lot of phone calls.

As I have reminded people, much of what we do in the Senate is done with unanimous consent. That means all Senators have to agree, and there are 100 of us. Senator MCCONNELL and I have been making phone calls to see if we can get this resolved, and I think we are at the point we need to be now. So thank you very much, everybody.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Presiding Officer is very happy to be here.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. Con. Res. 21

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order on Thursday, May 17, to proceed to the consideration of the conference report on the budget, if available, notwithstanding provisions of rule XXII.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1348

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1348 occur on Monday, May 21, no earlier than 5.30 p.m., and that if cloture is invoked, the motion be agreed to without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for those who are watching, I have spoken to people doing the negotiating on immigration, and they tell me they are 80 percent of the way. Well, that is fine, but the other 20 percent is hard. I don't think we lose a step by the agreement that we have just had. It will allow the people who have been working on this matter for a number of weeks to have a few more days to do that.

It would be different if we had nothing else to do here, but this will kind of clear the deck so we can, hopefully, complete WRDA, the budget, send something to conference on the supplemental, and then next week we have to do the conference report on the supplemental, which shouldn't take long, and then spend that time, if we can get an agreement, on immigration. That is why we have done what we have done with this consent agreement.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SESSIONS have up to 3 hours under his control to speak on Monday, May 21; that the hour prior to cloture be reserved for the two leaders or their designees; and that Senator SESSIONS also have 2 hours under his control on Tuesday, May 22, when and if we go to the immigration matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 16; that on Wednesday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time of the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1495, as provided for under a previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business, and the Republican leader has nothing further, which I understand is correct, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:03 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 16, 2007, at 9 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate May 15, 2007:

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DAVID J. MERCER, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be captain

NICHOLAS J. ALAGA, JR., 0000
WILLIAM M. ALBIN, 0000
SCOTT D. ALWINE, 0000
WILLIAM A. ANDERSON, JR., 0000
WILLIAM C. APPLEWHITE, JR., 0000
PATRICK A. BACCANARI, 0000
RONALD K. BACH, 0000
JAMES L. BARGE, 0000
DAVID F. BASSETT, 0000
DANIEL M. BAUER, 0000
ROBERT S. BAZAN, 0000
ALAN D. BEAL, 0000
MATTHEW M. BELL, 0000
KEVIN L. BERTELSEN, 0000
CRAIG W. BLADOW, 0000
DEAN R. BLAHA, 0000
DONALD M. BOUCHARD, 0000
ERIC E. BOWMAN, 0000
GLENN R. BRANDENBURG, 0000
JOHN F. BRENNAN, 0000
DENNIS K. BRUCE, 0000
ANDREW D. BUCKON, 0000
THEODORE J. BURGE, 0000
EUGENE E. BURKE, 0000
PATRICK C. BURNS, 0000
JULE B. BUTLER, 0000
RONDA L. BYRNECLARK, 0000
DAVID J. CANTRELL, 0000
JOSEPH R. CHAMPAGNE, 0000
RONALD D. COLLETT, JR., 0000
DAVID P. CONNELLY III, 0000
DAVID D. N. CORLEY, 0000
STUART B. CRAIG, 0000
WILLIAM M. CRANE, 0000
SCOTT G. CRANSTON, 0000
ROBERT K. CREIGHTON III, 0000
DAVID W. CRITCHLEY III, 0000
CARL W. CUSAAC, 0000
RICHARD S. DANN, 0000
JEFFREY C. DAUS, 0000
JEFFREY D. DAVISSON, 0000
KENNETH A. DEAKIN, 0000
CRAIG C. DEBEAUMONT, 0000
TIMOTHY P. DELOACHE, 0000
JAMES K. DICAMPLI, 0000
JAMES P. DIMATTEO, 0000
JOSEPH P. DIPAOLA, JR., 0000
FREEMAN R. DODSWORTH, 0000

MICHAEL E. DOYLE, 0000
KEVIN L. DUGGAN, 0000
JAMES D. DUNDORF, 0000
JAMES E. EPPLE, 0000
ROBERT A. ESPINOSA, 0000
RONALD A. FARMER, 0000
DAVID M. FITZGERALD, 0000
BRUCE M. FOCHT, 0000
THOMAS F. FOLEY, 0000
DIRK L. FOSTER, 0000
MARK M. FREDERICKSON, 0000
ANDREW R. GALLOTTA, 0000
RICHARD GASPERONI, JR., 0000
DAVID M. GEICK, 0000
BRADLEY N. GEYER, 0000
MARK GIBBONS, 0000
WILLIAM GILLCRIST, 0000
JOHN W. GILMAN, 0000
ARTHUR W. GLYNN, 0000
CHRISTOPHER J. GOODE, 0000
DANIEL I. GRUTA, 0000
JAMES J. GUZZETTI, 0000
ROBERT C. HAGGERTY, 0000
PATRICK J. HAMILTON, 0000
SCOTT S. HANDLER, 0000
DUANE E. HARPER, 0000
SAMUEL R. HARRIS, 0000
JOHN A. HAYES, 0000
PAUL A. HECHENBERGER, 0000
JAMES C. HEYE, 0000
PATRICK J. HEYE, 0000
EDWARD H. HILL, 0000
JAMES F. HILLMAN, 0000
CHRISTOPHER L. HOLLADAY, 0000
BRADLEY D. HOLT, 0000
KIRK D. HORNBURG, 0000
JEFFREY C. HORNEFF, 0000
ANDREW L. HOWARD, 0000
JAMES HUDSON, 0000
ROBERT J. HUGHES, 0000
DAVID P. HUNTER, 0000
THOMAS F. HURLEY II, 0000
JAMES M. INGALLS, 0000
MARGARET L. JEFFRIES, 0000
KEVIN M. JENNE, 0000
KEVIN R. JOHNSON, 0000
ANDREW M. JONES, 0000
COLETTE D. KAMLIN, 0000
PATRICK O. KENNEDY, 0000
DWIGHT A. KENNY, 0000
ROBERT J. KLEIN, 0000
BRIAN A. KUERBITZ, 0000
DAVID A. KUNSKY, JR., 0000
THOMAS R. LAND, 0000
GREGORY R. LARSON, 0000
BRANDT W. LATIMER, 0000
ANDREW C. LENNON, 0000
MARY K. LEWIS, 0000
MONTGOMERY P. LIU, 0000
MARK F. LULING, 0000
ROBERT J. LUMAN, 0000
MARK A. LUNDE, 0000
DONALD P. MACNEIL, 0000
LAWRENCE R. MAGNER, JR., 0000
BASIL K. MAKRIDIS, 0000
PHILIP B. MANSER, 0000
DEREK S. MARTIN, 0000
KEVIN M. MCCARTHY, 0000
DAN M. MCCULLEY, 0000
JAMES H. MCGEE, JR., 0000
MICHAEL W. MCGEHEE, 0000
GREGORY J. MCGIFFNEY, 0000
GREGORY D. MCLAUGHLIN, 0000
KERRY M. METZ, 0000
MICHAEL W. MIDDLETON, 0000
JACK P. MILLER, 0000
ALLIE W. MILLIGAN, 0000
BRIAN MINZENMAYER, 0000
ROBERT S. MITCHELL, 0000
CASEY D. MOLONEY, 0000
DOUGLAS W. MONTGOMERY, 0000
MICHAEL F. MORRISSEY, 0000
JOHN G. MOSHER, 0000
JOHN J. MOYNIHAN, JR., 0000
ERIC M. MUELLER, 0000
STEVEN B. MUTZ, 0000
CHRISTOPHER C. NICOL, 0000
THOMAS C. OCONNELL, 0000
PHILLIP E. OLD, 0000
THOMAS S. OLIVER III, 0000
DAVID M. OSEN, 0000
RONALD L. PAGE, 0000
CHAD L. PAINTER, 0000
TIMOTHY J. PANOFF, 0000
PERRY PARISI, 0000
MATTHEW S. PAULSON, 0000
DANIEL G. PEDRO, 0000
MICHAEL K. PETZOLD, 0000
MICHAEL P. PITNEY, 0000
LISA P. POTVIN, 0000
HENRY M. RAINONE, 0000
SCOTT A. READY, 0000
WARREN A. REBARKER, 0000
THOMAS G. RECK, 0000
TOMUS S. REDFORD, 0000
CURTIS S. RENARD, 0000
CHARLES D. RICHTER, 0000
LAWRENCE D. ROLLO, 0000
MICHAEL T. ROMINSKI, 0000
DANIEL M. ROY, 0000
JOSEPH B. RYAN, 0000
DANIEL SALAZAR, 0000
NEIL K. SAWYER, 0000
WILLIAM E. SCARING, 0000
STEPHEN J. SCHAFFER, 0000
KENNETH D. SENER, 0000
JOSEPH E. SHAFFER, 0000
DEBRA K. SHARITS, 0000
JAMES A. SHEA, 0000
DAVID B. SHECKELLS, 0000
STEPHEN V. SLEEM, 0000
JOHN W. SNARR, 0000
MONROE J. J. SPARKS, 0000
JOSEPH M. SPIVEY IV, 0000
WILLIAM H. STARR, 0000
GREGORY F. STEPHENS, 0000
CATHERINE F. STULTZ, 0000
MICHAEL D. TERRELL, 0000
FREDERICK D. THOMPSON, 0000
JESSE M. TILLMAN III, 0000
PETER D. TOMASCAK, 0000
STEVEN C. TULIP, 0000
TODD A. VALDES, 0000
DAVID N. VALENTE, 0000
SCOTT F. VANEK, 0000
MARC D. VARNEY, 0000
ROBERTO C. VELASCO, 0000
LINDA R. D. WACKERMAN, 0000
JEFFREY L. WAGONER, 0000
THOMAS E. WALTON, 0000
KEITH R. WANDER, 0000
KEITH E. WARNER, 0000
BRIAN K. WATERHOUSE, 0000
TODD A. WATERMAN, 0000
EDWARD T. WATKO, 0000
JOHN W. WATTS, 0000
RICHARD H. WHEAT, 0000
JOHN A. WILL, 0000
ROBERT R. WILLIAMS, 0000
WILLIAM T. WILLIAMS, 0000
WILLIAM A. WIMMER, 0000
WILLIAM W. WINDLE, 0000
KARL A. WINTERMEYER, 0000
BRETT D. WISE, 0000
TIMOTHY S. WOLTERS, 0000
EDWARD A. YEASTE, 0000
ITHAN B. ZIMMER, 0000
MARK H. ZUHONE, 0000

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO C. DIXON OSBURN–

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Speaker, today I pay tribute to C. Dixon Osburn, co-founder and executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network for 13 years. Dixon recently left the helm of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, and today I recognize and commend him for the contributions he has made to our nation's Armed Forces and to our nation's enduring goal of freedom and equality under the law for all Americans.

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network is a non-profit legal aid and advocacy organization founded in 1993 to assist service members living under the discriminatory ''Don't Ask, Don't Tell'' statute that became the law in my first months of serving in the United States Congress. Under Dixon's leadership, the organization has responded to more than 8,000 requests for assistance, and continues today to be a leader of the national movement to repeal ''Don't Ask, Don't Tell.''

I am proud to have worked with Dixon Osburn toward the goal of repealing ''Don't Ask, Don't Tell.'' This law has resulted in the discharge of more than 11,000 service members from our Armed Forces, at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. It is an affront to the patriotism and talent of the over one million lesbian, gay and bisexual Americans estimated to have served in our nation's Armed Forces to date.

I am proud to serve as the sponsor of legislation to repeal ''Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'' and I commend Dixon Osburn for all he has done to help lay the ground work for the passage of this important legislation.

HONORING THE CITY OF KILLEEN ON ITS 125TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, the City of Killeen, Texas celebrates its 125th birthday, today, May 15th, 2007. The City of Killeen was born May 15, 1882, when the Santa Fe Railroad extended its line westward. Named for Frank P. Killeen, an official of the railroad in Galveston, some believe that Killeen may have been among the railroad dignitaries on the train that arrived to mark the beginning of the town, but it has never been confirmed. The town of about 300 people became a shipping point of the area for agricultural products, cotton in particular.

In the next 60 years, the city prospered and grew to over 1,200 people. But in 1942, this small railroad town became home to military post Camp Hood. The military camp's impact was tremendous more than quintupling Killeen's population in its first few years.

After World War II, the Army was looking for a place to train soldiers in tank destroyer tactics, and Killeen fit the bill. Camp Hood was named for Confederate General John Bell Hood. The initial installation covered 160,000 acres; most of Killeen's best farming land, forcing many families from their homesteads. In 1950, the camp was declared a permanent post changing its name to Fort Hood.

Killeen was now a military town, so its goal became to make it the best town for military families to live. Supporting our soldiers and their families is still the top priority today.

The town and the fort grew together. Killeen worked to develop infrastructure that would incorporate the military base and its needs. Immediate needs were water leading to the construction of Belton Lake and later, Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir; the construction of better highways to meet military and civilian travel needs; major construction to provide housing; and an accompanying growth in retail business.

This small agriculture turned railroad turned military town now has a population of over 100,000 people and is bustling with commerce. Killeen has a young, diverse populous served by good schools and affordable housing and will continue to thrive in its next 125 years.

