

our troops on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan by supplying over \$258 million for defense-wide MRAP vehicles as well as over \$2.6 billion in funding for the armed forces to purchase this same equipment.

Amendment 1 also resolves many of the shortcomings of our military medical healthcare facilities and defense health programs inability to treat and care for our men and women in uniform returning from combat with injuries. In doing so, it allots \$1.878 billion for our Defense Health Programs specifically, \$6 million for treatment of TBI and those suffering from PTSD, the signature injuries of our troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. It also provides needed oversight of our military medical treatment facilities, military housing, medical hold personnel and housing provided to them by requiring a series of inspections be conducted by the Secretary of Defense thereby, ensuring that our service members never again return to military facilities at home that are substandard.

Amendment 1 also provides \$393 million in funding to the State Children's Health Insurance Programs, SCHIP, a vital program to the Nation and to the State of Maryland.

Currently, over 137,000 children in Maryland are without health insurance. Fully funding this program will be a great step toward providing universal health care to our neediest children. I should also note that Amendment 1 also provides needed agricultural, FEMA and general Gulf Coast recovery support for those still suffering from the widespread damage caused by Hurricane Katrina by appropriating over \$2.87 billion in financial support.

President Bush can no longer expect a blank check without any accountability given the current circumstances in Iraq. Over 3,400 soldiers have died and the number increases each day. We have been working diligently to negotiate with the President but he has constantly failed to meet us halfway, despite the clear need for a new direction and policy in Iraq. His mandate to have a bill with no strings attached as to time lines for redeployment or one absent of key benchmarks measuring our progress with accountability and needed oversight measures included is unreasonable and irresponsible. This is exactly why I firmly disapprove of Amendment 2.

The President has outlined the need for benchmarks himself particularly, in a January 13, 2007 radio address stating that "America will hold the Iraqi Government to benchmarks it has announced. These include taking responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November, passing legislation to share oil revenues among all Iraqis, and spending \$10 billion of its own money on reconstruction projects that will create new jobs." These are strong commitments. And the Iraqi Government knows that it must meet them, or lose the support of the Iraqi and the American people.

The President must be held accountable. No more blank checks. It is our duty to protect our brave men and women in uniform. Therefore, I call on my colleagues listen to the American people and vote against Amendment 2.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL DIGITAL TELEVISION CONSUMER EDUCATION ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues' strong support of a bill that I am introducing, which would educate the American people about the Nation's transition to digital television broadcasting and help prepare them for the analog cutoff date in February 2009.

As you know, Congress enacted a "hard date," February 17, 2009, by which our TV broadcasters must cease analog broadcasting and only transmit in digital. On that date, anyone who relies on over-the-air broadcasts will need a set-top box to receive and convert digital TV signals in order for their analog TV to continue to work.

The benefits of transitioning to digital TV signals are enormous, most importantly opening up desperately needed spectrum for first responders. I believe the American people will support this transition, but to make this transition a success our constituents need to know and understand why this is happening.

The Federal Communications Commission has been tasked with the responsibility of the success of this transition. If the Commission does not approach the analog cutoff date with care and consideration of the consumer, millions of TV viewing Americans will be left with a black screen.

I am particularly concerned that the FCC is relying heavily on a website to inform consumers about the transition and how to prepare for the analog cutoff day. I believe that this is not enough. According to the GAO, 21 million U.S. households rely on over-the-air television. Many of these households have a combined income of \$30,000 or less and do not have immediate access to the internet. I am not convinced that a website will help these families obtain the necessary information to prepare for the transition.

To facilitate this transition and make up for the lack of sufficient education from the FCC, I am introducing the National Digital Television Consumer Education Act. This legislation requires TV retailers to place signs next to analog televisions that will include an advisory that additional equipment is necessary after February 17, 2009 to continue using that TV. The bill also requires broadcasters to air PSAs for more than a year to help educate the public about what is happening and the set-top box subsidy program.

The DTV transition will impact every American. We must do everything to ensure the success of this transition and help our constituents from losing their television transmission in February 2009. I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor this bill which will help prepare the American people for the upcoming transition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, May 17, 2007, I missed six recorded votes due to a family obligation in Texas. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner.

H.R. 1427, FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

Rollcall No. 378 H. AMDT. 203 (BACHUS R-AL) Amendment No. 001—"yes"; rollcall No. 379 H. AMDT. 205 (HENSARLING R-TX) Amendment No. 003—"yes"; rollcall No. 380 H. AMDT. 209 (MCHENRY R-NC) Amendment No. 007—"yes"; rollcall No. 381 H. AMDT. 210 (KANJORSKI D-PA) Amendment No. 008—"no"; rollcall No. 382 H. AMDT. 211 (ROSKAM R-IL) Amendment No. 009—"yes" and rollcall No. 383 H. AMDT. 213 (GARRET R-NJ) Amendment No. 011—"no."

MARKING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE LIMA CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I am honored today to pay special tribute to the outstanding women of the Lima Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The chapter marked its 100th anniversary with a special reception on June 3, 2007.

Chartered on April 10, 1907, the Lima Chapter has served the people of Lima in countless ways through the years. From their work in support of servicemembers and veterans to their committed work with the youth of Allen County, Ohio, the women of the Lima DAR have compiled a long and distinguished record of service in times of war and peace.

Fifty-two women have served the Lima Chapter as Regent, starting with Mrs. Clara Paine Ohler. The chapter's membership through the years has included women from all walks of life who have distinguished themselves in numerous ways through their service.

The Lima DAR is especially noted for its work in local schools to promote civic education, reflecting the group's love of country and its high regard for the gift of freedom that we all enjoy. They are true examples of the DAR's high calling to cherish, maintain, and extend the institutions of American freedom.

Madam Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the Lima Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Our nation is better served through their hard work and diligence. We wish them all the best at their centennial celebration.