

million workers, raising the minimum wage for the first time in a decade, by providing overdue assistance to the gulf region hit hard by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, by protecting our troops, investing in military readiness, including armed vehicles and equipment, and by increasing the transparency and accountability with strengthened ethics and lobbying rules.

We also continue moving legislation that has already passed here in the House but is making its way through the system, including fully implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations, putting 50,000 more police officers on our streets, and by providing the largest increase in veterans health care funding in the Veterans Administration's 77-year history.

Madam Speaker, this new Democratic Congress has begun moving our Nation in a new direction to address the needs of all Americans.

#### IRAN IS RUNNING OUT OF GASOLINE

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

Mr. KIRK. Last night Iranian citizens burned gas stations in Iran, protesting President Ahmadinejad's gasoline rationing plan. Yes, Iran is running out of gasoline. Despite being a leading OPEC oil producer, Iran is heavily dependent on gasoline from abroad. This is the key weakness of Iran.

The Iranian government has promised to attack Israel. It is the chief funder of Hezbollah and Hamas. It threw U.N. inspectors out, and says that it is enriching uranium.

Last night Congressman ROB ANDREWS and I introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 2880, calling for more gasoline restrictions on Iran. After last night's gasoline riots, a policy of the U.S., working with our allies, could become the diplomatic key to bring pressure on Iran to stop funding terror and building nuclear weapons.

Running out of gasoline. This is a danger for Iran's rulers and an opportunity for our diplomats.

#### VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY'S EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Vice President CHENEY, in his usual arrogant way, refused to disclose the deliberations of his secret energy task force that gave billions to big oil and increased our dependence on OPEC. He claimed executive privilege.

Then his office illegally disclosed the identity of a secret undercover CIA officer, Valerie Plame. They claimed executive privilege.

Now, we find that the Vice President is mishandling classified information

in volumes in violation of Executive Branch regulations. And we have the astonishing assertion that the Vice President is not part of the executive branch. Rip up those civics text books kids. DICK CHENEY is above the law and the Constitution of the United States, according to his attorney. Or perhaps he's just that higher power that George Bush refers to every time he has to make a difficult decision like launching an unneeded war in Iraq.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members that they should not engage in personalities toward the Vice President of the United States.

#### NON-FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, freedom is the foundational principle of our society. Our founders were champions of this God-given right and charged future generations with eternal vigilance to protect it.

Now, a handful of people in Washington want Uncle Sam to start telling radio and TV personalities what to talk about, to limit their freedom and ours.

Rather than fight in the marketplace of ideas, they want to bring back a 1929 radio regulation rule known as the "Fairness Doctrine." Now, don't be fooled. There's nothing fair about it.

In the early age of broadcasting, when the majority of news and information was distributed by one or two outlets, it seemed important to promote a competition of viewpoints. That was then.

A fairness doctrine today tramples upon freedom of speech and freedom of the press. It dictates to Americans that in an open, free and flooded marketplace of ideas, they need Washington politicians to sort it all out.

Madam Speaker, real freedom means a government that listens to the people, not one that dictates to the people who they must listen to.

Let's keep the Fairness Doctrine off our airwaves and in the history books where it belongs.

#### HOW MANY BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT ARE THERE

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

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, there's an easy civics pop quiz for the summer break. How many branches of government are there in the United States?

Well, any high school civics student can tell you that there are three. But

it seems like our Vice President is confused about the facts. House investigators have revealed that since 2003, the Vice President's office has failed to provide data on its classification activities as required under an executive order claiming that the Vice President's office is not, "an entity within the executive branch."

It seems that the Vice President's office believes that his office is its own branch of government above the law.

Madam Speaker, in light of this confusion, perhaps the President will see fit to give the Vice President some time off to improve his understanding of civics in the United States.

#### HONORING ARMY SERGEANT CHRIS DAVIS

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, this morning I come to the floor of this House to honor Army Sergeant Chris Davis. Sergeant Davis died Saturday defending liberty in Iraq. Serving in the United States Army was a life-long dream for Sergeant Davis. His 8 years in the Army included four tours of duty in Iraq. His devotion to America's security earned him numerous medals for his achievement, service and defense of his country.

A native of Lubbock, Texas, Chris was a brave soldier, a devoted husband and a loving father. This morning, my thoughts and prayers go out to his family: His parents, Ray and Hermina, his three sisters, his wife, Debbie, the children, Kasey, Blade, Jacob, Taylor and Dillon.

As we celebrate this Fourth of July week, may we remember the sacrifices of many that have gone before us and particularly this young brave soldier, Sergeant Davis from Lubbock, Texas.

#### HOUSE DEMOCRATS ARE MAKING PROGRESS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, for 6 months, Democrats have succeeded in changing the direction of this country. We have replaced Republican rubber stamps with meaningful Congressional oversight.

The Democratic House has now passed 50 key measures since January, most with strong bipartisan support. Thanks to this Democratic Congress, millions of Americans will receive their first pay raise in almost a decade on January 24. As a senior member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I was proud to support the long overdue increase in the minimum wage.

Gulf coast hurricane communities will get much needed relief, up-armed Humvees and critical military