RECOGNIZING THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN IN CELEBRATION OF OBERLIN, OHIO'S JUNETEENTH CEREMONIES

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Tuskegee Airmen who were recently awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, specifically seven men being honored by their home community of Oberlin, Ohio in its annual Juneteenth celebration: Norman E. Proctor, Wayman E. Scott, Ferrier H. White, William Young, Gilbert Cargill, Perry Young, and William L. Williams, Jr.

On March 29, 2007, we were privileged to be witnesses to history as the largest group ever to be awarded a Congressional Gold Medal was honored in the Capitol rotunda. The elder men and their families who joined us that day were there not only to be feted for their own achievements, but represented dozens more of these gallant heroes who could not be there. I am proud that many residents in our own Ninth Congressional District of Ohio were part of this elite cadre of men.

The story of the Tuskegee Airmen continues to unfold, for they were truly unsung heroes of their time. Their outstanding service during World War II became legendary. Even while they fought a common enemy in foreign lands, they also fought racism at home. Despite discrimination they helped to tear down racial barriers in the U.S. armed services. History books tell the story that no U.S. military pilot was African-American prior to World War II. Eventually, in 1941, guided by leaders of the African-American civil rights movement the United States Congress directed the Army Air Corps to form an all-black combat unit. In June of that year, the 99th Fighter Squadron was formed at the Tuskegee Institute, a well-regarded university founded by national leader Booker T. Washington in Tuskegee, Alabama. The squadron was placed under the command of Capt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., one of the few African-American West Point graduates.

During World War II the Tuskegee Airmen flew escort for heavy bombers, established an impressive combat record, and often entered combat against greater numbers of superior German aircraft. By war's end, the unit was credited with shooting down 109 Luftwaffe aircraft and destroying numerous fuel dumps, trucks and trains. The squadrons of the 332nd Fighter Group flew more than 15,000 sorties on 1,500 missions.

The unit was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation for a mission flown on March 24, 1945, escorting B–17s to bomb the Daimler-Benz tank factory at Berlin, Germany, an action in which its pilots destroyed three Me–262 jets in aerial combat. The meritorious individual achievements of the pilots were also recognized. Together, the Tuskegee Airmen were awarded 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, seven Silver Stars, fourteen Bronze Stars, and 744 Air Medals. From 1940 to 1946, 992 pilots were trained as Tuskegee Airmen. Of these, 445 went overseas and 150 lost their lives in service to our Nation and freedom's cause.

Booker T. Washington once noted that ''A life is not worth much of which it cannot be said, when it comes to its close, that it was helpful to humanity.'' The corps of airmen who hailed from the school Mr. Washington founded most assuredly fulfilled that destiny. Our world remains profoundly grateful.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, on May 9th, during rollcall vote 318, on final passage of H.R. 1684, the Department of Homeland Security Authorization bill, I was detained and unable to reach the House floor in time to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

On May 14, because of business in Colorado, I was not present for the following three votes:

Rollcall vote 342, to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1124, to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999—had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Rollcall vote 343, to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 223, supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims—had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

Rollcall vote 344, to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 385, recognizing National AmeriCorps Week—had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

FREEDOM FOR ROLANDO JIMÉNEZ POSADA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Rolando Jiménez Posada, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Jiménez Posada is a lawyer and a director of the Democratic Human Rights Center. As a pro-democracy activist, Mr. Jiménez Posada has devoted himself to portraying the genuine terror of life in totalitarian Cuba. Because of his brave commitment to freedom for the Cuban people and his activities as a pro-democracy activist, the regime began by firing him from his job.

Mr. Jiménez Posada has been detained and threatened numerous times over the past years. On December 10, 2001, while taking part in a peaceful celebration to observe the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he and several others were beaten and pushed into police vehicles and then discarded in remote areas as a means of psychological torture. Amnesty International reports that in July 2002 Mr. Jiménez Posada was threatened at his home after handing out copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Later, the tyrant's thugs told him that he would be imprisoned if he continued carrying out public activities in support of Cuba's political prisoners.

Despite harassment and the continuous threats, Mr. Jiménez Posada never wavered in his conviction. On April 25, 2003, he was arrested and thrown in the gulag on accusations of ''disrespecting the commander'' (the tyrant) and ''revealing state secrets''. For 4 years, he languished in sub-human conditions awaiting ''formal charges'' and a ''trial'' for his ''crime'' of believing that all men have an inherent right to live in freedom.

On April 6, 2007, Mr. Jiménez Posada was ''sentenced'' to 12 years in a second secret trial in less than a week. His family and loved ones were never notified of his trial date, and when he even so much as attempted to voice concerns about the lack of defense counsel he was summarily thrown into a dungeon once again and prohibited all forms of legal defense. Let me be clear, Mr. Jiménez Posada rejects the gangster regime's constant propaganda and its lies. For that reason, he languishes in the most infernal conditions in the tyrant's dungeons.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Jiménez Posada suffers in the repulsive squalor of the totalitarian regime's gulag because he believes in truth and fundamental human rights for the Cuban people. It constitutes a crime of the highest order that a mere 90 miles from our shores, honorable men and women are jailed in dungeons simply for their desire to make known the truth of Cuba's tragic reality and for believing that all Cubans are deserving of human rights. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Rolando Jiménez Posada and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO LISA RAE AUSTGEN

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take this time to remember one of northwest Indiana's most distinguished citizens, Lisa Rae Austgen of Lowell, Indiana. Lisa's numerous contributions to her community are worthy of the highest admiration, especially her service as the director of the Challenger Center of Northwest Indiana in Hammond, Indiana. Lisa passed away on Friday, May 11, 2007, and following services at the Sheets Funeral Home in Lowell, she will be laid to rest on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at Plum Grove Cemetery, also in Lowell.

Lisa was an integral part of the success of the Challenger Learning Center of Northwest Indiana. Housed on the Purdue University—Calumet campus in Hammond, Indiana, the Challenger Learning Center provides a worthwhile educational resource to area schools. Under Lisa's direction, this 8-year old program has opened the window to space exploration to students who might otherwise have no exposure to our final frontier.

Lisa's passion for the Challenger Learning Center of Northwest Indiana is entwined into the legacy of this program. Completely devoted to improving and modernizing educational, opportunities for children, Lisa created programs at the center that simulated space missions, integrating information provided by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, into real-life missions controlled and operated by students. These missions not only offered students the chance to experience life as astronauts, but also taught valuable life skills, such as teamwork and cooperation, that they are able to apply to other facets of their academic development.

Thanks to Lisa's selfless dedication to actively pursuing funding for the center, thousands of students throughout the First Congressional District have had the unique opportunity to participate in the programs at the center which instill and increase students' enthusiasm for science, math, and technology. Further, her innovative approach to education fomented a genuine excitement among the students' attitudes toward math and science. Lisa was truly the backbone of the Challenger Learning Center and will be sorely missed by all the individuals with whom she worked so diligently to provide this resource to the region.

Lisa is survived by her loving husband, Tom; two sons: Ethan and Ryan; one daughter, Cassie Karney; mother, Karen Stover of Elwood, IN; father, Max (Mary) Stover of Kokomo, IN; one brother, Mike (Billie) Stover of Elwood, IN; one sister, Jennifer (Shaun) Boetjjer of Galveston, IN; and several nieces and nephews. Lisa also leaves to cherish her memory many other family members and friends who will forever remember her devotion to, not only her community, but to her family as well.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mrs. Lisa Austgen for her outstanding devotion to Indiana's First Congressional District. Her unselfish and lifelong dedication to the young people of northwest Indiana is worthy of the highest commendation. Lisa's selflessness was an inspiration to us all, and I am proud to have represented her in Congress.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of beginning the process to redeploy our troops in the coming months.

I first began calling for troop redeployment early last year when—despite the removal of Saddam Hussein, significant training of Iraqi police and army units, and the opening for a potential democracy in the Middle East—it became clear, it was time for a new direction in Iraq. I called for our troops to be redeployed within the year as it had become all too evident that they would be caught in the middle of escalating sectarian violence if they stayed. I urged the administration to adopt the recommendations of the Iraq study group to get the most stable result, but the administration rejected that advice and escalated the war.

Yet today, as violence in Iraq has only gotten worse with the number of U.S. dead and wounded continuing to grow and countless numbers of Iraqis dying in what has become a full blown civil war, this Administration tries to impose a military solution that cannot work. The escalation, which this administration now says will last until next spring, is simply the wrong way to go. Let us serve our men and women fighting overseas and recognize their sacrifices by charting a new course in Iraq.

Over the coming months, we must begin a responsible withdrawal of our troops. Only by moving forward with a redeployment of our troops can we provide the teeth necessary to force the Bush Administration and the Iraqi government to implement the benchmarks they set themselves, including debathification, minority rights, and sharing oil revenue.

I fully support funding for our troops as we scale down our operations in Iraq. I also believe the United States must stay engaged, leaving a limited number of forces to hunt down Al Qaeda and other terrorist operatives, help train Iraqi forces, and maintain a presence in neighboring countries.

It is just as important for this administration to start getting serious about a diplomatic offensive. I believe it must work harder in coordination with Iraq's neighbors and other leading countries to help the Iraqis settle their political differences and provide support for the reconstruction efforts.

By bringing the vast majority of our troops home in the coming months we will show both the Iraqis and the world that we are serious, that we believe the military mission is done, and that it is time for the Iraqis to take accountability for their country.

Mr. Speaker, by voting to redeploy in the coming months, I vote for accountability in Iraq. We can delay no longer. As a Congress we have a responsibility to support the troops, to honor our commitment to veterans, hold the Iraqi government accountable, and continue to press the President to change course and end this war.

I have made this clear before, and I will repeat it again here, today. Too many lives are at stake: I have crossed the Rubicon on this war.

Yet the President has chosen another path. While the American people continue to throw their hands in the air, this administration continues to ignore the painful consequences of its disastrous strategy. With his own veto last week, the President made clear his strategy will not change—unless we do something about it, here today.

We all know our troops will do anything their country asks—but let us not ask them to sacrifice everything for the wrong mission. We have a responsibility to get it right.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF BEECHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT PROJECT HEAD START

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Beecher Community School District Project Head Start. A community celebration is planned for Friday, May 18th in Flint, Michigan. The celebration will be attended by alumni, current and former staff, parents, students and other members of the community.

The Beecher Community School District is a delegate program of the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department. Over the past 40 years the Beecher Head Start program has served over 6,000 students. It is a comprehensive program providing medical, dental, nutrition, and child development. The teachers and social workers make home visits to assess the needs of the child and work to fully involve parents in the child's progress. This year 357 pupils benefited from participation in the program.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Beecher Community School District Project Head Start on 40 years of successfully preparing youngsters for school and enhancing the social and reasoning skills of thousands of students.

THANKING TINA TATE FOR HER PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, today I pay tribute to the career and personal achievement of one of the House's own—Tina Tate, who will retire on May 17 as the Director of the House Radio and Television Gallery after 34 years of service to this wonderful institution.

During the last three and one-half decades, Tina has worked tirelessly with the People's House and the media to chronicle the sometimes tumultuous but always lively day-to-day history of the Congress. She has gracefully assisted Democrats and Republicans in their interaction with the press during a period when technological advances changed the manner in which the media informed the American people about their government.

In 1969, Tina moved from her native Georgia to Washington, DC, with her husband and young son. Three years later, during the Nixon Administration and Carl Albert's Speakership, she was hired as the first female employee of the House Radio and Television Gallery. At that time, there were only three national television news organizations, and it was still one year before CBS radio took the bold step of launching a ''news on the hour'' service.

In 1981, she was selected Superintendent of the Radio TV Gallery—the first female to head that office. This was the first year of Ronald Reagan's Presidency and the fifth year of Thomas P. ''Tip'' O'Neill's service as Speaker. Since then she has overseen the historic coverage of the transition of power in the House, first from Democratic to Republican hands in 1994, and then a return to Democratic governance in 2006.

During her service, Tina served five Speakers of the House, guiding the House and those who cover it with integrity, honesty and a desire to help all sides succeed in a rapidly changing, frequently challenging environment.

Madam Speaker, Tina has left her mark on Congress and those who cover us for the people. For the press, she has been an advocate and steady hand in working with Congress to expand openness and access. For Members of Congress, she has been a faithful guardian of the institution's interests and the precedents that protect this body.

In addition to helping reporters gather news within the halls of Congress, Tina and her office have helped more than 5,000 members of independent radio and television organizations cover every national political convention. That makes sense, since once a nominee became President she oversaw their subsequent State of the Union Addresses.

Tina not only arranged logistics, she innovated. She developed new platforms for coverage, whether that be utilizing Statuary Hall to allow Members to talk to national and local media, or paving the way for new technologies like HDTV to find their place in the coverage of newsworthy events. She has had a hand in making all of this work and finding new ways to open up our government.

Tina's contribution will continue into the future. Since 2000, she has been working to establish a necessary and appropriate foothold for the electronic media in the Congressional Visitor's Center. As the technology and press have changed in 34 years, so have their needs and the needs of Members of Congress. She foresaw that growth and has worked with us to make the House successful in the years to come.

Let me close by thanking Tina for her service, friendship and gracious guidance. She leaves the House of Representatives the better for her service.

HONORING BRIDGES . . . A COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEM, INC., AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise today to extend my sincere congratulations to Bridges . . . A Community Support System, Inc., of Milford, Connecticut, as they celebrate their 50th anniversary. This is a remarkable milestone for this outstanding organization dedicated to providing support and mental health services to those in need.

