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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 17, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER 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 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. McDERMOTT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God, dynamic in power, never absent or diminished, inspire the Members of the House of Representatives with transcending vision and far-reaching goals. While focused on the honest issues facing Your people and searching for response in solid national policies, keep them as practical as most of America's people.

With Your help, enlighten them to assess accurately our Nation's resources, and yet be honest enough to admit our limitations. Prevent them from enabling dysfunctional endeavors or from being distracted by unreal anxieties.

Shape this assembly, Lord, into a body of diverse ideas, which can solve any problem with a variety of approaches, until a fitting solution can be brought to bear lasting goodness for Your people.

This we ask, calling upon Your almighty name. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. PETRI 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.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY TONY SNOW

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week Tony Snow stepped down as White House press secretary. Mr. Snow, a graduate of Davidson College in North Carolina, has served the President and his Nation with distinction, and I wish to thank him for his hard work and dedication.

As a speech writer in the first Bush administration and as a television and radio personality, Tony established a reputation for common sense and measured thinking. As White House press secretary, he has led a professional team of communications personnel during a time when our country faces many difficult challenges. President Bush could not have asked for a stronger spokesperson. His forthright and genuine approach to his job has earned Tony Snow the respect and admiration of his peers in the political arena as well as the media. We wish him and his family much health and happiness as they embark upon the next chapter of their lives.

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

RECOGNIZING THE HEROIC ACTIONS OF MERLIN AND TERESA HARN

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

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, it was a close call on September 1 in the town of Menasha, Wisconsin. Merlin Harn and his wife Teresa were in their car when they noticed two boys, one apparently age 5 and the other under 2, walking on some railroad tracks.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mrs. Harn said it "didn't look right" to have two small children so far away from any homes, so she called 911. As she was talking to the 911 operator, she realized a train was coming. Mr. Harn immediately jumped out of the car. The older child got off the tracks, but Mr. Harn saved the life of the younger child by pulling him to safety.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of people would have seen those two boys and would have said, "That doesn't look right, but it's none of my business."

But, no. The Harns acted like concerned neighbors, like responsible members of a community rather than self-obsessed individuals. And they saved a young life.

Their concern, and their heroic actions, deserve our recognition and thanks.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on September 14, 2007, at 12:16 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he transmits a report providing progress on 18 Iraqi benchmarks.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT RE- PORT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-58)

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 the Committee on Armed Services and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 1314 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110-28) (the "Act"), attached is a report that assesses the status of each of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks contained in the Act and declares whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

The second of two reports submitted consistent with the Act, it has been prepared in consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense; the Com-

mander, Multi-National Force-Iraq; the United States Ambassador to Iraq; and the Commander, United States Central Command.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, September 14, 2007.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

CONGRATULATING SCIENTISTS F. SHERWOOD ROWLAND, MARIO MOLINA, AND PAUL CRUTZEN FOR THEIR WORK IN ATMOS- PHERIC CHEMISTRY

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 593) congratulating scientists F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone, that led to the development of the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 593

Whereas in 1973, on the University of California, Irvine campus, chemists F. Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina began researching the depletion of stratospheric ozone by the chlorofluorocarbon gases then used worldwide as refrigerants and aerosol propellants;

Whereas on June 28, 1974, F. Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina published in the scientific journal *Nature*, their path-breaking article, "Stratospheric Sink for Chlorofluoromethanes: Chlorine Atom-Catalysed Destruction of Ozone";

Whereas in 1976, the work of F. Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina connecting chlorofluorocarbons and atmospheric ozone depletion was confirmed by the National Academy of Sciences;

Whereas in 1978, the United States banned chlorofluorocarbons as propellants in aerosol cans;

Whereas in 1987, because of the research of F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, Paul Crutzen, and many other scientists, the international community acted through the adoption of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer ("Montreal Protocol");

Whereas the Montreal Protocol created the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol which provides funds to help developing countries to phase out the use of ozone-depleting substances;

Whereas the Multilateral Fund for Implementation of the Montreal Protocol was the first financial mechanism to be created under an international treaty;

Whereas the Montreal Protocol recognized that world-wide emissions of certain sub-

stances can significantly deplete and otherwise modify the ozone layer in a manner that is likely to result in adverse effects on human health and the environment;

Whereas because of the adoption of the Montreal Protocol the levels of chlorofluorocarbon gases in the Earth's atmosphere have decreased;

Whereas on September 17, 1987, the Montreal Protocol was open for signatures;

Whereas to date, 191 nations have signed the Montreal Protocol;

Whereas F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen were awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1995 for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone; and

Whereas September 17, 2007, marks the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Montreal Protocol: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates scientists F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone, that led to the development of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; and

(2) encourages the continued research of the interaction of humans and their actions with the Earth's ecosystem.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 593, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 593, legislation that congratulates scientists Frank Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen for their work in atmospheric chemistry concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone.

In 1973, Frank Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina began studying the impacts of CFCs in the Earth's atmosphere at the University of California, Irvine. The chemists discovered that CFC molecules were stable enough to remain in the atmosphere until they reached the middle of the stratosphere. There the molecules would finally be broken down by ultraviolet radiation, releasing a chlorine atom.

Rowland and Molina proposed that these chlorine atoms might be expected to cause the breakdown of large amounts of ozone (O₃) in the stratosphere. Their argument was based upon an analogy to contemporary work by Paul J. Crutzen, which had shown that nitric oxide could catalyze the destruction of ozone.

Drs. Crutzen, Molina and Rowland were awarded the 1995 Nobel prize for

chemistry for their work on this problem. The Montreal Protocol was a landmark international agreement designed to protect the stratospheric ozone layer. The treaty was originally signed in 1987 and subsequently amended in 1990 and 1992. The protocol stipulated that the production of compounds that deplete ozone in the stratosphere, including chlorofluorocarbons, were to be phased out by the year 2000.

The work of Dr. Rowland, Dr. Molina, and Dr. Crutzen was vital to the development of the Montreal Protocol, the reduction of ozone depleting compounds, and the restoration of our atmosphere. I applaud their work and ask that my colleagues support this resolution which thanks them for their important contributions to science.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 593, congratulating scientists F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina and Paul Crutzen for their contribution to atmospheric chemistry, particularly the formation and decomposition of ozone. Their pioneering research on the effects of CFCs on the ozone layer in the early 1970s was the start of a nearly 15-year campaign that would include an overwhelming consumer reaction to products containing CFCs, a national ban on aerosols and unparalleled international cooperation.

Twenty years later, the Montreal Protocol has been described as one of the most successful international agreements to date. It is the ideal illustration of what can be accomplished when scientists, policymakers and industry work together toward a common goal. Uncertainty did not stop us from looking for alternative solutions. However, action was not taken until those uncertainties were addressed through further scientific research and until viable substitutes were available. Cooperation on environmental problems requires that the outcome be beneficial for all parties. This was achieved through the Montreal Protocol.

I offer my thanks to these three scientists. The environmental consequences and economic impacts in terms of greater health costs and loss of crops and damage to vital species due to the use of CFCs could have been far worse if not for the work of F. Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 593.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I am the proud sponsor of H. Res. 593, a resolution congratulating the scientists whose work led to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty that has been a critical part of the global commitment to improving the environment for ourselves and future generations. The treaty was a science driven effort to address a specific human action that has real consequences on the ozone layer.

Yesterday, September 16th was the 20th anniversary of when the Montreal Protocol was first made available for signature. Although the benefits of the Montreal Protocol are being realized worldwide, the science that led to its implementation is entirely home-grown.

In 1973, scientists Sherwood Rowland and Mario Molina began their work at the fantastic University of California, Irvine, in Orange County, California. Rowland and Molina researched the depletion of stratospheric ozone by chlorofluorocarbon gases. These CFC gases were used worldwide in many products as refrigerants and aerosol propellants. Like all scientific endeavors, Rowland and Molina started with a hypothesis. They realized that CFCs are very stable compounds in the lower atmosphere. Because of that, the compounds could travel to the upper atmosphere and interact with other compounds that are critical to the upper atmosphere.

By June of 1974 the hypothesis of Rowland and Molina was confirmed by their own research; CFCs are broken down by ultra-violet radiation in the upper atmosphere and then interact with and deplete ozone molecules. Their work was published in the scientific journal *Nature* to a mixed reaction because CFCs were considered by many to be a wonder product that had many benefits and no negative consequences. However, a mixed reaction to a published article is not necessarily a bad thing since it is necessary for published scientific work to hold up under intense peer review and scrutiny.

The National Academy of Sciences began testing the work of Rowland and Molina and by 1976, the Academy released a report that confirmed the scientific credibility of the ozone depletion hypothesis. To the credit of this institution, Congress acted quickly in response to the confirmed work of Rowland and Molina.

In 1978 the use of CFCs in aerosol propellants was banned in the United States. With the United States leading the way and significant studies being conducted by the Dutch scientist Paul Crutzen, the Montreal Protocol came into full force on September 17, 1987. To date, 191 nations have signed on to the Montreal Protocol.

In 1995, Rowland, Molina, and Crutzen were awarded the Nobel Prize for chemistry in recognition of their work—this was quite an achievement for UC Irvine as well. On the twentieth anniversary of the Montreal Protocol, let's once again recognize the homegrown science of Sherwood Rowland, Mario Molina, and Paul Crutzen that has had an ongoing and significant positive impact on the Earth's ecosystem.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 593.

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

Mr. HILL. 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 gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 593.

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.

ESTABLISHING A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1657) to establish a Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to recruit and prepare students for careers in the National Weather Service and in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration marine research, atmospheric research, and satellite programs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1657

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

SECTION 1. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator is authorized to establish a Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to individuals that is designed to recruit and prepare students for careers in the National Weather Service and in Administration marine research, atmospheric research, and satellite programs.

(2) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—Individuals shall be selected to receive scholarships under this section through a competitive process primarily on the basis of academic merit, with consideration given to financial need and the goal of promoting the participation of individuals identified in section 33 or 34 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a or 1885b).

(3) SERVICE AGREEMENTS.—To carry out the scholarship program, the Administrator shall enter into contractual agreements with individuals selected under paragraph (2) under which the individuals agree to serve as full-time employees of the Administration, for the period described in subsection (f)(1), in positions needed by the Administration in fields described in paragraph (1) and for which the individuals are qualified, in exchange for receiving a scholarship.

(b) SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible to participate in the scholarship program, an individual shall—

(1) be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a full-time student at an institution of higher education in an academic program or field of study described in the list made available under subsection (d);

(2) be a United States citizen or permanent resident; and

(3) at the time of the initial scholarship award, not be a Federal employee as defined in section 2105 of title 5 of the United States Code.

(c) APPLICATION REQUIRED.—An individual seeking a scholarship under this section shall submit an application to the Administrator at such time, in such manner, and containing such information, agreements, or assurances as the Administrator may require to carry out this section.

(d) ELIGIBLE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS.—The Administrator shall make publicly available a list of academic programs and fields of study for which scholarships may be utilized in fields described in subsection (a)(1), and shall update the list as necessary.