Originally founded in 1957 as the Milford Family Counseling Association, the organization's mission initially focused on addressing the mental health needs of children in the Milford community. The organization expanded and so did its scope of services—including adult psychiatric services, drug and alcohol prevention services and opening its doors to the neighboring communities of Orange and West Haven. As the needs of our communities and its residents changed, so did the agency as well as its name. Designated in the 1990s by the State of Connecticut as the Local Mental Health Authority, the organization made its final name change in 1999 to Bridges . . . A Community Support System to better reflect its purpose and mission.

Today, Bridges, working with local agencies and organizations, is able to provide a multitude of programs to those most in need. From individual counseling to bereavement support; teenage drug and alcohol prevention to vocational and social rehabilitation services, Bridges and its dedicated staff have continually identified the changing needs of our community. The partnerships they have established allow them to provide comprehensive services to their clients—making a real difference in the lives of thousands of children and families.

In building upon the vision first established with the Milford Family Counseling Association, Bridges has been able to provide those coping with the challenges of mental illnesses with one of life's most precious gifts—hope. Through its gift of hope, Bridges has left an indelible mark on our community and the thousands of lives they have touched. In its 50 year history, Bridges has established itself as an invaluable resource as well as respected advocates—not only for their clients, but community leaders and policy-makers alike.

Today, Bridges is continuing its legacy of helping people live more fulfilling and productive lives by providing clients with ''Pathways to Health, Hope, and Recovery.'' For its many invaluable contributions to our community and for all of their work on behalf of our children and families, I am proud to stand today and extend my sincere congratulations to the Bridges . . . A Community Support System on their 50th anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO SONIA GUTIÉRREZ

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to take this moment to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the founder and acting director of the Carlos Rosario School here in Washington, DC, Ms. Sonia Gutiérrez.

Carlos Manuel Rosario was the founder of the Program of English Instruction for Latin Americans in 1970, and was based out of the Columbia Heights neighborhood here in Washington, DC. In 1972, he met a woman named Sonia Gutiérrez, a professional educator who had just recently moved to Washington from Puerto Rico, and persuaded her to work for PEILA.

In October 1972, Ms. Gutiérrez became the Director of PEILA and transformed the small, underfunded English as a Second Language (ESL) program into a comprehensive adult education program. In 1974, the Office of Right to Read of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare designated it as one of the best literacy programs in the nation.

At Ms. Gutiérrez's request in 1992, the city council renamed the school after Carlos Rosario, who founded PEILA. The program provides 4,500 students per year with the necessary language, cultural, vocational and job skills to become functional and productive members of society. Their current waiting list stands at 2,000.

The school became a national and international model, and delegations from other states and other nations frequently visited the center to review its operations and curriculum, with hopes of replicating the success of the program.

In 1996, the District of Columbia faced a financial crisis that brought about the elimination of all DC Public Schools adult education programs, including the Carlos Rosario Adult Education Center. Ms. Gutiérrez vowed to rebuild the school for the benefit of her students and her community.

From August 1996 to March 1997, Ms. Gutiérrez worked tirelessly out of the basement of her home and raised $100,000 dollars from local foundations to reopen the school as the non-profit Carlos Rosario International Career Center. The new school opened its doors in April 1997 with Ms. Gutiérrez as Executive Director & Founder.

Realizing that there were still many in the community who were not being served, Ms. Gutiérrez actively sought for Public Charter School funding to increase the number of classes and opportunities available. She succeeded and in 1998 the school became the first Adult Public Charter School in the nation.

Today, the non-profit Carlos Rosario International Career Center and Public Charter School provides more than 1,200 students with English as a Second Language, GED in Spanish and English, courses in different areas of technology, citizenship classes, culinary arts, family literacy and Spanish classes.

Ms. Gutiérrez has also been very involved in the social and economic development of the Latino Community. In 1977, she founded the Council of Latino Agencies. She was instrumental in establishing the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs and presided over the Latino Festival. She is the past President of the Metropolitan Association of Adult and Continuing Education and also for both DC Commission for Women and the Latino Community Development Commission.

These are just a few of her accomplishments as a community organizer and leader. Ms. Gutiérrez should be an inspiration to us all, and should serve as a reminder that one person can make a difference in the lives of many.

I am honored to have a moment to recognize her 35 years of service to the Latino community of Washington, DC.

HONORING ST. PAUL YWCA'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the St. Paul YWCA for its 100 years of providing hope, opportunity, and a community gathering place for the residents of St. Paul.

Founded in 1907 by a group of dedicated young women who moved to St. Paul to look for employment opportunities in the factories and mills, the St. Paul YWCA and its programs have continuously evolved to meet the changing needs of the community. The first YWCA was constructed on Fifth Street in downtown St. Paul with a gymnasium, club, classrooms, auditorium, and a 100–bed residence. Since its beginning, the YWCA has maintained its commitment to serve and support women by providing programs in education, business skills, home arts and crafts, and physical fitness.

Over the years, the St. Paul YMCA has helped to foster other community initiatives and organizations. It provided office and meeting space for organizations such as Campfire Girls and the League of Women Voters, and later helped to spur the beginning of community agencies such as the Hallie O. Brown Center, Travelers Aid, International Institute of Minnesota, and Capitol Community Services. The YWCA was a pioneer of the first Festival of Nations grand opening in 1932.

During the Great Depression, the St. Paul YWCA helped to build up the community by offering job assistance and counseling for women in business and industry. Similar efforts were undertaken during World War II, when the YWCA provided support for women entering the labor force as well as support for servicemen and women through the USO and relief efforts.

In the second half of the 20th century, the St. Paul YWCA expanded its community outreach by offering educational and recreational programs, including housing projects as well as emergency shelter for homeless women and children in the state of Minnesota.

In the first 7 years of the 21st century, the YWCA has risen to new opportunities, serving more than 6,000 people through its programs that include wellness services, supportive housing, long-term mentoring, childcare, youth development programs, volunteer services, and community programming. In addition, the YWCA has served over 350 schools, community and government agencies, service providers, and businesses through its programs. I look forward to celebrating YWCA's many successes in the years to come.

Madam Speaker, in honor of the founders of the St. Paul YWCA, its staff, board members, and volunteers, and its delivery services that have made a difference for the lives of others, I am pleased to submit this statement for the Congressional Record recognizing the 100th anniversary of the St. Paul, MN, YWCA.

HONORING THE ''WELCOME HOME A HERO'' VOLUNTEER CAMPAIGN AT THE DFW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON ITS THIRD ANNIVERSARY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, the United States Army's Personnel Assistance Point at DFW Airport, the North Texas Commission and to DFW Airport's dedicated staff and thousands of community volunteers for reaching the third anniversary of the ''Welcome Home a Hero'' volunteer campaign.

In June 2004, the DFW International Airport and the North Texas Commission organized the ''Welcome Home a Hero'' volunteer campaign to honor and serve the brave men and women of the U.S. Army who travel through the DFW Airport on leave for Rest and Recuperation (R&R). The campaign has developed into one of the largest and most respected ongoing community initiatives in North Texas and the U.S. The campaign involves a wide array of business, civic and volunteer organizations, including the USO, churches, corporations, chambers of commerce, the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts of America and many veterans groups. ''Welcome Home a Hero'' has been so successful that it has been honored with the George Washington Honor Medal by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge and it has received hundreds of messages of gratitude from our servicemen and women who appreciate the patriotism and hospitality of DFW Airport and its loyal volunteers in North Texas.

This year more than 500,000 U.S. soldiers will have passed through the airport and participated in the R&R program and ''Welcome Home a Hero'' campaign. When these courageous soldiers arrive they are greeted with a warm reception and the thankful words of fellow Americans who wish to honor the enormous sacrifices made by all of our men and women in uniform.

Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize all those who have made the DFW Airport and Texas an emblem of patriotism to countless troops from around the nation. I congratulate the ''Welcome Home a Hero'' campaign for three great years and I am proud to witness the raw emotion and thanksgiving that emanates from both the soldiers and those who come here to celebrate their resolve.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 291, a resolution that commemorates and observes Peace Officers' Memorial Day, which honors law enforcement officers and those killed or disabled in the line of duty.

Law enforcement officers risk their lives daily to protect the citizens of this Nation and sadly 143 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in 2006. Next week, thousands of law enforcement officers will come to Washington, DC, to pay their respects to their fallen fellow officers at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. As a former police officer, I also pay tribute to law enforcement officials who died in the line of duty in 2006 and continue to honor those police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

As a proud member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I strongly support critical funding for programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, to hire additional police officers and help law enforcement acquire the latest crime-fighting technologies. I will continue to be a strong supporter of the law enforcement community and will advocate on behalf of public safety in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of our courageous law enforcement officers, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and paying respect to our valiant heroes. As a proud cosponsor of H. Res. 291, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POLAR BEAR PROTECTION ACT

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will close the polar bear loophole and prohibit U.S. citizens from bringing sport hunted polar bear trophies from Canada into the United States. I call on my colleagues to support the Polar Bear Protection Act, which if passed, will help conserve and protect one of the most beloved American icon species by discouraging U.S. citizens from contributing to their decline through sport hunting.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 established a moratorium on the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products, including the importation of all sport hunted marine mammals such as seals, walruses and polar bears. But in 1994, Congress enacted an exemption to this ban and allowed American sport hunters to bring home polar bear trophies from Canada for their personal use. There is no other such exemption in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This exemption has had the effect of increasing Canadian polar bear deaths by U.S. sport hunters.

In 1994 the polar bears' survival was not known to be at risk. Today, we know their future is precarious. Polar bear populations are facing threats previously unprecedented in the history in the Arctic. The polar bear is dependent on sea ice for survival—it relies on the ice for hunting, breeding and rearing its young. Yet as a result of climate change, Arctic sea ice is receding at a rate even a non-scientist can observe, rapidly enough for polar bears to feel the impacts. An unknown number of these magnificent creatures—which can swim at least 50 miles—have drowned and are starving. Populations are changing their distribution, bringing them closer to human villages and exposing them to greater risk of negative interactions with people as they desperately search for food. Leading scientists project that the Arctic may be completely free of sea ice in the summer as early as 2040. This has disastrous implications for polar bears.

In July 2005, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG) released its quadrennial report, which reviewed the status of polar bears. Although the world population estimate remains at 21,500–25,000, in fact many populations are ''data deficient,'' due to the difficulties of studying this species in its remote, harsh habitat. At least some populations are declining and more may be. The IUCN PBSG concluded that the species should be upgraded from ''a species of least concern'' to ''vulnerable,'' based on the ''likelihood of an overall decline in the size of the total population of more than 30 percent within the next 35 to 50 years.'' It further concluded that the principal cause of this decline is global warming, with pollution an additional negative influence. For the first time, they expressed a need for caution when determining hunting quotas.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has confirmed that warming temperatures and the receding of sea ice in the Arctic pose a threat to polar bears and has concluded that polar bears could be endangered within 45 years. Based on the threats posed to polar bears, the Interior Department proposed that polar bears be listed under the Endangered Species Act as ''threatened'' on December 27, 2006. As many of you know, I actively have supported the listing of polar bears on the Endangered Species List. I feel strongly that such a listing is vital to the bears' survival. I also feel strongly that sport hunting at this time is an additional unnecessary burden that these beleaguered bears can ill afford.

More than half of the world's polar bears are in Canada and most of these are in the territory of Nunavut. In 2005, Nunavut increased its polar bear hunt quotas by almost 30 percent without scientific basis, despite documented declines in some populations and the increased threats to polar bears from the effects of climate change. The increase was based on anecdotal accounts that more bears were seen near villages; however, this increase in sightings likely was the result of hungry bears being drawn to village dumps than an actual increase in bear numbers. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed concerns with this increase in quotas. Indeed, I am concerned that the money generated by American trophy hunters in Nunavut was a motivating factor in this quota increase.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also acknowledges that at least five polar bear populations, of which four are hunted, have poor and/or inadequate information on population statistics. It admits that four populations are possibly being over-harvested, posing conservation challenges for the bear.

Some of my colleagues here today may have supported the polar bear trophy importation exemption in 1994. I recognize that the landscape was different then, when many polar bear populations appeared sound. However, circumstances have dramatically changed. Seventeen years ago it was inconceivable to think that we could envision a world without these magnificent animals. Now, in 2007, we are learning that polar bear extinction could become a reality. While long-term action clearly is required to address the significant environmental factors negatively affecting polar bear survival, immediate action can and must be taken to control direct human-caused mortality, including addressing the harmful effects of U.S. trophy hunting.

I hope you all agree that contributing to the mortality of these bears from unnecessary sport hunting is no longer justified. We need to eliminate the exemption that allows the importation of polar bear trophies into the United States. The Polar Bear Protection Act will further polar bear conservation at a time when these animals need it most. I urge my colleagues to join me by supporting this legislation, and I hope that the Natural Resources Committee will hold hearings on polar-bear conservation and this bill.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2237, PROVIDING FOR REDEPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND DEFENSE CONTRACTORS FROM IRAQ; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2206, U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2207, AGRICULTURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND WESTERN STATES EMERGENCY UNFINISHED BUSINESS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this measure before us today because it provides a clearly needed change in course in Iraq. The President has placed roughly 160,000 of our troops in a highly vulnerable position—refereeing a civil war—while the various factions in Iraq have not made adequate progress toward reconciliation. The needed political reconciliation among these groups will not happen until we make it clear to the Iraqis that our occupation is coming to an end.

But our open-ended occupation of Iraq is not only not working; it's working against us. It undermines our fight against al-Qaeda and provides extremists a rallying point. We have every indication that al-Qaeda is resurgent in Pakistan, that bin Laden finds himself stronger

than ever, and that al-Qaeda-linked groups are growing in number and audacity. We need to responsibly redeploy our troops from Iraq so we can better fight this growing threat.

I initially had concerns with some of the language in this measure regarding funds for troops deployed to Iraq since January of this year. But after examining the bill more closely, I do not believe any provision in this bill would alter funding in a way that would put troops currently in the field at risk. The bottom line is that we must send a clear message to the President that we must change direction in Iraq and redeploy our troops.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF TITLE IX

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution celebrating the 35th anniversary of Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972. Thirty-five years ago, a college applicant could be denied admission simply because she was a woman.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 changed that. Led by the late Representatives Patsy T. Mink and Edith Green, Congress established a principle we often take for granted today—the prohibition of sex discrimination in any federally funded educational program. The results are astounding.

In 1972, only 9 percent of JDs were earned by women. Today women earn almost half of all law degrees. In fact, I am one of the many women able to go to law school because of Title IX. The story is similar for MDs and PhDs.

There are also, of course, the athletic opportunities. Here too, the change from 1972 to 2007 is astounding. Today, college athletic opportunities abound for young women. And the recent surge in women's professional sports teams could not have happened without the dramatic increase in women playing college sports.

These successes—both academic and athletic—are worth celebrating, as are the women who came before us here on the House floor as leaders of the Title IX movement. In 2002, after Representative Patsy T. Mink passed away, Chairman MILLER introduced a bill that named Title IX the ''Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.'' I have a picture of Patsy hanging in my office. She is an inspiration to me. And I know that if she were here today she would remind us that our work is not finished.

There are many problems still to be addressed. Women continue to face substantial barriers, especially in high wage fields such as science, technology, engineering and math. Sexual harassment remains pervasive in schools and on college campuses. Women and girls' sports teams still do not receive an equal share of resources.

Title IX is as necessary today as it was in 1972.

I am pleased to have over 100 original cosponsors on this bill, including Speaker PELOSI. I urge the rest of my colleagues to join me in celebrating Title IX's successes and in recognizing the work still to be done in our march toward equal educational opportunities.

IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TOLEDO SYMPHONY CEO ROBERT BELL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Toledo Symphony's own Robert Bell, celebrating his 50th anniversary season. The Toledo Symphony will formally recognize his remarkable achievement on May 22, 2007.

Robert Bell joined the Toledo Symphony in 1956. In his five decades with the symphony he has performed as a percussionist, principal timpanist and teacher. He has been the orchestra's personnel manger, managing director, and in his last decade has been President and Chief Executive Officer of the Toledo Orchestra Association since 1997. The hallmark of his tenure is the design and development of a ''music organization characterized by shared ownership.'' The Andrew F. Mellon Foundation described our symphony in 2005 as ''a remarkable organization that is approaching its evolution with a deep understanding of the community in which it operates . . . the Toledo Symphony is embedded in its community like no other American orchestra.'' Robert Bell's innovations and creative style can be credited for this high praise.

Partnerships Mr. Bell pursued with not only the Mellon Foundation, but also with the Stranahan Foundation and the Owens-Illinois Charitable Foundation have brought a financial stability to the symphony which now operates with a six million dollar budget. At the same time, Mr. Bell's efforts have led to a fourteen million dollar endowment fund which continues to grow. Its financial footing has enabled the symphony to draw talented musicians worldwide for its 60 positions and additional guest artists.

At his heart both musician and teacher, the Musicians in Action initiative was developed under Mr. Bell's tutelage. Through it, the symphony presents concerts especially for young people at 300 schools throughout the region. Annually, about 100,000 children benefit. The Community Music Lessons program offers group music lessons for underserved and needy students, fostering a talent these youngsters may have no other opportunity to develop. Music in Our Schools matches professional musicians with high school musicians for one-on-one coaching, rehearsals, and performances.

It has been said that without art civilization is lost. Robert Bell has dedicated his life to taking our civilization to new heights, helping us reach our potential individually and in community. His gift has been a soaring spirit of music and his legacy will be a symphony performing for decades beyond his own half century of service. For his time and talent, passion and inspiration, we are most grateful. I know I join with our entire community in offering congratulations to Robert Bell on his fiftieth anniversary season.

ON INTRODUCTION OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS AND INDIAN PEAKS WILDERNESS EXPANSION ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a revised bill to designate as wilderness most of the lands within the Rocky Mountain National Park and to expand the Indian Peaks Wilderness.

The bill is cosponsored by my Colorado colleague, Representative MUSGRAVE, and an identical measure is being introduced in the other body by Colorado's two Senators. Over a period of months, we have worked together to develop this bipartisan legislation that will provide important protection and management direction for some truly remarkable country, adding well over 200,000 acres in the park to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The wilderness designation for the park will cover some 94 percent of the park, including Longs Peaks and other major mountains along the Great Continental Divide, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra and wet meadows, old-growth forests, and hundreds of lakes and streams, all untrammeled by human structures or passage. Indeed, examples of all the natural ecosystems that make up the splendor of the Park are included in the wilderness that would be designated by this bill. At the same time, the wilderness boundaries have been drawn so as to allow continued access for use of existing roadways, buildings and developed areas, privately owned land, and areas where additional facilities and roadwork will improve park management and visitor services, In addition, specific provisions are included to assure that there ill be no adverse effects on continued use of existing water facilities.

The lands designated as wilderness will become part of the National Wilderness Preservation System that was established by the Wilderness Act and will be managed in accordance with that Act and the provisions of the bill. The bill's provisions amplify this by specifying that—(1) no new reclamation projects will be allowed in the wilderness area; (2) nothing in the bill will create a ''buffer zone'' around the wilderness and that non-wilderness activities visible or audible from within the wilderness will not be prohibited; (3) the National Park Service can act to control fire, insects, and diseases, including use of mechanical tools within the wilderness; and (4) nothing in the bill will reduce or restrict the current authority of the National Park Service to manage the Park's lands and resources.

The bill is similar to measures previously introduced by my predecessor, Representative David Skaggs (as well as others introduced before that), and ones I introduced in the 107th, 108th, and 109th Congress. However, it does include a number of adjustments and refinements that reflect discussion within the Colorado delegation in Congress and with interested parties in Colorado.

Like H.R. 4935 of the 109th Congress, the new bill includes designation of wilderness designation of more than 700 acres In the Twin Sisters area south of Estes Park. These lands were acquired by the United States and

made part of the park after submission to Congress of the original wilderness recommendation for the park in the 1970s, and so were not included in that recommendation. They are lands of a wilderness character and their designation will not conflict with any current uses. On the west side, the town of Grand Lake and Grand County requested that about 650 acres inward from the Park boundary around the town be omitted from the wilderness designation in order to allow the Park to respond to potential forest fire threats. As was the case previously, this bill accommodates that request.

Also like that previous measure, the bill responds to the request of the Town of Grand Lake, Grand County and the Headwaters Trails Alliance (a group composed of local communities in Grand County that seeks to establish opportunities for mountain biking) and the International Mountain Bicycling Association to omit from wilderness designation an area along the western park boundary, running south along Lake Granby from the Town to the park's southern boundary. This will allow the National Park Service to retain the option of authorizing construction of a possible future mountain bike route within this part of the park. Similarly, the bill would expand the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area by 1,000 acres in the area south of the park and north of Lake Granby. The lands involved are currently managed as part of the Arapaho National Recreation Area, which would accordingly be reduced by about 1,000 acres.

As did the previous bill, this bill includes a section that will authorize the National Park Service to lease an 11-acre property (the Leiffer tract) that was donated to the National Park Service in 1977. Located outside the park's boundaries, it has two buildings, including a house that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Park Service would like to have the option of leasing it, but current law allows that only for ''property administered . . . as part of the National Park System,'' and this property does not qualify. The bill would allow the Park Service to lease the property as if it were located inside or contiguous to the park.

Also like previous measures, the bill addresses the question of possible impacts on water rights—something that can be a primary point of contention in Congressional debates over designating wilderness areas. It reflects the legal reality that it has long been recognized under the laws of the United States and Colorado, including a decision of the Colorado Supreme Court, that Rocky Mountain National Park already has extensive Federal reserved water rights arising from the creation of the national park itself. And it reflects the geographic reality that the park sits astride the continental divide, meaning there's no higher land around from which streams flow into the park, and thus there is no possibility of any diversion of water occurring upstream from the park. In recognition of these legal and practical realities, the bill includes a finding that because the park already has these extensive reserved rights to water, there is no need for any additional reservation or appropriation of such right, and an explicit disclaimer that the bill effects any such reservation.

New provisions in this bill deal with the Grand River Ditch, created before Rocky Mountain National Park was established and partly located within the park. The owners of the ditch are currently working to conclude an agreement with the National Park Service with respect to operation and maintenance of the portion of the ditch within the park, and the bill provides that after conclusion of this agreement the strict liability standard of the Park Resources Protection Act (which now applies to any damage to park resources) will not apply so long as the ditch is operated and maintained in accordance with the agreement. The owners of the ditch would remain liable for damage to park resources caused by negligence or intentional acts, and the bill specifies that it will not limit or otherwise affect the liability of any individual or entity for damages to, loss of, or injury to any park resource resulting from any cause of event occurring before the bill's enactment. In addition, the bill specifies that its enactment will not restrict or otherwise affect any activity relating to the monitoring, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, or use of the ditch that was authorized or approved by the National Park Service as of the date. of the bill's enactment. And the bill also provides that use of water transported by the ditch for a main purpose (or main purposes) other than irrigation will not terminate or adversely affect the ditch's right-of-way.

Madam Speaker, the matters dealt with in this bill have a long history. The wilderness designations are based on National Park Service recommendations presented to Congress by President Richard Nixon. That they have not been acted on before this reflects the difficult history of wilderness legislation. One Colorado statewide wilderness bill was enacted in 1980, but it took more than a decade before the Colorado delegation and the Congress were finally able, in 1993, to pass a second statewide national forest wilderness bill. Since then, action has been completed on bills designating wilderness in the Spanish Peaks area of the San Isabel National Forest as well as in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, the Gunnison Gorge, the Black Ridge portion of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, and the James Peak area of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests.

We now need to continue making progress by providing wilderness designations for other deserving lands in Colorado, including lands that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management. And the time is ripe for finally resolving the status of the lands within Rocky Mountain National Park that are dealt with in this bill.

Lands covered by the bill are currently being managed protect their wilderness character. Formal wilderness designation will no longer leave this question to the discretion of the Park Service, but will make it clear that within the designated areas there will never be roads, visitor facilities, or other manmade features that interfere with the spectacular natural beauty and wildness of the mountains. This is especially important for a park like Rocky Mountain, which is relatively small by western standards. As nearby land development and alteration has accelerated in recent years, the pristine nature of the park's backcountry becomes an increasingly rare feature of Colorado's landscape. Further, the park's popularity demands definitive and permanent protection for wild areas against possible pressures for development within the park. While only about one tenth the size of Yellowstone National Park, Rocky Mountain sees nearly the same number of visitors each year as does our first national park. At the same time, designating these carefully selected portions of Rocky Mountain as wilderness will make other areas, now restricted under interim wilderness protection management, available for overdue improvements to park roads and visitor facilities.

In summary, Madam Speaker, this bill will protect some of our Nation's finest wild lands. It will protect existing rights. It will not limit any existing opportunity for new water development. It is bipartisan and will affirm the commitment of all Coloradans to preserving the features that make our State such a remarkable place to live. So, I think it deserves prompt enactment. For the information of our colleagues I am attaching a summary of the legislation:

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK
WILDERNESS BILL SUMMARY

Wilderness Designation.—The bill designates as wilderness approximately 249,339 acres within Rocky Mountain National Park, in Colorado.

Wilderness Management.—The lands designated as wilderness become part of the National Wilderness Preservation System that was established by the Wilderness Act and will be managed in accordance with that Act and the provisions of the bill. The bill's provisions amplify this by specifying that—

(1) No new reclamation projects will be allowed in the wilderness area; (2) Nothing in the bill will create a ''buffer zone'' around the wilderness and that non-wilderness activities visible or audible from within the wilderness will not be prohibited; (3) The National Park Service can act to control fire, insects, and diseases, including use of mechanical tools within the wilderness; and (4) Nothing in the bill will reduce or restrict the current authority of the National Park Service to manage the Park's lands and resources.

Potential Wilderness.—Specified lands within the Park not now eligible for wilderness designation because they are being used for purposes inconsistent with such designation will be designated as wilderness when those uses end.

Wilderness Exclusions.—Specified lands within the Park are excluded from the wilderness designation and from the category of ''potential wilderness.'' These lands include—(1) lands occupied by the Grand River Ditch and the lands 200 feet on each side of the ditch; (2) lands owned by the St. Vrain & Left Hand Water Conservancy District, including Copeland Reservoir and the Inlet Ditch from North St. Vrain Creek; (3) lands owned by the Wincentsen-Harms Trust; and (4) lands adjoining Grand Lake in an area called the ''East Short Trail Area'' discussed below.

Water Rights.—The bill includes findings about Colorado state court decisions holding that the Park already has existing sufficient water rights and that there is no need for the Federal Government to reserve or appropriate further water rights to fulfill the purposes of the wilderness designation; and the bill states that neither it nor any action taken out pursuant to it will constitute an express or implied reservation of water or water rights for any purpose.