(e) SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may provide a scholarship under the scholarship program for an academic year if the individual applying for the scholarship has submitted to the Administrator, as part of the application required under subsection (c), a

proposed academic program leading to a degree in a program or field of study on the list made available under subsection (d).

(2) DURATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—An individual may not receive a scholarship under this section for more than 4 academic years, unless the Administrator grants a waiver.

(3) SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT.—The dollar amount of a scholarship under this section for an academic year shall be determined under regulations issued by the Administrator, but shall in no case exceed the cost of attendance.

(4) AUTHORIZED USES.—A scholarship provided under this section may be expended for tuition, fees, and other authorized expenses as established by the Administrator by regulation.

(5) CONTRACTS REGARDING DIRECT PAYMENTS TO INSTITUTIONS.—The Administrator may enter into a contractual agreement with an institution of higher education under which the amounts provided for a scholarship under this section for tuition, fees, and other authorized expenses are paid directly to the institution with respect to which the scholarship is provided.

(f) PERIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE.—

(1) DURATION OF SERVICE.—Except as provided in subsection (h)(2), the period of service for which an individual shall be obligated to serve as an employee of the Administration shall be 24 months for each academic year for which a scholarship under this section is provided.

(2) SCHEDULE FOR SERVICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), obligated service under paragraph (1) shall begin not later than 60 days after the individual obtains the educational degree for which the scholarship was provided.

(B) DEFERRAL.—The Administrator may defer the obligation of an individual to provide a period of service under paragraph (1) if the Administrator determines that such a deferral is appropriate. The Administrator shall prescribe the terms and conditions under which a service obligation may be deferred through regulation.

(g) PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT.—

(1) FAILURE TO COMPLETE ACADEMIC TRAINING.—Scholarship recipients who fail to maintain a high level of academic standing, as defined by the Administrator by regulation, who are dismissed from their educational institutions for disciplinary reasons, or who voluntarily terminate academic training before graduation from the educational program for which the scholarship was awarded, shall be in breach of their contractual agreement and, in lieu of any service obligation arising under such agreement, shall be liable to the United States for repayment not later than 1 year after the date of default of all scholarship funds paid to them and to the institution of higher education on their behalf under the agreement, except as provided in subsection (h)(2). The repayment period may be extended by the Administrator when determined to be necessary, as established by regulation.

(2) FAILURE TO BEGIN OR COMPLETE THE SERVICE OBLIGATION OR MEET THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF DEFERMENT.—A scholarship recipient who, for any reason, fails to begin or complete a service obligation under this section after completion of academic training, or fails to comply with the terms and conditions of deferment established by the Administrator pursuant to subsection (f)(2)(B), shall be in breach of the contractual agreement. When a recipient breaches an agreement for the reasons stated in the preceding sentence, the recipient shall be liable to the United States for an amount equal to—

(A) the total amount of scholarships received by such individual under this section; plus

(B) the interest on the amounts of such awards which would be payable if at the time the awards were received they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States.

(h) WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF OBLIGATION.—

(1) DEATH OF INDIVIDUAL.—Any obligation of an individual incurred under the scholarship program (or a contractual agreement thereunder) for service or payment shall be canceled upon the death of the individual.

(2) IMPOSSIBILITY OR EXTREME HARDSHIP.—The Administrator shall by regulation provide for the partial or total waiver or suspension of any obligation of service or payment incurred by an individual under the scholarship program (or a contractual agreement thereunder) whenever compliance by the individual is impossible or would involve extreme hardship to the individual, or if enforcement of such obligation with respect to the individual would be contrary to the best interests of the Government.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act the following definitions apply:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(3) COST OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “cost of attendance” has the meaning given that term in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 108711).

(4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(5) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.—The term “scholarship program” means the Science and Technology Scholarship Program established under this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1657, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1415

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 1657, legislation that establishes a science and technology scholarship program. This program will award scholarships to recruit and prepare students for careers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, better known as NOAA, related to weather, atmospheric, marine, and satellite research.

There is a growing concern that too few American students pursue science,

math, and engineering degrees. H.R. 1657 provides incentives to study in these areas and go on to work at NOAA. The bill is based upon the Robert Noyce Scholarship program at the National Science Foundation.

I applaud the foresight of my colleague, Representative ROHRBACHER, in introducing this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill on the floor today.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, is the Nation's lead agency charged with conserving and managing our coastal and oceanic resources. NOAA also plays a vital role in public safety through the programs of the National Weather Service to issue weather forecasts and warnings. We must ensure that NOAA has the resources it needs to meet its statutory responsibilities and to accomplish its resource management, marine and atmospheric research, and public safety missions.

H.R. 1657 establishes a science and technology scholarship program to recruit and prepare students for careers at the National Weather Service and at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This scholarship program would provide assistance through a competitive process based on academic merit to those students who desire careers in weather forecasting, marine, or atmospheric research or satellite program.

Similar to other Federal incentive programs, this scholarship program would require participants to enter into contractual agreements working at either the National Weather Service or NOAA for 2 years for each year of scholarship money they receive. This two-for-one condition is beneficial for both the government and the students in that it guarantees that highly educated individuals will be working and gaining experience at vital national organizations, particularly at a time when our most experienced scientists and researchers begin to retire. Institutional knowledge will be passed on from one generation to the next, and young scientists will gain the experience needed should they choose to leave government service for the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when our Nation is about to be short on educated and qualified scientists, we cannot ignore the benefits that this bill will provide. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1657.

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

Mr. HILL. 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 Indiana (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1657.

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. WESTMORELAND. 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 motion will be postponed.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill H.R. 3246 to amend title 40, United States Code, to provide a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3246

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 "Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) certain regions of the Nation, including Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta Region, the Northern Great Plains Region, the Southeast Crescent Region, the Southwest Border Region, the Northern Border Region, and rural Alaska, have suffered from chronic distress far above the national average;

(2) an economically distressed region can suffer unemployment and poverty at a rate that is 150 percent of the national average; and

(3) regional commissions are unique Federal-State partnerships that can provide targeted resources to alleviate pervasive economic distress.

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

(1) to provide a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation; and

(2) to ensure that the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation have the necessary tools to develop the basic building blocks for economic development, such as transportation and basic public infrastructure, job skills training, and business development.

SEC. 3. REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subtitle V as subtitle VI; and

(2) by inserting after subtitle IV the following:

"Subtitle V—Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development

Table with 2 columns: Section Number and Section Title. Includes Chapter 151, Sections 15101-15107.

"CHAPTER 151—GENERAL PROVISIONS

"Sec.

"15101. Definitions.

"§ 15101. Definitions

"In this subtitle, the following definitions apply:

"(1) COMMISSION.—The term 'Commission' means a Commission established under section 15301.

"(2) LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT.—The term 'local development district' means an entity that—

"(A)(i) is an economic development district that is—

"(I) in existence on the date of enactment of this chapter; and

"(II) located in the region; or

"(ii) if an entity described in clause (i) does not exist—

"(I) is organized and operated in a manner that ensures broad-based community participation and an effective opportunity for local officials, community leaders, and the public to contribute to the development and implementation of programs in the region;

"(II) is governed by a policy board with at least a simple majority of members consisting of—

"(aa) elected officials; or

"(bb) designees or employees of a general purpose unit of local government that have been appointed to represent the unit of local government; and

"(III) is certified by the Governor or appropriate State officer as having a charter or authority that includes the economic development of counties, portions of counties, or other political subdivisions within the region; and

"(B) has not, as certified by the Federal Cochairperson—

"(i) inappropriately used Federal grant funds from any Federal source; or

"(ii) appointed an officer who, during the period in which another entity inappropriately used Federal grant funds from any Federal source, was an officer of the other entity.

"(3) FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM.—The term 'Federal grant program' means a Federal grant program to provide assistance in carrying out economic and community development activities.

"(4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term 'Indian tribe' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

"(5) NONPROFIT ENTITY.—The term 'nonprofit entity' means any entity with tax-exempt or nonprofit status, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, that has been formed for the purpose of economic development.

"(6) REGION.—The term 'region' means the area covered by a Commission as described in subchapter II of chapter 157.

"CHAPTER 153—REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

"Sec.

"15301. Establishment, membership, and employees.

"15302. Decisions.

"15303. Functions.

"15304. Administrative powers and expenses.

"15305. Meetings.

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"15307. Tribal representation on Northern Great Plains Regional Commission.

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"15309. Annual report.

"§ 15301. Establishment, membership, and employees

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There are established the following regional Commissions:

"(1) The Delta Regional Commission.

"(2) The Northern Great Plains Regional Commission.

"(3) The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission.

"(4) The Southwest Border Regional Commission.

"(5) The Northern Border Regional Commission.

"(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

"(1) FEDERAL AND STATE MEMBERS.—Each Commission shall be composed of the following members:

"(A) A Federal Cochairperson, to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

"(B) The Governor of each participating State in the region of the Commission.

"(2) ALTERNATE MEMBERS.—

"(A) ALTERNATE FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSON.—The President shall appoint an alternate Federal Cochairperson for each Commission. The alternate Federal Cochairperson, when not actively serving as an alternate for the Federal Cochairperson, shall perform such functions and duties as are delegated by the Federal Cochairperson.

"(B) STATE ALTERNATES.—The State member of a participating State may have a single alternate, who shall be appointed by the Governor of the State from among the members of the Governor's cabinet or personal staff.

"(C) VOTING.—An alternate member shall vote in the case of the absence, death, disability, removal, or resignation of the Federal or State member for which the alternate member is an alternate.

"(3) COCHAIRPERSONS.—A Commission shall be headed by—

"(A) the Federal Cochairperson, who shall serve as a liaison between the Federal Government and the Commission; and

"(B) a State Cochairperson, who shall be a Governor of a participating State in the region and shall be elected by the State members for a term of not less than 1 year.

"(4) CONSECUTIVE TERMS.—A State member may not be elected to serve as State Cochairperson for more than 2 consecutive terms.

"(c) COMPENSATION.—

"(1) FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSONS.—Each Federal Cochairperson shall be compensated by the Federal Government at level III of the Executive Schedule as set out in section 5314 of title 5.

"(2) ALTERNATE FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSONS.—Each Federal Cochairperson's alternate shall be compensated by the Federal Government at level V of the Executive Schedule as set out in section 5316 of title 5.

"(3) STATE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES.—Each State member and alternate shall be compensated by the State that they represent at the rate established by the laws of that State.

"(d) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—A Commission shall appoint and fix the compensation of an executive director and such other personnel as are necessary to enable the Commission to carry out its duties. Compensation under this paragraph may not exceed the maximum rate of basic pay established for the Senior Executive Service under section 5382 of title 5, including any applicable locality-based comparability payment that may be authorized under section 5304(h)(2)(C) of that title.

"(2) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The executive director shall be responsible for carrying out the administrative duties of the Commission, directing the Commission staff, and such other duties as the Commission may assign.

"(e) NO FEDERAL EMPLOYEE STATUS.—No member, alternate, officer, or employee of a Commission (other than the Federal Cochairperson, the alternate Federal Cochairperson, staff of the Federal Cochairperson, and any Federal employee detailed to the Commission) shall be considered to be a Federal employee for any purpose.

“§ 15302. Decisions

“(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL.—Except as provided in section 15304(c)(3), decisions by the Commission shall require the affirmative vote of the Federal Cochairperson and a majority of the State members (exclusive of members representing States delinquent under section 15304(c)(3)(C)).

“(b) CONSULTATION.—In matters coming before the Commission, the Federal Cochairperson shall, to the extent practicable, consult with the Federal departments and agencies having an interest in the subject matter.

“(c) QUORUMS.—A Commission shall determine what constitutes a quorum for Commission meetings; except that—

“(1) any quorum shall include the Federal Cochairperson or the alternate Federal Cochairperson; and

“(2) a State alternate member shall not be counted toward the establishment of a quorum.

“(d) PROJECTS AND GRANT PROPOSALS.—The approval of project and grant proposals shall be a responsibility of each Commission and shall be carried out in accordance with section 15503.

“§ 15303. Functions

“A Commission shall—

“(1) assess the needs and assets of its region based on available research, demonstration projects, investigations, assessments, and evaluations of the region prepared by Federal, State, and local agencies, universities, local development districts, and other nonprofit groups;

“(2) develop, on a continuing basis, comprehensive and coordinated economic and infrastructure development strategies to establish priorities and approve grants for the economic development of its region, giving due consideration to other Federal, State, and local planning and development activities in the region;

“(3) not later than one year after the date of enactment of this section, and after taking into account State plans developed under section 15502, establish priorities in an economic and infrastructure development plan for its region, including 5-year regional outcome targets;

“(4)(A) enhance the capacity of, and provide support for, local development districts in its region; or

“(B) if no local development district exists in an area in a participating State in the region, foster the creation of a local development district;

“(5) encourage private investment in industrial, commercial, and other economic development projects in its region;

“(6) cooperate with and assist State governments with the preparation of economic and infrastructure development plans and programs for participating States;

“(7) formulate and recommend to the Governors and legislatures of States that participate in the Commission forms of interstate cooperation and, where appropriate, international cooperation; and

“(8) work with State and local agencies in developing appropriate model legislation to enhance local and regional economic development.

“§ 15304. Administrative powers and expenses

“(a) POWERS.—In carrying out its duties under this subtitle, a Commission may—

“(1) hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and print or otherwise reproduce and distribute a description of the proceedings and reports on actions by the Commission as the Commission considers appropriate;

“(2) authorize, through the Federal or State Cochairperson or any other member of

the Commission designated by the Commission, the administration of oaths if the Commission determines that testimony should be taken or evidence received under oath;

“(3) request from any Federal, State, or local agency such information as may be available to or procurable by the agency that may be of use to the Commission in carrying out the duties of the Commission;

“(4) adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws and rules governing the conduct of business and the performance of duties by the Commission;

“(5) request the head of any Federal agency, State agency, or local government to detail to the Commission such personnel as the Commission requires to carry out its duties, each such detail to be without loss of seniority, pay, or other employee status;

“(6) provide for coverage of Commission employees in a suitable retirement and employee benefit system by making arrangements or entering into contracts with any participating State government or otherwise providing retirement and other employee coverage;

“(7) accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations or services or real, personal, tangible, or intangible property;

“(8) enter into and perform such contracts, cooperative agreements, or other transactions as are necessary to carry out Commission duties, including any contracts or cooperative agreements with a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States, a State (including a political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of the State), or a person, firm, association, or corporation; and

“(9) maintain a government relations office in the District of Columbia and establish and maintain a central office at such location in its region as the Commission may select.

“(b) FEDERAL AGENCY COOPERATION.—A Federal agency shall—

“(1) cooperate with a Commission; and

“(2) provide, to the extent practicable, on request of the Federal Cochairperson, appropriate assistance in carrying out this subtitle, in accordance with applicable Federal laws (including regulations).

“(c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the administrative expenses of a Commission shall be paid—

“(A) by the Federal Government, in an amount equal to 50 percent of the administrative expenses of the Commission; and

“(B) by the States participating in the Commission, in an amount equal to 50 percent of the administrative expenses.

“(2) EXPENSES OF THE FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSON.—All expenses of the Federal Cochairperson, including expenses of the alternate and staff of the Federal Cochairperson, shall be paid by the Federal Government.

“(3) STATE SHARE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the share of administrative expenses of a Commission to be paid by each State of the Commission shall be determined by a unanimous vote of the State members of the Commission.

“(B) NO FEDERAL PARTICIPATION.—The Federal Cochairperson shall not participate or vote in any decision under subparagraph (A).

“(C) DELINQUENT STATES.—During any period in which a State is more than 1 year delinquent in payment of the State's share of administrative expenses of the Commission under this subsection—

“(i) no assistance under this subtitle shall be provided to the State (including assistance to a political subdivision or a resident of the State) for any project not approved as of the date of the commencement of the delinquency; and

“(ii) no member of the Commission from the State shall participate or vote in any action by the Commission.

“(4) EFFECT ON ASSISTANCE.—A State's share of administrative expenses of a Commission under this subsection shall not be taken into consideration when determining the amount of assistance provided to the State under this subtitle.

“§ 15305. Meetings

“(a) INITIAL MEETING.—Each Commission shall hold an initial meeting not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section.

“(b) ANNUAL MEETING.—Each Commission shall conduct at least 1 meeting each year with the Federal Cochairperson and at least a majority of the State members present.

“(c) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.—Each Commission shall conduct additional meetings at such times as it determines and may conduct such meetings by electronic means.

“§ 15306. Personal financial interests

“(a) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—

“(1) NO ROLE ALLOWED.—Except as permitted by paragraph (2), an individual who is a State member or alternate, or an officer or employee of a Commission, shall not participate personally and substantially as a member, alternate, officer, or employee of the Commission, through decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, request for a ruling, or other determination, contract, claim, controversy, or other matter in which, to the individual's knowledge, any of the following has a financial interest:

“(A) The individual.

“(B) The individual's spouse, minor child, or partner.

“(C) An organization (except a State or political subdivision of a State) in which the individual is serving as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee.

“(D) Any person or organization with whom the individual is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply if the individual, in advance of the proceeding, application, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, claim controversy, or other particular matter presenting a potential conflict of interest—

“(A) advises the Commission of the nature and circumstances of the matter presenting the conflict of interest;

“(B) makes full disclosure of the financial interest; and

“(C) receives a written decision of the Commission that the interest is not so substantial as to be considered likely to affect the integrity of the services that the Commission may expect from the individual.

“(3) VIOLATION.—An individual violating this subsection shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned for not more than 1 year, or both.

“(b) STATE MEMBER OR ALTERNATE.—A State member or alternate member may not receive any salary, or any contribution to, or supplementation of, salary, for services on a Commission from a source other than the State of the member or alternate.

“(c) DETAILED EMPLOYEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—No person detailed to serve a Commission shall receive any salary, or any contribution to, or supplementation of, salary, for services provided to the Commission from any source other than the State, local, or intergovernmental department or agency from which the person was detailed to the Commission.

“(2) VIOLATION.—Any person that violates this subsection shall be fined under title 18, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.

“(d) FEDERAL COCHAIRMAN, ALTERNATE TO FEDERAL COCHAIRMAN, AND FEDERAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.—The Federal Cochairman, the alternate to the Federal Cochairman, and any Federal officer or employee detailed to duty with the Commission are not subject to this section but remain subject to sections 202 through 209 of title 18.

“(e) RESCISSION.—A Commission may declare void any contract, loan, or grant of or by the Commission in relation to which the Commission determines that there has been a violation of any provision under subsection (a)(1), (b), or (c), or any of the provisions of sections 202 through 209 of title 18.

“§ 15307. Tribal representation on Northern Great Plains Regional Commission

“(a) TRIBAL COCHAIRPERSON.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—In addition to the members specified in section 15301(b)(1), the membership of the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission shall include a Tribal Cochairperson, to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Tribal Cochairperson shall be a member of an Indian tribe in the Commission’s region.

“(2) DUTIES.—In addition to the Federal Cochairperson and State Cochairperson, the Commission shall be headed by the Tribal Cochairperson, who shall serve as a liaison between the governments of Indian tribes in the region and the Commission.

“(b) ALTERNATE TRIBAL COCHAIRPERSON.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—The President shall appoint an alternate to the Tribal Cochairperson.

“(2) DUTIES.—The alternate Tribal Cochairperson, when not actively serving as an alternate for the Tribal Cochairperson, shall perform such functions and duties as are delegated by the Tribal Cochairperson.

“(3) VOTING.—The alternate Tribal Cochairperson shall vote in the case of the absence, death, disability, removal, or resignation of the Tribal Cochairperson.

“(c) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) TRIBAL COCHAIRPERSON.—The Tribal Cochairperson shall be compensated by the Federal Government at level III of the Executive Schedule as set out in section 5314 of title 5.

“(2) ALTERNATE TRIBAL COCHAIRPERSON.—The Tribal Cochairperson’s alternate shall be compensated by the Federal Government at level V of the Executive Schedule as set out in section 5316 of title 5.

“(d) EXPENSES OF TRIBAL COCHAIRPERSON.—All expenses of the Tribal Cochairperson, including expenses of the alternate and staff of the Tribal Cochairperson, shall be paid by the Federal Government.

“(e) DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES.—Except as provided in subsections (c) and (d), the Tribal Cochairperson shall have the same duties and privileges as the State Cochairperson.

“§ 15308. Tribal participation

“Governments of Indian tribes in the region of the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission or the Southwest Border Regional Commission shall be allowed to participate in matters before that Commission in the same manner and to the same extent as State agencies and instrumentalities in the region.

“§ 15309. Annual report

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the last day of each fiscal year, each Commission shall submit to the President and Congress a report on the activities carried out by the Commission under this subtitle in the fiscal year.

“(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall include—

“(1) a description of the criteria used by the Commission to designate counties under section 15702 and a list of the counties designated in each category;

“(2) an evaluation of the progress of the Commission in meeting the goals identified in the Commission’s economic and infrastructure development plan under section 15303 and State economic and infrastructure development plans under section 15502; and

“(3) any policy recommendations approved by the Commission.

“CHAPTER 155—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

“Sec.

“15501. Economic and infrastructure development grants.

“15502. Comprehensive economic and infrastructure development plans.

“15503. Approval of applications for assistance.

“15504. Program development criteria.

“15505. Local development districts and organizations.

“15506. Supplements to Federal grant programs.