Grand River Ditch.—The bill provides that—(1) lands occupied by the Grand River Ditch and the lands 200 feet on each side of the ditch are excluded from wilderness; (2) upon conclusion of an agreement between the National Park Service and the ditch's owners on operations and maintenance of the Grand River Ditch, the strict liability standard of the Park Resources Protection Act (which now applies to any damage to park resources) will not apply so long as the ditch is

operated and maintained in accordance with the agreement. The owners of the ditch would remain liable for damage to park resources caused by negligence or intentional acts; (3) the bill will not affect any liability for damage to park resources occurring before the bill's enactment; (4) the bill will not restrict any activity related to monitoring, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, or use of the ditch that was authorized or approved by the National Park Service as of the date of the bill's enactment; and (5) use of water carried by the ditch for a purpose other than irrigation will not adversely affect the ditch's right-of-way.

Colorado-Big Thompson Project.—The bill includes provisions specifying that its enactment will not restrict any activity related to monitoring, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement, or use of the project's facilities that were allowed as of the date of the bill's enactment or prohibit or restrict the conveyance of water through the Alva B. Adams Tunnel for any purpose.

East Shore Trail.—The bill requires the National Park Service to identify an alignment for a bicycle trail within the ''East Shore Trail Area'' that is excluded from the wilderness. The Park Service will decide whether to authorize construction of the trail and until construction is authorized, lands in the ''East Shore Trail Area'' will continue to be managed to maintain the option of its being designated as wilderness in the future.

Indian Peaks Wilderness and Arapaho Recreation Area.—The bill adjusts the boundaries of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and the Arapaho National Recreation Area so as to reduce the recreation area by about 1,000 acres and increase the wilderness by about 1,000 acres.

Leiffer Tract Lease Authority.—The bill allows the National Park Service to lease the ''Leiffer tract,'' a parcel of Federal land located outside the Park's boundary but managed by the National Park Service that includes an historic cabin and several other buildings. Any lease would be under an existing law that requires leased property to be used for activities consistent with the purposes of the Park and compatible with National Park Service programs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, May 14, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 1124, H. Res. 223, and H. Res. 385.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 342 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1124, to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 343 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 223, supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, I would have voted ''aye.''

Had I been present for rollcall No. 344 on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 385, recognizing National Americorps Week, I would have voted ''aye.''

HONORING MICHAEL D. THOMAS

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael D. Thomas, who was killed on April 27, 2007 in Hirat Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Michael was a sniper, a weapons sergeant and a combat medic assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, NC, and was killed when his unit came under rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire.

I did not have the privilege of knowing Staff Sergeant Thomas personally but by all accounts he was a dedicated family man who was devoted to serving his country. He grew up in Seffner, FL, and joined the military police in 1991, serving in Somalia and in Korea. After already having served in the military police for 13 years and with only 3½ years until he could retire, he volunteered to be a Green Beret. At 34, Michael was one of the oldest in his unit, which earned him the nickname ''Gramps.''

Michael was a highly decorated soldier. His awards and commendations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Defense Medal, the Parachutist Badge and the Special Forces Tab.

Michael was an avid Tampa Bay Buccaneer fan who visited the team's training camp whenever he could. I've been told that he decorated his Fort Bragg room with Buccaneer memorabilia, including signed footballs and helmets. He was also an accomplished guitarist who liked watching movies and going for long walks with his wife, Teresa.

Madam Speaker, my heart aches for Michael's family. He leaves behind his wife, Teresa, his children, Diana and Craig, his sisters, Krista and Cassie, his brother, Jaye, his granddaughter, Alexis, and his parents, Debbie and Robert Kirkpatrick. May God bless the Thomas family and continue to watch over the country that Staff Sergeant Thomas so loved. We shall never forget him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to be present on the House floor on Monday, May 14 for recorded votes because illness prevented timely travel.

However, had I been present I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 1124; a bill to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999; ''aye'' on H. Res. 223, a bill supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims; and ''aye'' on H. Res. 385, a bill recognizing National AmeriCorps Week.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, because of illness, I was not present for votes on May 14. I would like the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted had I been here: Rollcall No. 342 on H.R. 1124, I would have voted ''yea''; Rollcall No. 343 on H. Res. 223, I would have voted ''yea''; Rollcall No. 344 on H. Res. 385, I would have voted ''yea.''

IN HONOR OF V. LANE RAWLINS AND HIS SERVICE TO WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize V. Lane Rawlins for his 7 years of leadership as the ninth president of Washington State University (WSU). President Rawlins used those 7 years to build a focused direction for the University, linking world-class research with outstanding undergraduate education.

Part of this world-class research has come from the Agriculture Research Service facility at Johnson Hall, a project that I am proud to have worked on with President Rawlins. This facility provides a place for federal and state research scientists to work together with the academic community in support of technology-based research programs in wheat, barley, and grain legumes.

Providing quality education is key to increasing America's competitiveness and creating a skilled, 21st century workforce. One of my first acts in Congress was to introduce legislation that would reauthorize and strengthen the WWAMI program. I applaud President Rawlins for his support of this important program that recruits and trains primary care doctors to practice in underserved areas like the rural communities of Eastern Washington.

President Rawlins has made it a priority to develop Washington State University campuses statewide. In particular, the Nursing Building at Washington State University Spokane will allow students involved in the nursing and dental programs at WSU to start their first year of training in Spokane and participate in the WWAMI program.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend President Rawlins for his outstanding work as the ninth president of Washington State University. I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking President V. Lane Rawlins for his years of service to the University and the Eastern Washington community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ARNOLD SHENOFSKY

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Arnold Shenofsky of Toledo, Ohio. Arnie passed from this life at the age of 92 on March 31, 2007, leaving a legacy of love and friendship to many and rejoining his wife Jessica.

Coming to Toledo as a toddler, Arnie was a lifelong resident. He went to work at the former Willys Overland Jeep plant during World War II, and went on to the United Auto Workers International Union staff in 1951. Of note, he never missed a union convention beginning in 1941.

More than a labor leader, Arnie was an accomplished accordion player and performed in various events throughout the United States and Canada, including each of those UAW conventions. His music was appreciated, but children knew him best as Uncle Arnie the clown. He willingly gave of his talents as both accordionist and clown to all sorts of charitable causes, putting a smile on the face of everyone he met. A family man and friend of the neighborhood at heart, it is the measure of the man that all who knew him were fond of him.

He was beloved by his family and thousands in our community. The festive mood set by his joyous music, tens of thousands of balloon animals lovingly given to children, endless gifts given to strangers and friends alike, demonstrated an extraordinarily kind heart that shone through his sparkling eyes and effervescent smile. His spirit lifted every occasion and he gave and gave and gave. Arnie Shenofsky helped define Toledo as a caring community. It was my privilege to know him and witness firsthand how his presence lent splendor to every event, large and small. Many times, he chose not to speak but to let you know what he was feeling through his music. How fortunate we have been that he shared his gifts of the heart with us for nine decades.

Through the decades of his life Arnold Shenofsky sought to always be a helper, a healer, a friend to young and old alike. He was the same person with both notables and neighbors, and was truly beloved by his family. His sisters, brothers, and children and their families have mourned their loss even as they celebrate a life well lived. They carry his flame in their hearts, always.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, in reviewing the formal record of rollcall 209, the vote on the Kilpatrick substitute to H. Con. Res. 99, the budget resolution for fiscal year 2008, I find I am recorded as having voted ''yes.'' However, I had intended to vote ''no,'' and my recollection is that I did vote ''no.''

TRIBUTE TO JERRY BERRY

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to pay tribute to a dear friend, Jerry Berry of Success, Arkansas, a fine businessman, farmer, friend and devoted family member who spent his entire life serving his community and making others happy.

Jerry was born November 29, 1939, in Success, AR, and lived there his entire life. In 1969, he opened Success Grain Inc., and it has been a family owned business its entire time in operation. In addition to running the family business, Jerry served as mayor of Success, AR, for 12 years. Some of his biggest accomplishments during his time include building a new playground and fire department, installing a new sewer system and paving all of the roads in the city.

Jerry was a man of true character. He was the type of friend that would rush to help you regardless of the time of day or circumstance because he genuinely cared about people. Jerry never had a bad day—he was always upbeat and would put the needs of others before himself because he was truly devoted to helping people.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jerry Berry and celebrating his lifetime of achievements. Jerry was a loyal friend to me and although I am saddened by this loss, I feel very fortunate for the time and friendship we shared together. He will be remembered by many as a devoted community leader, a genuine friend and a great American.

HONORING DR. MURIEL PETIONI

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the great accomplishments of one of this Nation's most accomplished community activists and physicians, Dr. Muriel Marjorie Petioni.

Dr. Petioni has been a role model for all women and is especially beloved in my Congressional District. Born on January 1, 1914, in Trinidad, young Petioni immigrated to the U.S. in 1919, settling with her family in New York City, where her father soon became a prominent Harlem physician and activists in the Carribean nationalist movement. She followed her father and other relatives into the medical field, working locally at Harlem Hospital after she graduated from Howard University's School of Medicine in 1937.

Her community and its residents have never been far from Dr. Petioni's mind. After a short break during the 1940s to get married and start a family, she returned to the medical profession in 1950, setting up her practice in the same office that her father had decades earlier. She maintained that practice for over 40 years, working diligently to ensure that hardworking residents and their families received the proper attention they deserved. When Harlem Hospital stumbled on financial difficulties in the 1980s, she founded the Friends of Harlem Hospital Center to raise private funding for the institution.

Dr. Petioni has also been a tireless educator, working hard to open up the doors of college and medical school to all underrepresented groups, especially women and African Americans. In 1974, she founded the Susan Smith McKinney Steward Medical Society for Women, a professional association of black women physicians. Named after the first African American female doctor, the organization provides institutional support for students and its members. Dr. Petioni has also worked with the Coalition of 100 Black Women to develop mentorship programs to encourage and guide young black women into the medical field.

Dr. Petioni's efforts have also led to her involvement with local government officials to ensure equal access to healthcare. She served for 30 years as a school physician for Central Harlem for the New York City Department of Health and as supervising physician for East and Central Harlem from 1980–1984. Today, Petioni is on the board of a number of non-profit institutions and government agencies, including the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, the Columbia School of Social Work, the Harlem Council of Elders, and the New York and Harlem branches of the American Cancer Society.

Numerous organizations and institutions have deservedly showered Dr. Petioni with awards and other honors. The venerable National Medical Association, which has named their annual Women in Medicine Luncheon after her. This May, New York's Barnard College is bestowing her with The Barnard Medal of Distinction, the school's highest award, for her ''service to the Harlem community as a physician, community activist and philanthropist for over 70 years.''

It is great to see such a good friend receive the accolades she so rightly deserves for the years of service that she has given to our community and Nation. Going strong at 93 years of age, she continues to be a trailblazer and an inspiration, a New Year's Day gift to us all that has touched the lives of countless children and families.

TAIWAN'S BID TO JOIN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I spoke recently in support of Taiwan's bid to join the World Health Organization.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that Taiwan has a world-class health care system and is willing and able to make meaningful contributions to the WHO's efforts, Chinese pressure to block Taiwan's efforts once again triumphed over fairness and common sense.

President Chen recently penned an editorial that was printed in the Washington Post that I would like to commend to my colleagues. In the piece, President Chen makes an eloquent and indisputable case for why Taiwan deserves membership in this and other international organizations.

I hope my colleagues will take the time to read the editorial, and to support Taiwan's future endeavors to contribute to international organizations like the WHO.

[From the Washington Post, May 11, 2007]

THE SHUNNING OF A STATE

(By Chen Shui-bian)

In recent years the outbreak and spread of avian flu has brought illness, death and economic peril to countries in Asia and elsewhere. Memories of the fear, pain and suffering that accompanied the 2003 SARS outbreak—after failed coverups by the Chinese government—are still vivid in many places. While disease heeds no national borders, Taiwan has had to fight pandemics without help from the World Health Organization—a humanitarian agency that is supposed to serve all humankind.

Taiwan is not a member of the WHO, nor is it an observer at the World Health Assembly (WHA)—unlike the Palestinian Authority or the Malta Order of Chivalry. But under mounting international pressure prompted by fear of an avian flu pandemic, China was persuaded in 2005 to consent, in principle, to Taiwan's meaningful participation in WHO conferences focusing on that threat. China conceded after demanding that the WHO secretariat sign a secret memorandum of understanding. As a result, Taiwan's participation in the WHO is subject to China's approval, even for technical meetings. Such participation is minimal rather than meaningful.

It is improper and unprecedented for an international humanitarian organization to enter into a secret pact with one of its member states, especially an authoritarian one. More important, the memorandum has been used to obstruct Taiwan's participation in WHO activities. Our representatives were unable to attend the majority of conferences they sought admission to last year. The WHO secretariat has effectively jeopardized the health of people in Taiwan and other countries.

For a decade, we have striven relentlessly to participate in the WHO, to no avail. Even our humble pursuit of ''meaningful participation'' has yielded little success. With 95 percent of the Taiwanese people supporting full WHO membership, I must act upon the will of my people as a democratically elected president.

On April 11, I sent a letter to the WHO formally requesting our nation's application for membership under the name ''Taiwan.'' The secretariat responded on April 25, claiming that Taiwan is not a sovereign state and therefore is not eligible for WHO membership. This is legally and morally deplorable.