“§ 15501. Economic and infrastructure development grants

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A Commission may make grants to States and local governments, Indian tribes, and public and nonprofit organizations for projects, approved in accordance with section 15503—

“(1) to develop the transportation infrastructure of its region;

“(2) to develop the basic public infrastructure of its region;

“(3) to develop the telecommunications infrastructure of its region;

“(4) to assist its region in obtaining job skills training, skills development and employment-related education, entrepreneurship, technology, and business development;

“(5) to provide assistance to severely economically distressed and underdeveloped areas of its region that lack financial resources for improving basic health care and other public services;

“(6) to promote resource conservation, tourism, recreation, and preservation of open space in a manner consistent with economic development goals;

“(7) to promote the development of renewable and alternative energy sources; and

“(8) to otherwise achieve the purposes of this subtitle.

“(b) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—A Commission shall allocate at least 40 percent of any grant amounts provided by the Commission in a fiscal year for projects described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (a).

“(c) SOURCES OF GRANTS.—Grant amounts may be provided entirely from appropriations to carry out this subtitle, in combination with amounts available under other Federal grant programs, or from any other source.

“(d) MAXIMUM COMMISSION CONTRIBUTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Commission may contribute not more than 50 percent of a project or activity cost eligible for financial assistance under this section from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle.

“(2) DISTRESSED COUNTIES.—The maximum Commission contribution for a project or activity to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 15702 may be increased to 80 percent.

“(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR REGIONAL PROJECTS.—A Commission may increase to 60 percent under paragraph (1) and 90 percent under paragraph (2) the maximum Commission contribution for a project or activity if—

“(A) the project or activity involves 3 or more counties or more than one State; and

“(B) the Commission determines in accordance with section 15302(a) that the project or activity will bring significant interstate or multicounty benefits to a region.

“(e) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—Funds may be provided by a Commission for a program or project in a State under this section only if the Commission determines that the level of Federal or State financial assistance provided under a law other than this subtitle, for the same type of program or project in the same area of the State within region, will not be reduced as a result of funds made available by this subtitle.

“(f) NO RELOCATION ASSISTANCE.—Financial assistance authorized by this section may not be used to assist a person or entity in relocating from one area to another.

“§ 15502. Comprehensive economic and infrastructure development plans

“(a) STATE PLANS.—In accordance with policies established by a Commission, each State member of the Commission shall submit a comprehensive economic and infrastructure development plan for the area of the region represented by the State member.

“(b) CONTENT OF PLAN.—A State economic and infrastructure development plan shall reflect the goals, objectives, and priorities identified in any applicable economic and infrastructure development plan developed by a Commission under section 15303.

“(c) CONSULTATION WITH INTERESTED LOCAL PARTIES.—In carrying out the development planning process (including the selection of programs and projects for assistance), a State shall—

“(1) consult with local development districts, local units of government, and local colleges and universities; and

“(2) take into consideration the goals, objectives, priorities, and recommendations of the entities described in paragraph (1).

“(d) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A Commission and applicable State and local development districts shall encourage and assist, to the maximum extent practicable, public participation in the development, revision, and implementation of all plans and programs under this subtitle.

“(2) GUIDELINES.—A Commission shall develop guidelines for providing public participation, including public hearings.

“§ 15503. Approval of applications for assistance

“(a) EVALUATION BY STATE MEMBER.—An application to a Commission for a grant or any other assistance for a project under this subtitle shall be made through, and evaluated for approval by, the State member of the Commission representing the applicant.

“(b) CERTIFICATION.—An application to a Commission for a grant or other assistance for a project under this subtitle shall be eligible for assistance only on certification by the State member of the Commission representing the applicant that the application for the project—

“(1) describes ways in which the project complies with any applicable State economic and infrastructure development plan;

“(2) meets applicable criteria under section 15504;

“(3) adequately ensures that the project will be properly administered, operated, and maintained; and

“(4) otherwise meets the requirements for assistance under this subtitle.

“(c) VOTES FOR DECISIONS.—On certification by a State member of a Commission of an application for a grant or other assistance for a specific project under this section, an affirmative vote of the Commission under section 15302 shall be required for approval of the application.

“§ 15504. Program development criteria

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In considering programs and projects to be provided assistance by a Commission under this subtitle, and in establishing a priority ranking of the requests

for assistance provided to the Commission, the Commission shall follow procedures that ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, consideration of—

“(1) the relationship of the project or class of projects to overall regional development;

“(2) the per capita income and poverty and unemployment and outmigration rates in an area;

“(3) the financial resources available to the applicants for assistance seeking to carry out the project, with emphasis on ensuring that projects are adequately financed to maximize the probability of successful economic development;

“(4) the importance of the project or class of projects in relation to the other projects or classes of projects that may be in competition for the same funds;

“(5) the prospects that the project for which assistance is sought will improve, on a continuing rather than a temporary basis, the opportunities for employment, the average level of income, or the economic development of the area to be served by the project; and

“(6) the extent to which the project design provides for detailed outcome measurements by which grant expenditures and the results of the expenditures may be evaluated.

“§ 15505. Local development districts and organizations

“(a) GRANTS TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS.—Subject to the requirements of this section, a Commission may make grants to a local development district to assist in the payment of development planning and administrative expenses.

“(b) CONDITIONS FOR GRANTS.—

“(1) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant awarded under this section may not exceed 80 percent of the administrative and planning expenses of the local development district receiving the grant.

“(2) MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR STATE AGENCIES.—In the case of a State agency certified as a local development district, a grant may not be awarded to the agency under this section for more than 3 fiscal years.

“(3) LOCAL SHARE.—The contributions of a local development district for administrative expenses may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including space, equipment, and services.

“(c) DUTIES OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS.—A local development district shall—

“(1) operate as a lead organization serving multicounty areas in the region at the local level;

“(2) assist the Commission in carrying out outreach activities for local governments, community development groups, the business community, and the public;

“(3) serve as a liaison between State and local governments, nonprofit organizations (including community-based groups and educational institutions), the business community, and citizens; and

“(4) assist the individuals and entities described in paragraph (3) in identifying, assessing, and facilitating projects and programs to promote the economic development of the region.

“§ 15506. Supplements to Federal grant programs

“(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that certain States and local communities of the region, including local development districts, may be unable to take maximum advantage of Federal grant programs for which the States and communities are eligible because—

“(1) they lack the economic resources to provide the required matching share; or

“(2) there are insufficient funds available under the applicable Federal law with respect to a project to be carried out in the region.

“(b) FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING.—A Commission, with the approval of the Federal Cochairperson, may use amounts made available to carry out this subtitle—

“(1) for any part of the basic Federal contribution to projects or activities under the Federal grant programs authorized by Federal laws; and

“(2) to increase the Federal contribution to projects and activities under the programs above the fixed maximum part of the cost of the projects or activities otherwise authorized by the applicable law.

“(c) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—For a program, project, or activity for which any part of the basic Federal contribution to the project or activity under a Federal grant program is proposed to be made under subsection (b), the Federal contribution shall not be made until the responsible Federal official administering the Federal law authorizing the Federal contribution certifies that the program, project, or activity meets the applicable requirements of the Federal law and could be approved for Federal contribution under that law if amounts were available under the law for the program, project, or activity.

“(d) LIMITATIONS IN OTHER LAWS INAPPLICABLE.—Amounts provided pursuant to this subtitle are available without regard to any limitations on areas eligible for assistance or authorizations for appropriation in any other law.

“(e) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a project or activity receiving assistance under this section shall not exceed 80 percent.

“(f) MAXIMUM COMMISSION CONTRIBUTION.—Section 15501(d), relating to limitations on Commission contributions, shall apply to a program, project, or activity receiving assistance under this section.

“CHAPTER 157—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

“SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

“Sec.

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“SUBCHAPTER II—DESIGNATION OF REGIONS

“15731. Delta Regional Commission.

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“SUBCHAPTER III—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

“15751. Authorization of appropriations.

“SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

“§ 15701. Consent of States

“This subtitle does not require a State to engage in or accept a program under this subtitle without its consent.

“§ 15702. Distressed counties and areas

“(a) DESIGNATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, each Commission shall make the following designations:

“(1) DISTRESSED COUNTIES.—The Commission shall designate as distressed counties those counties in its region that are the most severely and persistently economically distressed and underdeveloped and have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.

“(2) TRANSITIONAL COUNTIES.—The Commission shall designate as transitional counties those counties in its region that are economically distressed and underdeveloped or have recently suffered high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.

“(3) ATTAINMENT COUNTIES.—The Commission shall designate as attainment counties, those counties in its region that are not designated as distressed or transitional counties under this subsection.

“(4) ISOLATED AREAS OF DISTRESS.—The Commission shall designate as isolated areas of distress, areas located in counties designated as attainment counties under paragraph (3) that have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.

“(b) ALLOCATION.—A Commission shall allocate at least 50 percent of the appropriations made available to the Commission to carry out this subtitle for programs and projects designed to serve the needs of distressed counties and isolated areas of distress in the region.

“(c) ATTAINMENT COUNTIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), funds may not be provided under this subtitle for a project located in a county designated as an attainment county under subsection (a).

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

“(A) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS.—The funding prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply to grants to fund the administrative expenses of local development districts under section 15505.

“(B) MULTICOUNTY AND OTHER PROJECTS.—A Commission may waive the application of the funding prohibition under paragraph (1) with respect to—

“(i) a multicounty project that includes participation by an attainment county; and

“(ii) any other type of project, if a Commission determines that the project could bring significant benefits to areas of the region outside an attainment county.

“(3) ISOLATED AREAS OF DISTRESS.—For a designation of an isolated area of distress to be effective, the designation shall be supported—

“(A) by the most recent Federal data available; or

“(B) if no recent Federal data are available, by the most recent data available through the government of the State in which the isolated area of distress is located.

“§ 15703. Counties eligible for assistance in more than one region

“(a) LIMITATION.—A political subdivision of a State may not receive assistance under this subtitle in a fiscal year from more than one Commission.

“(b) SELECTION OF COMMISSION.—A political subdivision included in the region of more than one Commission shall select the Commission with which it will participate by notifying, in writing, the Federal Cochairperson and the appropriate State member of that Commission.

“(c) CHANGES IN SELECTIONS.—The selection of a Commission by a political subdivision shall apply in the fiscal year in which the selection is made, and shall apply in each subsequent fiscal year unless the political subdivision, at least 90 days before the first day of the fiscal year, notifies the Cochairpersons of another Commission in writing that the political subdivision will participate in that Commission and also transmits a copy of such notification to the Cochairpersons of the Commission in which the political subdivision is currently participating.

“(d) INCLUSION OF APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION.—In this section, the term ‘Commission’ includes the Appalachian Regional Commission established under chapter 143.

§ 15704. Inspector General; records

“(a) APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—There shall be an Inspector General for the Commissions appointed in accordance with section 3(a) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.). All of the Commissions shall be subject to a single Inspector General.

“(b) RECORDS OF A COMMISSION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A Commission shall maintain accurate and complete records of all its transactions and activities.

“(2) AVAILABILITY.—All records of a Commission shall be available for audit and examination by the Inspector General (including authorized representatives of the Inspector General).

“(c) RECORDS OF RECIPIENTS OF COMMISSION ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A recipient of funds from a Commission under this subtitle shall maintain accurate and complete records of transactions and activities financed with the funds and report to the Commission on the transactions and activities.

“(2) AVAILABILITY.—All records required under paragraph (1) shall be available for audit by the Commission and the Inspector General (including authorized representatives of the Commission and the Inspector General).

“(d) ANNUAL AUDIT.—The Inspector General shall audit the activities, transactions, and records of each Commission on an annual basis.

§ 15705. Biannual meetings of representatives of all Commissions

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Representatives of each Commission, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Denali Commission shall meet biannually to discuss issues confronting regions suffering from chronic and contiguous distress and successful strategies for promoting regional development.

“(b) CHAIR OF MEETINGS.—The chair of each meeting shall rotate among the Commissions, with the Appalachian Regional Commission to host the first meeting.

§ 15706. Relationship to other laws

“Projects receiving assistance under this subtitle shall be treated in the manner provided in section 602 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3212).

“SUBCHAPTER II—DESIGNATION OF REGIONS**§ 15731. Delta Regional Commission**

“The region of the Delta Regional Commission shall consist of the following political subdivisions:

“(1) ALABAMA.—The counties of Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Escambia, Greene, Hale, Lowndes, Macon, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Pickens, Russell, Sumter, Washington, and Wilcox in the State of Alabama.

“(2) ARKANSAS.—The counties of Arkansas, Ashley, Baxter, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Clay, Cleveland, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Fulton, Grant, Greene, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lee, Lincoln, Lonoke, Marion, Mississippi, Monroe, Ouachita, Phillips, Poinsett, Prairie, Pulaski, Randolph, St. Francis, Searcy, Sharp, Stone, Union, Van Buren, White, and Woodruff in the State of Arkansas.

“(3) ILLINOIS.—The counties of Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union, White, and Williamson in the State of Illinois.

“(4) KENTUCKY.—The counties of Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Henderson, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Mar-

shall, McCracken, McLean, Muhlenberg, Todd, Trigg, Union, and Webster in the State of Kentucky.

“(5) LOUISIANA.—The parishes of Acadia, Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Bienville, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, E. Baton Rouge, DeSoto, E. Carroll, E. Feliciana, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Iberia, Iberville, Jackson, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafourche, LaSalle, Lincoln, Livingston, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Orleans, Ouachita, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Red River, Richland, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Tangipahoa, Tensas, Union, Vermilion, W. Baton Rouge, W. Carroll, W. Feliciana, Washington, Webster, and Winn in the State of Louisiana.

“(6) MISSISSIPPI.—The counties of Adams, Amite, Attala, Benton, Bolivar, Carroll, Claiborne, Coahoma, Copiah, Covington, DeSoto, Franklin, Grenada, Hinds, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Jasper, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lawrence, Leflore, Lincoln, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Montgomery, Panola, Pike, Quitman, Rankin, Sharkey, Simpson, Smith, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tippah, Tunica, Union, Walthall, Warren, Washington, Wilkinson, Yalobusha, and Yazoo in the State of Mississippi.

“(7) MISSOURI.—The counties Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Crawford, Dent, Douglas, Dunklin, Howell, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Oregon, Ozark, Pemiscott, Perry, Phelps, Reynolds, Ripley, Ste. Genevieve, St. Francois, Scott, Shannon, Stoddard, Texas, Washington, Wayne, and Wright in the State of Missouri.

“(8) TENNESSEE.—The counties of Benton, Carroll, Chester, Crockett, Decatur, Dyer, Fayette, Gibson, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, McNairy, Madison, Obion, Shelby, Tipton, and Weakley in the State of Tennessee.

§ 15732. Northern Great Plains Regional Commission

“The region of the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission shall consist of the following:

“(1) All counties of the States of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

“(2) The counties of Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Carroll, Chariton, Clay, Clinton, Cooper, Daviess, DeKalb, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Holt, Howard, Jackson, Linn, Livingston, Mercer, Nodaway, Platte, Putnam, Schuyler, Sullivan, and Worth in the State of Missouri.

§ 15733. Southeast Crescent Regional Commission

“The region of the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission shall consist of all counties of the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida not already served by the Appalachian Regional Commission or the Delta Regional Commission.

§ 15734. Southwest Border Regional Commission

“The region of the Southwest Border Regional Commission shall consist of the following political subdivisions:

“(1) ARIZONA.—The counties of Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Maricopa, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma in the State of Arizona.

“(2) CALIFORNIA.—The counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura in the State of California.

“(3) NEW MEXICO.—The counties of Catron, Chaves, Dona Ana, Eddy, Grant, Hidalgo,

Lincoln, Luna, Otero, Sierra, and Socorro in the State of New Mexico.

“(4) TEXAS.—The counties of Atascosa, Bandera, Bee, Bexar, Brewster, Brooks, Cameron, Coke, Concho, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Dimmit, Duval, Ector, Edwards, El Paso, Frio, Gillespie, Glasscock, Hidalgo, Hudspeth, Irion, Jeff Davis, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Karnes, Kendall, Kenedy, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Kleberg, La Salle, Live Oak, Loving, Mason, Maverick, McMullen, Medina, Menard, Midland, Nueces, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Real, Reeves, San Patricio, Shleicher, Sutton, Starr, Sterling, Terrell, Tom Green Upton, Uvalde, Val Verde, Ward, Webb, Willacy, Wilson, Winkler, Zapata, and Zavala in the State of Texas.

§ 15735. Northern Border Regional Commission

“The region of the Northern Border Regional Commission shall include the following counties:

“(1) MAINE.—The counties of Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington in the State of Maine.

“(2) NEW HAMPSHIRE.—The counties of Carroll, Coos, Grafton, and Sullivan in the State of New Hampshire.

“(3) NEW YORK.—The counties of Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego, Seneca, and St. Lawrence in the State of New York.

“(4) VERMONT.—The counties of Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans in the State of Vermont.

“SUBCHAPTER III—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS**§ 15751. Authorization of appropriations**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to each Commission to carry out this subtitle—

- “(1) \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- “(2) \$45,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- “(3) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- “(4) \$55,000,000 for fiscal year 2011; and
- “(5) \$60,000,000 for fiscal year 2012.

“(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 10 percent of the funds made available to a Commission in a fiscal year under this section may be used for administrative expenses.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of subtitles for chapter 40, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to subtitle V and inserting the following:

“V. REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT 15101
“VI. MISCELLANEOUS 17101”.

SEC. 4. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) REPEALS.—Subtitles F and G of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa–2009bb–13) are repealed.

(b) INSPECTOR GENERAL ACT.—Section 11 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “or the President of the Export-Import Bank;” and inserting “the President of the Export-Import Bank; or the Federal Cochairpersons of the Commissions established under section 15301 of title 40, United States Code;” and

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking “or the Export-Import Bank,” and inserting “the Export-Import Bank, or the Commissions established under section 15301 of title 40, United States Code.”

SEC. 5. TRANSFERS OF AUTHORITY AND SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

(a) TRANSFERS OF AUTHORITY.—Subject to the requirements of this Act (including the amendments made by this Act)—

(1) all of the functions of the Delta Regional Authority are transferred to the Delta Regional Commission; and

(2) all of the functions of the Northern Great Plains Regional Authority are transferred to the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission.

(b) **LEGAL DOCUMENTS.**—All orders, determinations, rules, regulations, grants, loans, contracts, and agreements—

(1) that have been issued, made, granted, or allowed to become effective by the Delta Regional Authority or the Northern Great Plains Regional Authority in the performance of any function that is transferred by this section, and

(2) that are in effect on the effective date of such transfer (or become effective after such date pursuant to their terms as in effect on such effective date),

shall continue in effect according to their terms until modified, terminated, superseded, set aside, or revoked in accordance with law by an authorized official, a court of competent jurisdiction, or operation of law.

(c) **TRANSFER OF ASSETS AND PERSONNEL.**—

(1) **DELTA REGIONAL COMMISSION.**—There shall be transferred to the Delta Regional Commission such assets, funds, personnel, records, and other property of the Delta Regional Authority relating to the functions of the Authority as the Commission determines appropriate.

(2) **NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION.**—There shall be transferred to the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission such assets, funds, personnel, records, and other property of the Northern Great Plains Regional Authority as the Commission determines appropriate.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the first day of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. **NORTON**) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. **SHUSTER**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. **NORTON**. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3246.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. **NORTON**. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3246, as amended, in fact does amend title 40, United States Code, to provide a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely and economically distressed regions of the Nation.

H.R. 3246, the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007, authorizes two existing commissions and three new regional economic development commissions under a common framework of administration and management, and further provides a framework for good decisionmaking and planning. These commissions are

designed to address problems of systemic poverty and underdevelopment in their respective regions.

The five commissions are: the Delta Regional Commission, the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, the Southwest Border Regional Commission, and the Northern Border Regional Commission.

The bill models the administrative and management procedures for these five commissions after the highly successful Appalachian Regional Commission. The bill provides for a voting structure, provisions regarding staffing, conflicts of interest, local development districts, and other matters designed to produce a standard administrative framework.

By providing a uniform set of procedures, this bill provides a consistent method for distributing economic development funds throughout the regions most in need of such assistance and ensures a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development where it is most needed in our country.

The Northern Border Regional Commission, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, and the Southwest Border Regional Commission have been proposed in legislation introduced in this and in previous Congresses and are designed to address problems of systemic poverty and underdevelopment in those regions. In addition, the Delta Regional Commission and the Northern Great Plains Commission would be authorized through this legislation.

H.R. 3246 authorizes funds for each commission to provide vital assistance for the development of our Nation's most chronically poor and distressed regions.

I would like to say a few words about the uniqueness of each of the new commissions being authorized by this bill. The Southwest Border Region includes all counties within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. This region contains 11 counties in New Mexico, 65 counties in Texas, 10 counties in Arizona, and seven counties in California, for a combined population of approximately 29 million residents.

According to research compiled by the Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Southwest Border, 20 percent of the residents of this region of the Nation live below the poverty level. Unemployment rates are often as high as five times the national unemployment rate, and a lack of adequate access to capital has created economic disparities and made it difficult for businesses to start up in the region.

The Northern Border Region, stretching from Maine to New York, while abundant in natural resources and rich in potential, lags behind much of the Nation in its economic growth, and its people have not shared properly in the Nation's prosperity. The region's historic reliance on a few basic industries and on agriculture has failed to provide

a diverse enough economic base for a vigorous self-sustained growth. In the belt of counties along the northern border from Maine through New York, 12.5 percent of the population lives in poverty; median household incomes is about \$6,500 below the national average; unemployment through layoffs in traditional manufacturing industries is persistent; and the population grew only by 0.6 percent between 1990 and 2000 while the U.S. population rose by 13.2 percent, showing significant out-migration and loss of young people in the northern border region.

The southeastern portion of the United States, encompassing the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, is an area which has seen poverty rates well above the national average, coupled with record unemployment. The region has also experienced natural disasters at a rate two to three times greater than any other region in the United States. The Southeast Crescent Authority authorizes a local-State-Federal partnership to lift citizens in this geographic area out of poverty and create jobs.