Article 3 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization stipulates: ''Membership in the Organization shall be open to all States,'' while Article 6 provides that states such as Taiwan that are not members of the United Nations ''may apply to become Members and shall be admitted as Members when their application has been approved by a simple majority vote of the Health Assembly.'' Rule 115 of the WHA Rules of Procedure stipulates that ''Applications made by a State for admission to membership . . . shall . . . be addressed to the Director-General and shall be transmitted immediately'' to WHO members.

Clearly, the authority to determine whether Taiwan is eligible for admission to the WHO belongs to its members, many of which have diplomatic relations with Taiwan and cannot be co-opted by any individual or administrative office.

When East Germany applied for WHO membership in 1968, many questioned its sovereignty and the legitimacy of its government. But East Germany's application was circulated, and although it was voted down that year, it was approved in 1973.

Taiwan, formally known as the Republic of China, is indisputably a sovereign state, satisfying all of the criteria cited in Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention on the Duties and Obligations of States: It has a permanent population, a defined territory, a functional government and the capacity to conduct relations with other states. It also has its own internationally traded currency and issues its own passport, honored by virtually all other nations.

Another broadly affirmed criterion for recognizing the legitimacy of a state is the principle, enunciated in the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that the sovereignty a state exercises should be based on the will of the people. A truly ''sovereign'' state, in other words, is free and democratic. We find no better words to describe Taiwan.

Ultimately, the question of Taiwan's participation in the WHO is a moral one. The systematic shunning of Taiwan is unconscionable not only because it compromises the health of our 23 million people but also because it denies the world the benefit of our abundant public health and technical resources. Taiwan's public and private sectors have donated more than $450 million in medical and humanitarian aid to more than 90 countries over the past 10 years.

We in Taiwan are grateful that many governments and legislative bodies such as the U.S. Congress and the European Parliament have supported our bid for observer status in the WHA. As humankind seeks to control global pandemics, victory will require collaboration that is not restricted by political obfuscation or subject to discriminatory picking and choosing of participants. We must not allow an all-but-one scenario to undermine our common mission—health for all.

H.R. 2922, THE PAY VETERANS FIRST ACT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Pay Veterans First Act (H.R. 2922), introduced by my colleague from New York, Mr. HALL.

When most people think of a "bonus," they think of a financial incentive given to reward exceptional work done above and beyond the call of duty. It is typically recognition of the long and countless hours of hard work put in to get the job done. It is something you earn, not something you receive in return for lackluster performance.

Yet, recently the Associated Press reported that top officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs received a total of $3.8 million in bonuses, with some individuals receiving as much as $33,000, or 20 percent of their annual salary. While these officials received these performance based rewards, the VA was facing a nearly $1 billion budgetary shortfall and the national backlog for veterans' claims is about 177 days on average. There are very few veterans in eastern Connecticut or across the country who would agree that this data demonstrates "exceptional work" on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

It is appalling that the failing performance of top VA officials would be rewarded so handsomely while the quality of care for our Nation's veterans suffers. The veterans of eastern Connecticut and those throughout the Nation deserve an explanation for this apparent error in judgment and disgraceful lack of leadership within the Department of Veterans Affairs. I recently wrote to Secretary Jim Nicholson asking him to provide an explanation for this imbalance and look forward to his response.

There are, without a doubt, many people in veterans' health care facilities across the country working tirelessly to care for our veterans without the resources they need, let alone discretionary bonuses. The VA is strained to care for the patients they have now, and face daunting challenges to care for those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The Pay Veterans First Act is an important step to ensuring that the priorities and resources of the VA remain focused on where they rightfully belong: the needs of those who have served our country in uniform, and not the bureaucrats in Washington.

I applaud Mr. HALL of New York for leading this important effort and urge my colleagues to support this bill on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD L. BRIGHAM

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a true American hero who proudly served our country in World War II. Howard L. Brigham was born in 1925 in Denver, Colorado, the oldest of eight children. After serving our country in the war, Howard served Colorado for 37 years as an educator and administrator.

In December of 1942, one year after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Howard joined the United States Navy at the young age of 17. He was unable to be present for his own high school graduation. Howard manned a 20 millimeter gun and served as a deck boss's mate on the Seaplane Tender, USS *Matagorda*. Howard served primarily in the Atlantic theater, but he also spent time in the South Pacific. He was briefly in port in Iceland, England, Wales, North Africa, and Brazil. He was away from his family the entire 4 years of the war and spent most of that time at sea. Howard's father passed away during this time and he was unable to leave his duties to attend the funeral. Seaman 2nd Class Brigham was awarded the American Theater Medal, the European Theater Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

Following his heroic service, Mr. Brigham attended the University of Denver earning both a bachelors and a masters degree in education. For the next 37 years he served as a teacher, counselor, and principal in the Denver Public School system and the Poudre School System in Fort Collins. He and his wife Jeanie will celebrate 60 years of marriage in June of this year. Together they raised three children, Jerry Brigham of Broomfield, and Randy Brigham and Kay Rich of Sterling.

We are so fortunate to live in this great country where freedom is something that we rarely have to think about and often take for granted. It is simply a way of life for us, and we are truly blessed to live in a country whose citizens willingly volunteer to put themselves in harm's way to defend and protect our great Nation.

I am proud to honor Mr. Brigham for his dedicated service to our Nation. Howard is an

American hero who left his home to defend our Nation, and then returned home to be a valued member of his community, showing his children and grandchildren how to live meaningful lives of service. Howard is the embodiment of all the values that have molded America into the great Nation it is today. May God bless Mr. Brigham and his family, may God bless our precious veterans, and may God continue to bless America.

HONORING DR. LEONARD J. KLAY

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today together with my colleague, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, to honor Dr. Leonard Klay and recognize his contributions to medicine in Sonoma County and the State of California. The Sonoma County Medical Association is taking this opportunity to recognize Dr. Klay's ongoing commitment to organized, high-quality medical service for the community of Sonoma County.

Dr. Klay grew up and completed high school in southern California before receiving his bachelor's degree with distinction from Stanford University in 1959. He continued at Stanford, graduating from medical school in 1962 and going on to complete his internship and residency in southern California. He served as a major in the U.S. Army from 1967–1970 during which time he served overseas.

After beginning his practice with the Permanente Group in 1970 as an OB/GYN, Dr. Klay moved to private practice in 1971 where he remained for 29 years, finally moving to the Sutter OB/GYN Medical Group in 2000. He retired in 2004, but continues to assist part-time as an obstetric surgeon. For the last 35 years he has generously given his time to assist at the Sonoma County Family Planning Clinic, and he remains there as a valued volunteer. In 1999 he joined the staff at the Santa Rosa Community Hospital as a Clinical Professor where he helps train a new generation of doctors.

Dr. Klay has made numerous contributions to the medical profession as an outspoken leader in Sonoma County and around the State. He has twice been elected president of the Sonoma County Medical Association, and has served on a wide variety of committees within that body. Active in the California Medical Association for 36 years, he has served as a delegate and Tenth District Chair. He has served on a number of county commissions focused on perinatal substance abuse, and has worked to stabilize healthcare in Sonoma County through participation as a trustee or director on numerous boards.

Dr. Klay has been particularly active in his community in fighting to implement public smoking bans, and reduce tobacco use by raising the smoking age. His endeavors in this direction were successful when the city of Healdsburg passed that ban. He continues to advocate against smoking in other forums and is on the county's Tobacco Coalition.

Madam Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Dr. Leonard Klay for his many years of service on behalf of the people of Sonoma County. He has worked tirelessly to improve health care and the medical profession, and he deserves our thanks.

HONORING DR. LEONARD J. KLAY, MD

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today together with my colleague, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, to honor Dr. Leonard Klay and recognize his contributions to medicine in Sonoma County and the State of California. The Sonoma County Medical Association is taking this opportunity to recognize Dr. Klay's ongoing commitment to organized, high-quality medical service for the community of Sonoma County.

Dr. Klay grew up and completed high school in southern California before receiving his bachelor's degree with distinction from Stanford University in 1959. He continued at Stanford, graduating from medical school in 1962 and going on to complete his internship and residency in southern California. He served as a major in the U.S. Army from 1967–1970 during which time he served overseas.

After beginning his practice with the Permanente Group in 1970 as an OB/GYN, Dr. Klay moved to private practice in 1971 where he remained for 29 years, finally moving to the Sutter OB/GYN Medical Group in 2000. He retired in 2004, but continues to assist part-time as an obstetric surgeon. For the last 35 years he has generously given his time to assist at the Sonoma County Family Planning Clinic, and he remains there as a valued volunteer. In 1999 he joined the staff at the Santa Rosa Community Hospital as a Clinical Professor where he helps train a new generation of doctors.

Dr. Klay has made numerous contributions to the medical profession as an outspoken leader in Sonoma County and around the State. He has twice been elected president of the Sonoma County Medical Association, and has served on a wide variety of committees within that body. Active in the California Medical Association for 36 years, he has served as a delegate and Tenth District Chair. He has served on a number of county commissions focused on perinatal substance abuse, and has worked to stabilize healthcare in Sonoma County through participation as a trustee or director on numerous boards.

Dr. Klay has been particularly active in his community in fighting to implement public smoking bans, and reduce tobacco use by raising the smoking age. His endeavors in this direction were successful when the city of Healdsburg passed that ban. He continues to advocate against smoking in other forums and is on the county's Tobacco Coalition.

Madam Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Dr. Leonard Klay for his many years of service on behalf of the people of Sonoma County. He has worked tirelessly to improve health care and the medical profession, and he deserves our thanks.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am proud we have brought this resolution to the floor today. it is sadly fitting, as today marks the 1-year anniversary of the fatal shootings of Master Police Officer Michael E. Garbarino and Detective Vicky O. Armel of the Fairfax County Police Department—the first two officers shot and killed in the line of duty in the department's long, distinguished history.

These local officers were shining examples of the courage and selflessness found in our law enforcement community. Their stories also illustrate the fact that personal sacrifice and danger have always been synonymous with law enforcement service, beginning with New York City's Deputy Sheriff Isaac Smith, who on May 17, 1792, became the first recorded police officer to be killed in the line of duty.

Today, there are 870,000 sworn law enforcement officers in the United States who continue the ''quest to preserve both democracy and decency, and to protect a national treasure that we call the American dream,'' a quote by President George Bush engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Each one of these officers and their families carry with them the knowledge their efforts put them in harm's way. Today, more than 56,000 are assaulted each year and every 53 hours, an officer is killed while serving the American people. September 11, 2001, was the deadliest day for police officers in all of American history when 72 officers were killed while responding to terrorist attacks.

May 15 is Peace Officers Memorial Day, a holiday created in 1961 by Congress to honor fallen law enforcement officers who dedicated their lives to protecting this country and its citizens. The flag is flown at half-staff and thousands of people visit the Memorial, which was authorized by President Ronald Reagan in 1984 and built in 1989 and currently has 17,912 names etched into the wall.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution to honor the memories of Master Police Officer Garbarino and Detective Armel, and all the fallen heroes from the law enforcement ranks for their service and their willingness to expose themselves to danger in their pursuit of a safe community.

CONGRATULATING THE HAMMOND LADY RED DEVILS UPON WINNING THE 2007 NEW YORK STATE CLASS D CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. McHUGH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Hammond Central School District's Lady Red Devils of Hammond, New York, upon winning the 2007 New York State Girls Basketball Class D Championship. This was not only Hammond's first State basketball

championship, it was also the first State basketball championship won by a Section X team.

On March 18, 2007, the Hammond Lady Red Devils, who are from my upstate New York Congressional District, won the New York State Class D Championship when they defeated the S.S. Seward Lady Spartans by a score of 52 to 51. In that game, the Lady Red Devils worked hard to overcome the Lady Spartans' leads, which were as much as 17 points at one time and 12 points at the end of the first half. In fact, S.S. Seward led by two points with 47 seconds to play before the Lady Red Devils' Brittany Kenyon, the New York State Class D MVP, made a three point shot with 15.9 seconds left in the game to give Hammond the lead and, ultimately, the victory.

The Lady Red Devils completed the 2007 season undefeated, with a record of 12 and 0. They were coached by Shawn Dack and assistant coaches Larry Hollister, Doug McQueer, and Chet Truskowski. Other team members were scorekeeper Cathy Tulley and players Whitney Atkins, Cassie Cunningham, Nicole Davidson, Aubrie Dunn, Brooke Hollister, Katlyn Hunt, Malynda Jenne, Jessica Martin, Sara Measheaw, Emily Moquin, and Sarah Sheridan. Madam Speaker, it is a great honor to represent these young ladies and to have the opportunity to recognize them for their very significant accomplishment.

TRIBUTE TO CECIL E. WILLIAMS, JR.

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to pay tribute to a dear friend, Cecil E. Williams, Jr., a lifelong advocate and friend to Arkansas farmers. Williams, who was a West Memphis resident and longtime executive vice president of the Agriculture Council of Arkansas, passed away on April 12 at the age of 74. His death was a great loss to his community, his family, his State and this Nation.

Williams began his agricultural education at a young age on his family's cotton farm in Tyronza, AR. After serving in the U.S. Air Force as a weather observer in Alaska, he moved to Baton Rouge, LA, and enrolled at Louisiana State University where he obtained his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics. During his final year in college, Williams met his wife Barbara. They eventually married and had three sons.