With the Federal allocation of funding, SECA seeks to funnel monies to programs which address one or more of the following criteria for the community betterment: infrastructure, education and job training, health care, entrepreneurship, and leadership development. Those communities with the greatest need will be targeted, and grants will be made according to the degree of distress.

This bill has very broad and very bipartisan support, Mr. Speaker; and the committee has held a series of hearings that has documented the needs that these economic development commissions would address.

□ 1430

I strongly support the bill, and urge passage of H.R. 3246.

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

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

First, I want to express the regrets of the subcommittee ranking member, Mr. **GRAVES** from Missouri, who was unable to be here and has asked me to explain the bill.

H.R. 3246, as amended, authorizes two existing economic development commissions, the Delta Regional Commission and the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission. The bill also creates three new economic development commissions, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, the Southwest Border Regional Commission, and the Northern Border Regional Commission.

The Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act authorizes these five regional economic development commissions for 5 years, and provides a structure for economic development, decision-making and planning. The bill outlines conditions for financial assistance, authorizes grants to

local development districts. In addition, the bill establishes an Inspector General for the commission.

Additionally, H.R. 3246 provides a framework for administration and management. The framework is modeled after the Appalachian Regional Commission structure, including membership, voting structure and staffing of the commission. Through the use of this common framework, this bill provides a consistency in distribution of economic development funds.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD).

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007 represents a vision for economic development in our Nation that will help Americans in the most distressed region of our country.

In the northern border region, we have seen a clear, persistent pattern of economic distress. If you look at the 36 counties that lie on the border right next to the border between Maine and New York, you will find poverty above the national level average, median household income that is more than \$6,500 below the national average. You'll see a persistent unemployment through layoffs and traditional manufacturing industry, and most striking of all, a meager gain in only 0.6 percent of the population between 1990 and 2000, compared to a 13 percent growth nationally over the same period.

In short, Mr. Speaker, our mills are closing, our young people are leaving and too many of our workers are looking for work. Clearly, this region has a common set of challenges and a compelling need for investment and new growth.

As a mill worker for over 28 years at Great Northern Paper Company, I understand the particular challenges in the border regions of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Like my father and grandfather before me, I left high school and went straight to work in the paper mill in my hometown. After 28 years, and 2 days after I was sworn into Congress, the mill that I worked at went bankrupt, and my hometown was devastated. Unemployment rose to over 33 percent.

The story of my hometown and the mills where I worked has been repeated throughout the State of Maine and our region. That is why we need to support this region economic development bill. We have to support our regional industries and build on new job opportunities, and that is why we need to invest in leadership and focus in our regional economic development that the Northern Border Commission would bring.

The Northern Border Commission would help the region invest in transportation, health care, agriculture, broadband and alternative energy. It can be a partner with businesses to maintain our industries and build new industry clusters. It can help us create jobs for the long term.

We have all the ingredients that we need to face our challenges head on and make our region an economic engine. This new commission would help us make a fundamental change in our future.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working in a bipartisan manner on this bill. I'd like to thank the Chair of the full committee, Chairman OBERSTAR, and the Chair of the subcommittee, Ms. NORTON, for their efforts as well, and also the former Chair of the subcommittee, Mr. SHUSTER, for all his hard work on the regional commission bills, as well as Congressman HODES from New Hampshire who has been a true leader in this particular area as well.

This bill represents a new way forward for economic development in our Nation for the places and the people that need it most. Let's pass this bill and give our people the hope and the future that they deserve.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES).

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I join Congressman MICHAUD in expressing thanks to Chairman OBERSTAR and other members of the Transportation Committee.

I rise today to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007. This bill includes the Northern Border Regional Development Commission Act, the first bill I introduced as a Member of Congress, a bill with bipartisan support, and for which I extend a special thanks to Congressman MICHAUD, who has shown extraordinary leadership in the northern border region for economic development.

Mr. Speaker, parts of my home State of New Hampshire, and especially the beautiful region known as the North Country, have taken an economic beating and are struggling to recover. A staggering number of jobs have been lost. We have watched as plants closed and our young people disappeared to places that offer more opportunity. New Hampshire's North Country has suffered repeated economic body blows, and for the people who live there, it's getting harder and harder to get by.

I get up to the North Country quite frequently, and have spoken with hard-working folks with the drive to improve their neighborhoods, but whose communities have been ignored by the Federal Government for years.

If you were to pick up the paper today, Mr. Speaker, you would see pictures of the smokestacks of once thriving pulp mills coming down, having been subject to explosives.

Because of the challenges New Hampshire's North Country face, and the sincere desire of the people there to turn things around and to create new jobs

and new investments, there's a compelling case for leveraging Federal investment in the region. In fact, the northern border region, or the ice belt, which includes the northernmost counties of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, has higher unemployment, a higher percentage of people living in poverty, and lower household income than the rest of the Nation.

The commission created in this bill would be charged with investing Federal resources for economic development and job creation in the most distressed counties in that northern border region.

By design and purpose, this bill follows the successful regional development models created in the mid 1960s to improve the economic standing of targeted regions in the South. Based on this successful model, the commission would create a unique Federal-State partnership charged with promoting development through regional planning, technical assistance and funding of projects aimed at encouraging economic prosperity.

The bill works like this: Community development districts and other non-profits are encouraged to bring project ideas to the commission from the local level. This bottom-up, grassroots approach insures that actions reflect both local needs and regional economic development goals. It also insures that States have a deciding voice in what investment is made within their borders.

With a proposed budget of \$40 million per year, the Northern Border Regional Development Commission can help meet a range of local needs. Whether the need is agricultural development, land and forestry conservation to maintain productive traditional uses, investment in transportation infrastructure, alternative and renewable energy or health care facilities, this commission will play a key role in investing in the region's economy.

The bill says, if you're willing to work hard and play by the rules, we're here to help you get ahead. The communities in the northern border region deserve effective government working for them. The Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act is an important first step toward providing good-paying jobs, economic opportunity and revitalized communities.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to stress the bipartisan nature of this bill. I also want to stress the hearings we've held on this bill. As you might imagine, when people hear the word "economic development," everybody wants in. This has been a very rigorous process. We have bent over backwards, frontwards and sideways to be completely objective and to be open to Members on both sides of the aisles.

It's worth noting that all of the amendments that were added were requested by minority Members, our Republican colleagues. We're pleased to

do so. They were able to show the need in their respective districts.

This bill, it seems to me, in light of the strong support it has had in our subcommittee and our committee, from Members from all parts of the country, and of all backgrounds and parties, in light of that fact, I urge passage of the bill, and I urge all Members to support this bipartisan bill for economic development for the underdeveloped regions of our country.

Mr. McHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3246, Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007. I appreciate the work Chairman OBERSTAR and Representatives GRAVES, HODES, and MICHAUD have done to develop this important legislation and bring it to the House floor.

The Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act is designed to alleviate systemic poverty and underdevelopment in our Nation's most severely economically distressed areas. These include rural Alaska, Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta region, the northern Great Plains region, the southeast crescent region, the southwest border region, and the northern border region, which includes all 11 counties that I have the honor to represent: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego, and St. Lawrence.

To provide a comprehensive, consistent and broad-based approach to economic and infrastructure development, H.R. 3246 authorizes five regional economic development commissions. These commissions, modeled after the successful Appalachian Regional Commission, would have a uniform set of procedures and a common structure for administration, decision-making, management, and planning.

With funding authorized and provided by Congress, each Commission would make grants to States and local governments, Indian tribes, and public or nonprofit organizations for projects to develop transportation, public, and telecommunications infrastructure. These projects would also further efforts to provide job skills training, improve basic health care and related services, promote resource conservation, and development of both renewable and alternative energy sources.

My constituent counties, like many others within the northern border region, lag behind the rest of the Nation in economic growth and continue to experience higher than average levels of unemployment, poverty, and outmigration. Very simply, my constituents, as well as those who live in the other affected areas, should no longer be left behind. Moreover, I am confident that with the assistance provided through H.R. 3246, the economies of all the impacted counties will improve, thus resulting in an enhanced quality of life for all.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3246, the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007, which will help spur economic development in my district of El Paso, TX. I would like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR for his vision regarding the need and importance of regional authorities for development in areas of the country with huge economic need. For the past three Congresses, I have introduced my bill, the Southwest Regional Border Authority Act, in an attempt to bring some relief to the United States-Mexico border and my district of El Paso, TX. This year, under the leadership

of Chairman OBERSTAR, my bill has been included into his overall legislation. I would also like to thank many of my colleagues who represent districts along the United States-Mexico border for their support in the creation of the Southwest Regional Border Authority.

The Chairman's bill would authorize \$1.25 billion over the period of FY 2008 through FY 2012 for five regional commissions one of which will be created in the United States-Mexico border region. The Authorities would be Federal-State partnerships for providing assistance to economically distressed and underdeveloped areas that have experienced high levels of unemployment, poverty, or outmigration. Three of the commissions would be new and would assist areas in the southeastern United States and areas along the Mexican and Canadian borders; two of the commissions would replace existing Authorities in the Delta and northern Great Plains regions. The bill would establish uniform administrative structures and responsibilities for the commissions, and authorize the commissions to provide financial assistance for projects and programs in their respective regions to develop transportation and infrastructure, provide job skills training and support business development.

The Southwest border region, as defined in the bill, includes all counties within 150 miles of the United States-Mexico border. This region contains 11 counties in New Mexico, 65 counties in Texas, 10 counties in Arizona, and 7 counties in California, with a combined population of approximately 29 million.

According to research compiled by the Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Southwest Border, 20 percent of the residents in my region live below the poverty level, unemployment rates often reach as high as five times the national average, and a lack of adequate access to capital has created economic disparities, making it difficult for businesses to start up in the region. Border communities have long endured a depressed economy and low-paying jobs. Our economic challenges partly stem from our position as a border community.

Economic development in border communities is difficult to stimulate without assistance from the government, private sector, and community organizations. H.R. 3246 would help foster planning to encourage infrastructure improvements, technology deployment, education and workforce training, and community development through entrepreneurship.

Modeled in part after the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Southwest Border Regional Authority and other Authorities would follow four guiding principles:

First, the Authorities would fund proposals designed at the local level followed by approval at the State level in order to meet regional economic development goals;

Second, projects leading to the creation of a diversified regional economy would be prioritized. Currently, States and counties often are forced to compete against each other for limited funding;

Third, the Authorities would be independent agencies. This would prevent them from having to attempt to satisfy another Federal agency's mission requirements when determining which projects to fund; and

Finally, the Authorities would be comprised of one Senate-confirmed Federal representative and the governors of the States of jurisdiction.

For too long, many areas of our country including the Southwest border region have been ignored, overlooked, and underfunded. We need to recognize the challenges facing these underserved areas and help them make the most of their many assets. I believe the Authorities created in the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007 would go a long way toward achieving the goal of economic prosperity in some of the poorest regions of our country.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR for his leadership on this issue and look forward to the implementation of this important legislation.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3246, a bill to provide a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation.