Williams took a job with the National Cotton Council and began traveling to cotton farms around the South, soliciting new members. In return for their membership, Williams kept them informed of new farm technology and techniques that would help farmers run a more efficient and profitable business.

In the mid-1960s, Williams became the executive vice president of the Agricultural Council of Arkansas in West Memphis and served the council honorably for 37 years. Although Williams worked for the council during the day, in his free time he maintained a small family farm because he loved working the land. By maintaining the farm, he gained a firsthand perspective of the challenges Arkansas farmers faced on a day-to-day basis.

Williams' life-long commitment to farming made it easy for him to advocate on the behalf of farmers in Washington. Williams worked as a liaison, advocating for farm policies that would benefit Arkansas' agricultural community to Members of Congress. He would then return to Arkansas and use his natural gift of communication to explain the complexities of farm bills to producers, which helped them understand how the legislation would impact their business.

A devout public servant, Williams was a man of honor and compassion. On behalf of the Congress, I extend sympathies to his family and gratitude for all he did to make our community a better place. His service and friendship will be missed by all.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6079–S6156

Measures Introduced: Fifteen bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1390–1404, and S. Res. 199–202. **Page S6126**

Measures Reported:

S. 119, to prohibit profiteering and fraud relating to military action, relief, and reconstruction efforts, with amendments. (S. Rept. No. 110–66) **Page S6126**

Measures Passed:

National Health Information Technology Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 202, designating the period beginning on May 14, 2007, and ending on May 18, 2007, as ''National Health Information Technology Week''. **Pages S6154–55**

School-Based Music Education: Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of H. Con. Res. 121, recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S6155**

Measures Considered:

Water Resources Development Act: Senate continue consideration of H.R. 1495, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S6086–89, S6092–S6115, S6118–24**

Rejected:

By 12 yeas and 77 nays (Vote No. 163), Coburn Amendment No. 1090 (to Amendment No. 1065), to prioritize federal spending to ensure the residents of the city of Sacramento are protected from the threat of floods before spending money to add sand to beaches in San Diego. **Pages S6086–89**

By 11 yeas and 79 nays (Vote No. 164), Coburn Amendment No. 1089 (to Amendment No. 1065), to prioritize federal spending to ensure the needs of Louisiana residents who lost their homes as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are met before spending money to design or construct a non-essential visitors center. **Pages S6086, S6093**

By 22 yeas and 69 nays (Vote No. 165), Boxer (for Feingold) Amendment No. 1086 (to Amendment No. 1065), to establish a Water Resources Commission to prioritize water resources projects in the United States. **Pages S6086, S6093–95**

Withdrawn:

Cardin Amendment No. 1071 (to Amendment No. 1065), to provide for the siting, construction, expansion, and operation of liquefied natural gas terminals. **Pages S6092–93**

By 51 yeas to 42 nays (Vote No. 166), Kerry Amendment No. 1094 (to Amendment No. 1065), to require the consideration of certain factors relating to global climate change. Pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Tuesday, May, 15, 2007, requiring 60 votes for the adoption of the amendment, it is withdrawn having failed to achieve 60 votes in the affirmative. **Pages S6100–15**

Pending:

Boxer/Inhofe Amendment No. 1065, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6086**

Reid (for Levin/Reid) Amendment No. 1097 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 1065), to provide for military readiness and benchmarks relative to Iraq. **Page S6086**

Reid (for Feingold/Reid) Amendment No. 1098 (to Amendment No. 1097), to provide for a transition of the Iraq mission. **Page S6086**

Warner/Collins Amendment No. 1134 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 1065), relative to the President's strategy in Iraq. **Pages S6118–21**

McConnell (for Cochran) Amendment No. 1135 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 1065), to express the sense of the Senate that Congress must send to the President acceptable legislation to continue funds for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom by not later than May 28, 2007. **Page S6121**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Reid Amendment No. 1098 (to Amendment No. 1097) (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the

Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, May 17, 2007. **Page S6121**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Reid (for Reid/Levin) Amendment No. 1097) (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, May 17, 2007. **Page S6121**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Warner (for Collins) Amendment No. 1134 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 1065) (listed above) and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, May 17, 2007. **Page S6122**

A motion was entered to close further debate on McConnell (for Cochran) Amendment No. 1135 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 1065) (listed above) and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, May 17, 2007. **Page S6122**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of bill at 9 a.m., on Wednesday, May 16, 2007; vote on the motions to invoke cloture on certain amendments; provided further, that second-degree amendments may be filed until 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, May 16, 2007. **Page S6155**

U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act: Senate began consideration of H.R. 2206, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S6115–18**

Pending:

Reid/McConnell Amendment No. 1123, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6115–16**

Reid/McConnell Amendment No. 1124 (to Amendment No. 1123), expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions. **Page S6116**

Reid Amendment No. 1125 (to Amendment No. 1124), expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions. **Page S6116**

Motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Reid Amendment No. 1126. **Page S6116**

Reid Amendment No. 1126 (to the instructions of the motion to commit H.R. 2206), expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions. **Page S6116**

Reid Amendment No. 1127 (to the instructions of the motion to commit (to Amendment No. 1126)), expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions. **Pages S6116–17**

Reid Amendment No. 1128 (to Amendment No. 1127), expressing the sense of the Congress that no action should be taken to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces of the United States or impact their ability to complete their assigned or future missions. **Page S6117**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the Reid/McConnell Amendment No. 1123 (listed above) and, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Tuesday, May 15, 2007, a vote on cloture will occur one hour after the Senate convenes on Thursday, May 17, 2007; and that notwithstanding rule XXII, if cloture is invoked, Senate remain on the bill until its disposition.

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, May 17, 2007. **Page S6117**

Concurrent Budget Resolution Conference Report—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that it be in order on Thursday, May 17, 2007, Senate begin consideration of the conference report to accompany 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, if available, not withstanding Rule XXII. **Page S6155**

Comprehensive Immigration Reform—Agreement: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1348, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform.

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Monday, May 21, 2007, no earlier than 5:30 p.m., and that if cloture is invoked the motion be agreed to. **Page S6155**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senator Sessions have up to 3 hours under his control to speak on Monday, May 21, 2007, and have 2 hours under his control on Tuesday, May 22, 2007; provided further, that the hour prior to the cloture vote be reserved for the Majority and Republican Leaders, or their designees.

Page S6155

Stevens Tributes—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the tributes to Senator Stevens in the Congressional Record be printed as a Senate document and that Senators be permitted to submit statements for inclusion until June 1, 2007. **Page S6154**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States: Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report certifying that the export to the People's Republic of China of certain materials, including an isostatic press for manufacturing automotive spare parts, is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry and that the material will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. (PM–13)

Page S6125

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral.

A routine list in the Navy. **Pages S6155–56**

Messages from the House: **Pages S6125–26**

Measures Referred: **Page S6126**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S6126**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6126–29**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Page S6129**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6125–44**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S6144–53**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Pages S6153–54**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S6154**

Record Votes: Four record votes were taken today. (Total—166) **Pages S6089, S6093, S6095, S6115**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m., and adjourned at 9:03 p.m., until 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 2007. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6155.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

SHORT-TERM ENERGY OUTLOOK FOR SUMMER 2007

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the short-term energy outlook for the summer of 2007, focusing on oil and gasoline, after receiving testimony from Guy Caruso, Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy; Kevin J. Lindemer, Global Insight, Lexington, Massachusetts; Paul Sankey, Deutsche Bank, New York, New York; and Geoff Sundstrom, AAA, Heathrow, Florida.

WATER AND LAND BILLS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks concluded a hearing to examine S. 553, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Eightmile River in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 800, to establish the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area in the State of New York, S. 916, to modify the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument, to establish the Minidoka National Historic Site, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land and improvements of the Gooding Division of the Minidoka Project, Idaho, S. 1057, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the New River in the States of North Carolina and Virginia as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 1209, to provide for the continued administration of Santa Rosa Island, Channel Islands National Park, in accordance with the laws (including regulations) and policies of the National Park Service, S. 1281, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain rivers and streams of the headwaters of the Snake River System as additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System, H.R. 161, to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial in Bainbridge Island, Washington, H.R. 247, to designate a Forest Service trail at Waldo Lake in the Willamette National Forest in the State of Oregon as a national recreation trail in honor of Jim Weaver, a former Member of the House of Representatives, and H.R. 376, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of including the battlefields and related sites of the First and Second Battles of Newtonia, Missouri, during the Civil War as part of Wilson's

Creek National Battlefield or designating the battlefields and related sites as a separate unit of the National Park System, after receiving testimony from Senators Feinstein and Schumer; Daniel N. Wenk, Deputy Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior; Joel Holtrop, Deputy Chief, National Forest System, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Jack Dennis, Campaign for the Snake Headwaters, Jackson, Wyoming; Tom Ikeda, Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, Seattle, Washington; George Santucci, National Committee for the New River, West Jefferson, North Carolina; and Timothy D. Vail, Vail and Vickers Company, Santa Rosa Island, California.

GREEN BUILDINGS

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine energy savings, water and air quality, economic, and other benefits of green buildings, after receiving testimony from Robert F. Fox, Jr., Cook and Fox Architects, New York, New York; Peter Templeton, United States Green Building Council, Washington, D.C.; Claire L. Barnett, Healthy Schools Network, Inc., Albany, New York; Ray Tonjes, Ray Tonjes Builder, Inc., Austin, Texas, on behalf of the National Association of Home Builders; and Ward Hubbell, Green Building Initiative, Portland, Oregon.

EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN CONGRESS

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine equal representation in Congress, focusing on providing voting rights to the District of Columbia, including S. 1257, to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives, after receiving testimony from Senator Hatch, Representatives Tom Davis and Norton; Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, Jack Kemp, Kemp Partners, Wade J. Henderson, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Viet D. Dinh, Georgetown University Law Center, and Jonathan R. Turley, George Washington University Law School, all of Washington, D.C.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: CURRENT AND FUTURE BREAKTHROUGH RESEARCH

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging concluded a hearing to examine Alzheimer's disease, focusing on current and future breakthrough research, after receiving testimony from Paul S. Aisen, Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, D.C., on behalf of the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study; Arthur F. Kramer, University of Illinois, Urbana; Robert Essner, Wyeth, Madison, New Jersey; and J. Donald deBethizy, Targacept, Inc., Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

PRESERVING PROSECUTORIAL INDEPENDENCE

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Department of Justice and its handling of the hiring and firing of United States Attorneys, focusing on preserving prosecutorial independence, after receiving testimony from James B. Comey, Lockheed Martin Corporation, McLean, Virginia.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 24 public bills, H.R. 2313–2355; and 5 resolutions, H. Res. 402, 405–408 were introduced. **Pages H5052–53**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5054–55**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H. Res. 403, providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense and to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008 (H. Rept. 110–151) and

H. Res. 404, providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 1427, to reform the regulation of certain housing-related government-sponsored enterprises (H. Rept. 110–152). **Pages H5050, H5052**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Costa to act as Speaker Pro Tempore for today. **Page H4969**

Recess: The House recessed at 9:08 a.m. and reconvened at 10:00 a.m. **Page H4970**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Don Green, Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. **Page H4970**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin: H.R. 634, amended, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who became disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 416 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 345; **Pages H4973–76, H5014**

Army Specialist Joseph P. Micks Federal Flag Code Amendment Act of 2007: H.R. 692, amended, to amend title 4, United States Code, to authorize the Governor of a State, territory, or possession of the United States to order that the National flag be flown at half-staff in that State, territory, or possession in the event of the death of a member of the Armed Forces from that State, territory, or possession who dies while serving on active duty, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 408 ayes to 4 nays, Roll No. 346; **Pages H4976–78, H5014–15**

John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act of 2007: H.R. 916, amended, to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 341 yeas to 73 nays, Roll No. 347; **Pages H4978–82, H5015–16**

Recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity for Congress to improve the foster care system throughout the United States: H. Res. 263, amended, to recognize National Foster Care Month as an opportunity for Congress to improve the foster care system throughout the United States; **Pages H4982–85**

COPS Improvements Act of 2007: H.R. 1700, amended, to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance the COPS ON THE BEAT grant program, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 381 yeas to 34 nays, Roll No. 348; **Pages H4985–95, H5016**

Safe American Roads Act of 2007: H.R. 1773, amended, to limit the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to grant authority to motor carriers domiciled in Mexico to operate beyond United States municipalities and commercial zones on the United States-Mexico border, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 411 yeas to 3 nays, Roll No. 349; **Pages H4995–H5001, H5016–17**

James A. Leach Federal Building Designation Act: H.R. 1505, amended, to designate the Federal building located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the "James A. Leach Federal Building"; **Pages H5001–03**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "To designate the United States courthouse located at 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the 'James A. Leach Federal Building'.". **Page H5003**

Authorizing the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation: H.R. 1036, amended, to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation; **Pages H5003–04**

Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run: H. Con. Res. 123, to authorize the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run; **Pages H5004–05**

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week: H. Res. 352, to support the goals and ideals of National Public Works Week; **Pages H5005–07**

Commemorating the marinas of the United States and expressing support for the designation of the sixth annual National Marina Day: H. Res. 343, amended, to commemorate the marinas of the United States and expressing support for the designation of the sixth annual National Marina Day; **Pages H5007–09**

Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby: H. Con. Res. 79, to authorize the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; **Pages H5009–10**

Recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week: H. Res. 386, amended, to recognize the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the National Safe Boating Council for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week; and **Pages H5010–12**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "Recognizing the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and other boating safety organizations for their efforts to promote National Safe Boating Week". **Page H5012**

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Eosinophil Awareness Week, and for other purposes: H. Res. 296, to support the goals and ideals of National Eosinophil Awareness Week. **Pages H5012–13**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he transmitted certification to Congress that the export to the People's Republic of China of certain listed items is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered printed (H. Doc. 110–34). **Page H5043**

Committee Resignations: Read a letter from Representative McCotter wherein he resigned from the

Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Foreign Affairs due to his election to the Committee on Financial Services. **Page H5043**

Recess: The House recessed at 8:31 p.m. and reconvened at 9:17 p.m. **Page H5050**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H4970.

Amendments: Amendments ordered printed pursuant to the rule appear on page H5055.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5014, H5014–15, H5015, H5016, H5016–17. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9:00 a.m. and adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Committee Meetings

FRESH PRODUCE SAFETY

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture held a hearing to review industry response to the safety of fresh and fresh-cut produce. Testimony was heard from Lloyd Day, Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA; David Acheson, M.D., Assistant Commissioner, Food Protection, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services; and public witnesses.

COLLEGE CAMPUS SAFETY

Committee on Education and Labor: Held a hearing on Best Practices for Making College Campuses Safe. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PRIVATE SECTOR WHISTLEBLOWERS PROTECTIONS

Committee on Education and Labor: Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing on Private Sector Whistleblowers: Are There Sufficient Legal Protections? Testimony was heard from Richard Fairfax, Director of Enforcement, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor; Tom Devine, Legal Director, GAO; and public witnesses.

CHILDREN'S PRODUCT SAFETY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection held a hearing entitled ''Protecting Our Children: Current Issues in Children's Product Safety.'' Testimony was head from Nancy A. Nord, Acting Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission; and public witnesses.

MEDICARE SAVINGS PLAN AND LOW INCOME SUBSIDY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Medicare Savings Plan and Low Income Subsidy: Keeping Medicare's Promise for Seniors and People with Disabilities.'' Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ENGAGEMENT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Held a hearing on U.S. Re-Engagement in the Global Effort to Fight Climate Change. Testimony was heard from Eileen Claussen, former Assistant Secretary, Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State; and public witnesses.

HURRICANE SEASON PREPAREDNESS

Committee on Homeland Security: Held a hearing entitled ''The 2007 Hurricane Season: Are We Prepared?'' Testimony was heard from R. David Pulison, Director, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security; William Jenkins, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues Division, GAO; Craig Fugate, Director, Division of Emergency Management, State of Florida; and Joe Becker, Senior Vice President, Preparedness and Response, National Headquarters, American Red Cross.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing on the following bills: H.R. 1239, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2007; H.R. 1388, Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Act; H.R. 1483, To amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the authorization for certain national heritage areas; and H.R. 1528, New England National Scenic Trail Designation Act. Testimony was heard from Representatives Regula, Olver, Hastings of Florida; Castle and Murphy of Connecticut; Chris Jarvi, Associate Director, Partnerships and Visitor Experience, National Park Service, Department of the Interior; Robert Stanton, former Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

Committee on Rules: Granted, by vote of 9 to 4, a structured rule. The rule provides for ninety minutes of general debate on H.R. 1585, National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2008, equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Armed Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Armed Services

shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of further amendment and shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the committee amendment except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI.

The rule makes in order only those amendments printed in the report and waives all points of order against such amendments except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule also permits the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer amendments en bloc if those amendments have been printed in the report and not earlier disposed of. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may recognize for consideration any amendment printed in this report out of the order printed but not sooner than 30 minutes after the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services announces from the floor a request to that effect. Finally, the resolution permits the Chair, during consideration of the bill in the House, to postpone further consideration until a time designated by the Speaker. Testimony was heard from Chairman Skelton, Representatives, Boren, Ellsworth, McGovern, Moran of Virginia, Scott of Virginia, Holden, Blumenauer, Jackson-Lee of Texas, Tierney, Schakowsky, Thompson of California, Israel, Michaud, Lipinski, Braley, Carney, Walz, Saxton, Akin, Miller of Michigan, Franks of Arizona, Drake, Davis of Kentucky, Lincoln Diaz-Balart of Florida, Sessions, Tom Davis of Virginia, LaHood, Latham, Weller, Goode, Terry, Capito, King of Iowa, Musgrave and McCotter.

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

Committee on Rules: Granted, by voice vote, an open rule with a preprinting requirement. The rule provides one hour of general debate on H.R. 1427, Federal Housing Finance Reform Act of 2007, equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be read by title rather than by section and each title shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, except for clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI.

The rule makes in order only those amendments to the amendment in the nature of a substitute that have been pre-printed in the Congressional Record before the beginning of consideration of the bill or are pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate. The rule provides that each amendment so printed may be offered only by the Member who caused it to be printed or a designee, and that each amendment shall be considered as read. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Finally, the rule provides that the Chair may postpone consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker. Testimony was heard from Chairman Frank, Representatives Bachus.

ADVANCED COAL TECHNOLOGIES

Committee on Science and Technology: Subcommittee on Energy and Environment held a hearing on Prospects for Advanced Coal Technologies: Efficient Energy Production, Carbon Capture and Sequestration. Testimony was heard from Carl O. Bauer, Director, National Energy Technology Laboratory, Department of Energy; Robert J. Finley, Director, Energy and Earth Resources Center, Geological Survey, State of Illinois; and public witnesses.

MATH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Committee on Science and Technology: Subcommittee on Research and Science Education held a hearing on Federal STEM Education Programs: Educators' Perspectives. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

VETERANS MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Ordered reported the following bills: H.R. 612, amended, Returning Servicemember VA Health Insurance Act of 2007; H.R. 67, amended, Veterans Outreach Improvement Act of 2007; H.R. 1660, amended, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery for veterans in the southern Colorado region; H.R. 1470, Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act; and H.R. 2199, amended, to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide certain improvements in treatment of Individuals with traumatic brain injuries; and H.R. 2239, amended, Early Access to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits Act.

MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENTS

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on Payments to Certain Medicare Fee-for-Service Providers, Testimony was heard from Herb Kuhn, Acting Deputy Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services; Mark Miller,

Executive Director, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission; and public witnesses.

STATE CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Income Security held a hearing on challenges Facing the Child Welfare System. Testimony was heard from Cornelia M. Ashby, Director of Education, Workforce and Income Security, GAO; Mary Nelson, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Human Services, State of Iowa; Anne Holton, First Lady of Virginia; and public witnesses.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense, to hold hearings to receive testimony from sundry public witnesses, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2008 for the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, 3 p.m., SD–192.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled ''Foreign Investment and National Security Act of 2007'', an original bill to make technical corrections to Title III of SAFETEA–LU; H.R. 1675, to suspend the requirements of the Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding electronic filing of previous participation certificates and regarding filing of such certificates with respect to certain low-income housing investors, H.R. 1676, to reauthorize the program of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for loan guarantees for Indian housing, S. 254, to award posthumously a Congressional gold medal to Constantino Brumidi, and the nominations of David George Nason, of Rhode Island, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Institutions, Mario Mancuso, of New York, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, Michael W. Tankersley, of Texas, to be Inspector General, Export-Import Bank, Robert M. Couch, of Alabama, to be General Counsel of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Janis Herschkowitz, of Pennsylvania, and Nguyen Van Hanh, of California, and David George Nason, of Rhode Island, each to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank, 9:30 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, to hold hearings to examine the state of mercury regulation, science, and technology, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the efficacy of United States preference programs, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine rogue online pharmacies, focusing on the growing problem of internet drug trafficking, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: business meeting to mark up S. 1256, to amend the Small Business Act to reauthorize loan programs under that Act, 2 p.m., SR–428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Michael K. Kussman, of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Health, 10 a.m., SD–562.

Special Committee on Aging: to hold hearings to examine Medicare Advantage marketing and sales, focusing on who has the advantage, 10:30 a.m., SD–106.

House

Committee on Education and Labor, hearing on Evaluating the Effectiveness of MSHA's Mine Safety and Health Programs, 10:30 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Reauthorization of the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act,'' 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''2006 Prudhoe Bay Shutdown: Will Recent Regulatory Changes and BP Management Reforms Prevent Future Failures,'' 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, hearing entitled ''Private Equity's Effects on Workers and Firms,'' 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, briefing on Africa's Water Crisis and the 2006 UNDP Human Development Report, 2:30 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, hearing on Africa's Water Crisis and the U.S. Response, 3 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia, hearing on Public Diplomacy in the Middle East and South Asia: Is the Message Getting Through? 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, hearing entitled ''The Impact of Foreign Ownership and Foreign Investment on the Security of Our Nation's Critical Infrastructure,'' 2:30 p.m., 1539 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Antitrust Task Force, hearing on Prices at the Pump: Market Failure and the Oil Industry, 1 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Courts, The Internet, and Intellectual Property, to mark up H.R. 1908, Patent Reform Act of 2007, 4 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, hearing on Comprehensive Immigration Reform: Becoming Americans-U.S. Immigration Integration, 9:30 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Science and Technology, hearing on the State of Climate Change Science 2007: The Findings of the

Fourth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group III: Mitigation of Climate Change, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, hearing on legislation affecting the SBA's Entrepreneurial Development programs, including its Small Business Development Center and Women's Business Center Programs, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, hearing on Climate Change and Energy Independence: Transportation and Infrastructure Issues, 11 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the explosive costs of elder care and determine if they are hurting family finances and business competition, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9 a.m., Wednesday, May 16

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 1495, Water Resources Development Act, and vote on the motions to invoke cloture on certain amendments.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, May 16

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 1585—National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Berry, Marion, Ark., E1055, E1058
Bilirakis, Gus M., Fla., E1054
Carter, John R., Tex., E1047
Costello, Jerry F., Ill., E1051
Courtney, Joe, Conn., E1056
Davis, Tom, Va., E1057
DeLauro, Rosa L., Conn., E1048, E1049
Diaz-Balart, Lincoln, Fla., E1048
Hinojosa, Rubén, Tex., E1050
Hirono, Mazie K., Hawaii, E1052
Hoyer, Steny H., Md., E1049
Inslee, Jay, Wash., E1051
Johnson, Timothy V., Ill., E1054
Kaptur, Marcy, Ohio, E1047, E1052, E1055
Kildee, Dale E., Mich., E1049
McCarthy, Carolyn, N.Y., E1054
McCollum, Betty, Minn., E1050
McHugh, John M., N.Y., E1057
McMorris Rodgers, Cathy, Wash., E1054
Marchant, Kenny, Tex., E1050
Meehan, Martin T., Mass., E1047
Musgrave, Marilyn N., Colo., E1056
Rangel, Charles B., N.Y., E1055
Sánchez, Linda T., Calif., E1054
Smith, Adam, Wash., E1051
Tancredo, Thomas G., Colo., E1055
Thompson, Mike, Calif., E1057
Udall, Mark, Colo., E1047, E1052, E1055
Visclosky, Peter J., Ind., E1048
Woolsey, Lynn C., Calif., E1057

Congressional Record

The *Congressional Record* (USPS 087–390). The Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C. The public proceedings of each House of Congress, as reported by the Official Reporters thereof, are printed pursuant to directions of the Joint Committee on Printing as authorized by appropriate provisions of Title 44, United States Code, and published for each day that one or both Houses are in session, excepting very infrequent instances when two or more unusually small consecutive issues are printed one time. ¶Public access to the *Congressional Record* is available online through *GPO Access*, a service of the Government Printing Office, free of charge to the user. The online database is updated each day the *Congressional Record* is published. The database includes both text and graphics from the beginning of the 103d Congress, 2d session (January 1994) forward. It is available through *GPO Access* at www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess. Customers can also access this information with WAIS client software, via telnet at swais.access.gpo.gov, or dial-in using communications software and a modem at 202–512–1661. Questions or comments regarding this database or *GPO Access* can be directed to the *GPO Access* User Support Team at: E-Mail: gpoaccess@gpo.gov; Phone 1–888–293–6498 (toll-free), 202–512–1530 (D.C. area); Fax: 202–512–1262. The Team's hours of availability are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, except Federal holidays. ¶The *Congressional Record* paper and 24x microfiche edition will be furnished by mail to subscribers, free of postage, at the following prices: paper edition, $252.00 for six months, $503.00 per year, or purchased as follows: less than 200 pages, $10.50; between 200 and 400 pages, $21.00; greater than 400 pages, $31.50, payable in advance; microfiche edition, $146.00 per year, or purchased for $3.00 per issue payable in advance. The semimonthly *Congressional Record Index* may be purchased for the same per issue prices. To place an order for any of these products, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at: bookstore.gpo.gov. Mail orders to: Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250–7954, or phone orders to 866–512–1800 (toll free), 202–512–1800 (D.C. area), or fax to 202–512–2250. Remit check or money order, made payable to the Superintendent of Documents, or use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or GPO Deposit Account. ¶Following each session of Congress, the daily *Congressional Record* is revised, printed, permanently bound and sold by the Superintendent of Documents in individual parts or by sets. ¶With the exception of copyrighted articles, there are no restrictions on the republication of material from the *Congressional Record*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Superintendent of Documents, *Congressional Record*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, along with the entire mailing label from the last issue received.