H.R. 3246, the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007, reauthorizes two existing commissions, the Delta Regional Commission and the Northern Great Plains Regional Commission, and establishes three new regional economic development commissions: the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission, the Southwest Border Regional Commission, and the Northern Border Regional Commission. These Commissions will address problems of systemic poverty and underdevelopment in their respective regions.

This legislation authorizes all of these regional commissions under a common framework of administration and management, modeled after the procedures for the highly successful Appalachian Regional Commission. By providing a uniform set of procedures, this bill provides a consistent method for distributing economic development funds and ensures a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely distressed regions in the country.

H.R. 3246 authorizes \$250 million per year for fiscal years 2008 through 2012 for each commission to provide vital assistance for the development of our Nation's most chronically poor and distressed regions.

Each of the three new commissions authorized by this bill serves a unique need. The Southwest border region includes all counties within 150 miles of the United States-Mexico border. This region contains 11 counties in New Mexico, 65 counties in Texas, 10 counties in Arizona, and 7 counties in California for a combined population of approximately 29 million people. According to research compiled by the Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Southwest Border, 20 percent of the residents in this region of the Nation live below the poverty level, and unemployment rates often reach as high as five times the national unemployment rate. A lack of adequate access to capital has created economic disparities and made it difficult for businesses to start up in the region.

The northern border region stretches from Maine to New York. While the region enjoys abundant natural resources and is rich in potential, it lags behind much of the Nation in economic growth, and its people have not shared equitably in the Nation's prosperity. The region's historic reliance on a few basic industries and agriculture has failed to provide a diverse enough economic base for vigorous, self-sustaining growth. In the countries in this region, 12.5 percent of the population lives in

poverty, median household income is more than \$6,500 below the national average, and unemployment through layoffs in traditional manufacturing industries is persistent. The population grew only 0.6 percent between 1990 and 2000, during which time the U.S. population rose by 13.2 percent, indicating significant out-migration and loss of young people.

The southeastern region of the United States includes the coastal and central portions of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida. Approximately 40 percent of the counties in this region have had 20 percent or more of their citizens living in poverty, on average, during the last 30 years. The area has also faced record unemployment. Additionally, this region has experienced natural disasters at a rate of two to three times greater than any other region of the U.S. The southeastern region is one of the last areas of the country without a Federal authority dedicated to ending poverty and strengthening communities. The Southeast Crescent Authority (SECA) authorizes a local-State-Federal partnership to lift citizens in this geographic area out of poverty and create jobs by targeting the communities with the greatest need.

This bill has broad bipartisan support, and the committee has held a series of hearings regarding the need for these economic development commissions. The model for economic development through partnerships between the Federal Government and State and local governments has worked extremely well in the case of the Appalachian Regional Commission, and I am certain it will continue to serve to enhance the lives and livelihoods of citizens in other regions.

I submit an exchange of letters regarding jurisdiction, and I support HR. 3246 and urge its passage.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, September 17, 2007.

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR: I am writing to confirm our mutual understanding regarding consideration of H.R. 3246, the "Regional Infrastructure Development Act of 2007," which was referred to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and reported to the House on September 7. Specifically, I appreciate your acknowledgement of the Committee on Agriculture's jurisdictional interest in provisions contained in the bill that affect rural development programs.

As you know, clause 1(a) of Rule X gives the Committee on Agriculture jurisdiction over bills that affect rural development programs. Given the importance of moving this bill forward promptly, I would be glad to waive any consideration of this measure as to allow its timely consideration by the entire House of Representatives. However, I do so with the understanding that this procedural route will not be construed to prejudice the Agriculture Committee's jurisdictional interests and prerogatives on this bill, or any other similar legislation, and will not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to the Agriculture Committee in the future.

Furthermore, in the event a conference with the Senate is requested in this matter, I would ask you to support the Committee on Agriculture's request to be represented.

Thank you very much for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to your con-

tinued cooperation between our Committees as we deal with these matters in the future. Sincerely,

COLLIN C. PETERSON
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, September 17, 2007.

Hon. COLLIN C. PETERSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, House of
Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PETERSON: Thank you for your September 17, 2007 letter regarding H.R. 3246, the "Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007". Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that provisions in the bill are of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Agriculture. I acknowledge that by forgoing a sequential referral, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction and I will fully support your request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Agriculture has jurisdiction in H.R. 3246.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this important economic development legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
Chairman.

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007, which provides a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation. This bill includes legislation that I have introduced in every Congress since the 107th Congress that will establish a SouthEast Crescent Authority for economic development. The authority would cover the southeastern portion of the United States, encompassing the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, which have all seen poverty rates well above the national average coupled with record unemployment—the double whammy—poverty and unemployment.

I would like to personally thank the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman OBERSTAR and his Ranking Member, Mr. MICA, and the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development Chairwoman HOLMES NORTON and the Ranking Member, Mr. GRAVES, for their hard work and dedication to our Nation's most economically disadvantaged regions. It is their compassion, cooperation, and commitment that brought us here today, and I applaud them for their efforts to continue this cause, and I thank them for their friendship and support.

As a Member that represents a district from one of the Southern States that has experienced job growth stagnation, I have seen firsthand the restructuring of the South's economy. Jobs in textiles and furniture-making have decreased substantially while jobs in retail, services, and the professions have rushed in. Although a more high-tech and globally competitive economy has enabled new opportunities for employment in the South, it has also dismantled jobs long held by employees who have few prospects for shifting to other jobs with comparable pay. In addition, the seven States of the SECA region also experience natural disasters at a rate of two to three

times greater than any other region of the United States, and this vulnerability to natural disasters further exacerbates the ability to recover from economic distress.

Modeled primarily after the successful Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the SouthEast Crescent Authority hopes to enjoy a local-State-Federal partnership to lift our citizens out of poverty and create jobs. With the Federal allocation of funding, SECA seeks to target monies to programs which address one or more of the following criteria for community betterment: (1) infrastructure, (2) education and job training, (3) health care, (4) entrepreneurship, and (5) leadership development. Those communities with the greatest need will be targeted, and grants will be made according to the degree of distress.

Mr. Speaker, the time is now to work to change this pattern and ensure that those individuals—like those in my district who work in textiles or manufacturing—and those communities—like the many rural communities that have been affected—are not left behind. And I am confident that the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007 that is before us today will be able to do just that. It's the least we can do to act now and help "the least of these" who have suffered enough and to help bolster economic progress and possibility. Thank you, and may God bless our efforts to help expand economic opportunities for all of our citizens and their families.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007.

I want to thank the distinguished Chairwoman of the Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management Subcommittee, Ms. NORTON, the Full Committee Chairman, and the Ranking Members for delivering this legislation which authorizes three new economic development commissions—the Northern Border, Southeast Crescent, and Southwest Border Regional Commissions—and reauthorizes the successful Delta and Northern Great Plains Regional Commissions. These Commissions will help bring economic development to regions of our country that desperately need it.

Over the last several decades, Upstate New York has had a consistent pattern of economic distress as a result of substantial losses in the manufacturing sector, coupled with aging infrastructure and lack of opportunities for a skilled workforce. My district alone has seen a staggering loss of more than 14,000 manufacturing jobs between 2000 and 2005. However, this isn't an anomaly, it is extremely characteristic of several States in the Northeast. A targeted regional approach can help bring back economic vitality to these regions.

This bipartisan legislation creates a Northern Border Regional Commission that will bring much needed job creation and economic development resources to the Northeast region. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Upstate New York will all benefit tremendously from the establishment of this Commission because it will assess and address the very specific needs, assets, and challenges of the region as a whole.

The Commission will create a Federal-State partnership where local development districts and other non-profits bring project ideas and priorities to the Commission from the local level to promote economic development

through regional planning, technical assistance, and funding of projects aimed at encouraging economic prosperity.

This Northern Border Regional Commission is modeled after the very successful Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) approach, an idea conceived by Chairman OBERSTAR, over 40 years ago.

Simply put, the numbers speak for themselves. Since its creation, the ARC has reduced the number of distressed counties in its region from 219 to 100, cut the poverty rate from 31 percent to 15 percent, and helped 1,400 businesses create 26,000 new jobs. I welcome the creation of similar Commissions with this kind of proven track record.

The Northern Border Regional Commission not only will extend benefits to economically distressed counties in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, but will also allow Upstate New York counties like Oneida, Herkimer, Cayuga, and Seneca to enjoy the same benefits their neighboring counties in the Southern Tier enjoy under the Appalachian Regional Commission.

We need to act now to ensure that every American has access to job training, employment-related education, and high-tech infrastructure, so that we can retain and grow our global competitive edge. And I am confident the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act will help us achieve that end.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation which will help create parity for economically anemic regions across the country.

Ms. NORTON. 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 the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3246, 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. WESTMORELAND. 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 motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING THE AUTHORITIES OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3527) to extend for two months the authorities of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3527

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

SECTION 1. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF OPIC PROGRAMS.

Section 235(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2195(a)(2)) is amended by striking "September 30, 2007" and inserting "November 30, 2007".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3527.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

This House recently approved legislation that would reauthorize the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for an additional 4 years. The bill would ensure that OPIC continues its critical mission of supporting private investment to accomplish important public sector goals in the developing world, while, at the same time, enhancing OPIC's transparency and accountability.

The Senate is considering similar legislation, Mr. Speaker, and the Foreign Affairs Committee looks forward to working with that body so that we can send the bill to the President for his signature.

While the Senate considers this legislation, OPIC's current authority expires at the end of this month. In order to provide the Senate with additional time to take up this legislation and ensure that the corporation continues its critical work, my friend and colleague, the good chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. SHERMAN from California, has crafted this proposed bill that provides OPIC with the authority to operate for an additional 2 months beyond September 30, 2007.

□ 1445

I do want to commend our distinguished chairman of the committee, Mr. LANTOS; and our senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support and leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor. I recommend this legislation for passage, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the bill, H.R. 3527, a bill that would extend the authorization of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation until November 30 of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, on July 23, as my good friend Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA just said, the House passed H.R. 2798, a bill to reauthorize OPIC through September 30 of 2011. That measure had previously been favorably reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs by a vote of 26-5, totally bipartisan. To date, how-

ever, the other body has not acted, requiring us to take this stop-gap measure to continue the authorization for this legislation. We hope they act soon on the Senate side so that the President can be sent a bipartisan bill that can be signed.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3527.

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. WESTMORELAND. 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 motion will be postponed.

AUTHORIZING THE PEACE CORPS TO PROVIDE SEPARATION PAY FOR HOST COUNTRY RESIDENT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTORS

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3528) to provide authority to the Peace Corps to provide separation pay for host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3528

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION FOR PEACE CORPS TO PROVIDE SEPARATION PAY FOR HOST COUNTRY RESIDENT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTORS OF THE PEACE CORPS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund for the Peace Corps to provide separation pay for host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps.

(b) FUNDING.—The Director of the Peace Corps may deposit in the fund established under subsection (a)—

(1) amounts previously obligated and not canceled to provide the separation pay described in such subsection; and

(2) amounts obligated for fiscal years after fiscal year 2006 for current and future costs of providing such separation pay.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Beginning in fiscal year 2007, amounts deposited in the fund established under subsection (a) shall be available without fiscal year limitation for severance, retirement, or other separation payments to host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps in countries where such payments are legally authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA)

and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, again I rise in strong support of this legislation and thank my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey, on the other side of the aisle for his support in managing this legislation. I also want to thank the leadership of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman LANTOS and our senior ranking member, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, for their leadership and support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, to millions around the globe, Peace Corps is the "human face" of America. For more than 46 years, the Peace Corps has helped the people of developing countries meet their needs for trained men and women and in the process has promoted a better understanding of America.

The legislation before the House today is a technical bill requested by the administration. It will facilitate the provision of separation pay to the many foreign nationals who work for the Peace Corps overseas. The bill accomplishes this objective in an open and transparent manner to ensure the complete accountability to the American taxpayers.

With that, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3528, legislation introduced by our distinguished chairman, TOM LANTOS, that will help the Peace Corps eliminate a small but important discrepancy between its accounting and its expenditures.

Under foreign local law and the terms of their contracts, the Peace Corps is frequently required to make separation payments to personal service contractors overseas, for example, a lump sum payment equal to 1 month's salary for every year of service. The Peace Corps is required to account for that liability on its books every year even though those funds are not paid out to the contractor until the end of their service with the Peace Corps, which sometimes can be more than a decade.

However, because unspent funds revert back to the U.S. Treasury 5 years after they are obligated, the Peace Corps must pay obligations from beyond that time frame out of current

operating funds. The bill would create a fund into which those obligations could be paid as they accrue, which can be used only for that purpose. Since this does not affect Peace Corps appropriations or obligations, there are no costs associated with this fix.

This also provides us with an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to again commend the Peace Corps and its many volunteers for the important work that they do in building bridges of understanding between the American people and communities, families, and individuals overseas.

We support this legislation.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3528.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS ACT OF 2007

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3096) to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3096

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings.

Sec. 3. Purpose.

TITLE I—PROHIBITION ON NONHUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM

Sec. 101. Bilateral nonhumanitarian assistance.

TITLE II—ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY IN VIETNAM

Sec. 201. Assistance.

TITLE III—UNITED STATES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Sec. 301. Radio Free Asia transmissions to Vietnam.

Sec. 302. United States educational and cultural exchange programs with Vietnam.

TITLE IV—UNITED STATES REFUGEE POLICY

Sec. 401. Refugee resettlement for nationals of Vietnam.

TITLE V—ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS TOWARD FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN VIETNAM

Sec. 501. Annual report.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The relationship between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has grown substantially over the past 12 years, with annual trade between the 2 countries reaching over \$9,000,000,000 per year.

(2) The Government of Vietnam's transition toward greater economic freedom and trade has not been matched by greater political freedom and substantial improvements in human rights for many Vietnamese.

(3) The United States Congress agreed to Vietnam becoming an official member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2006, amidst assurances that the Vietnamese Government was steadily improving its human rights record and would continue to do so.

(4) Vietnam remains a one-party state, ruled and controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), which continues to deny the right of citizens to change their government.

(5) Although in recent years the National Assembly of Vietnam has played an increasingly active role as a forum for highlighting local concerns, corruption, and inefficiency, the National Assembly remains subject to the direction of the CPV and the CPV maintains control over the selection of candidates in national and local elections.

(6) The Government of Vietnam forbids public challenge to the legitimacy of the one-party state, restricts freedoms of opinion, the press, and association and tightly limits access to the Internet and telecommunication.

(7) Since Vietnam's accession to the WTO on January 11, 2007, the Vietnamese Government arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned several individuals for their peaceful advocacy of democracy, including Father Nguyen Van Ly and human rights lawyers Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thi Cong Nhan.

(8) The Government of Vietnam continues to detain, imprison, place under house arrest, convict, or otherwise restrict persons for the peaceful expression of dissenting political or religious views, including Bui Kim Thanh, Hang Tan Phat, Truong Quoc Huy, Vu Hoang Hai, Nguyen Ngoc Quang, Pham Ba Hai, Dr. Le Nguyen Sang, Huynh Nguyen Dao, Nguyen Bac Truyen, Tran Quoc Hien, Nguyen Tan Hoanh, Tran Thi Le Hang, Doan Huu Chuong, Doan Van Dien, Le Ba Triet, Nguyen Tuan, Tran Thi Thuy Trang, Nguyen Phong, Nguyen Binh Thanh, Hoang Thi Anh Dao, Le Thi Le Hang, Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, Ho Thi Bich Khuong, Hong Trung, Danh Tol, Kim Muot, Thach Thuong, Ly Suong, Ly Hoang, Nguyen Van Tho, Le Van Soc, Nguyen Van Thuy, Duong Thi Tron, Truong Minh Duc, and Dr. Pham Hong Son, among others.

(9)(A) The Government of Vietnam continues to limit freedom of religion and restrict the operation of religious organizations.

(B) Despite reported progress in church openings and legal registrations of religious venues, the Government of Vietnam has halted most positive actions since the Department of State lifted the "country of particular concern" (CPC) designation for Vietnam in November 2006.

(C) Unregistered ethnic minority Protestant congregations suffer severe abuses because of actions by the Government of Vietnam, which have included forced renunciations of faith, the arrest and harassment of pastors, the withholding of social programs provided for the general population, confiscation and destruction of property, and subjection to severe beatings.

(D) The Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) suffers persecutions as the Government of Vietnam continues to restrict

contacts and movement of senior UBCV clergy, including the Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, and the Most Venerable Thich Quang Do for refusing to join the state-sponsored Buddhist organizations, and the Government also continues to place leaders under "pagoda" and house arrest, destroy religious property, and harass and threaten local practicing Buddhists.

(E) The Government of Vietnam continues to suppress the activities of other religious adherents, including Cao Dai and Hoa Hao who lack official recognition or have chosen not to affiliate with the state-sanctioned groups, including through the use of detention and imprisonment.

(F) During Easter weekend in April 2004, thousands of Montagnards gathered to protest their treatment by the Government of Vietnam, including the confiscation of tribal lands and ongoing restrictions on religious activities. Credible reports indicate that the protests were met with violent response as many demonstrators were arrested, injured, went into hiding, and that others were killed. Many of these Montagnards are still serving long sentences for their involvement in peaceful demonstrations in 2001 and 2004.

(G) Ethnic minority Hmong in the Northwest Highlands of Vietnam also suffer restrictions, abuses, and persecution by the Government of Vietnam, and although the Government is now allowing some Hmong Protestants to organize and conduct religious activity, some government officials continue to deny or ignore additional applications for registration.

(10) The Government of Vietnam controls all print and electronic media, including access to the Internet, jams the signals of some foreign radio stations, including Radio Free Asia, and has detained and imprisoned individuals who have posted or sent democracy-related materials via the Internet.

(11) People arrested in Vietnam because of their political or religious affiliations and activities often are not accorded due legal process as they lack full access to lawyers of their choice, may experience closed trials, have often been detained for years without trial, and have been subjected to the use of torture to admit crimes they did not commit or to falsely denounce their own leaders.

(12)(A) United States refugee resettlement programs, including the Humanitarian Resettlement (HR) Program, the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), Resettlement Opportunities for Vietnamese Returnees (ROVR) Program, general resettlement of boat people from refugee camps throughout Southeast Asia, the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1988, and the Priority One Refugee resettlement category have helped rescue Vietnamese nationals who have suffered persecution on account of their associations with the United States as well as Vietnamese nationals who have been persecuted because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

(B) While previous programs have served their purposes well, a significant number of eligible refugees from Vietnam were unfairly denied or excluded, including Amerasians, in some cases by vindictive or corrupt Vietnamese officials who controlled access to the programs, and in others by United States personnel who imposed unduly restrictive interpretations of program criteria. In addition, the Government of Vietnam has denied passports to persons who the United States has found eligible for refugee admission.

(C) The Department of State has agreed to extend the September 30, 1994, registration deadline for former United States employees, "re-education" survivors, and surviving spouses of those who did not survive "re-education" camps to sign up for United States refugee programs, as well as the Vietnamese

In Country Priority One Program in Vietnam to provide protection to victims of recent persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

(D) The former United States Immigration and Naturalization Service agreed to resume the processing of former United States employees under the U11 program, which had been unilaterally suspended by the United States Government, as well as to review applications of Amerasians, children of American servicemen left behind in Vietnam after the war ended in April 1975, for resettlement to the United States under the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1988.

(13) Congress has passed numerous resolutions condemning human rights abuses in Vietnam, indicating that although there has been an expansion of relations with the Government of Vietnam, it should not be construed as approval of the ongoing and serious violations of fundamental human rights in Vietnam.

(14) Enhancement of relations between the United States and Vietnam has proved an opportunity for a human rights dialogue and could lead to future progress on human rights issues in Vietnam.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to promote the development of freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

TITLE I—PROHIBITION ON NONHUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM

SEC. 101. BILATERAL NONHUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), United States nonhumanitarian assistance may not be provided to the Government of Vietnam in an amount exceeding the amount so provided for fiscal year 2007—

(A) for fiscal year 2008 unless not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act the President determines and certifies to Congress that the requirements of subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (2) have been met during the 12-month period ending on the date of the certification; and

(B) for each subsequent fiscal year unless the President determines and certifies to Congress in the most recent annual report submitted pursuant to section 501 that the requirements of subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph (2) have been met during the 12-month period covered by the report.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this paragraph are that—

(A) the Government of Vietnam has made substantial progress toward releasing all political and religious prisoners from imprisonment, house arrest, and other forms of detention;

(B)(i) the Government of Vietnam has made substantial progress toward respecting the right to freedom of religion, including the right to participate in religious activities and institutions without interference by or involvement of the Government; and

(ii) the Government of Vietnam has made substantial progress toward returning estates and properties confiscated from the churches;

(C) the Government of Vietnam has made substantial progress toward allowing Vietnamese nationals free and open access to United States refugee programs;

(D) the Government of Vietnam has made substantial progress toward respecting the human rights of members of all ethnic minority groups; and

(E)(i) neither any official of the Government of Vietnam nor any agency or entity wholly or partly owned by the Government of Vietnam was complicit in a severe form of trafficking in persons; or

(ii) the Government of Vietnam took all appropriate steps to end any such complicity and hold such official, agency, or entity fully accountable for its conduct.

(b) EXCEPTION.—

(1) CONTINUATION OF ASSISTANCE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST.—Notwithstanding the failure of the Government of Vietnam to meet the requirements of subsection (a)(2), the President may waive the application of subsection (a) for any fiscal year if the President determines that the provision to the Government of Vietnam of increased nonhumanitarian assistance would promote the purpose of this Act or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States.

(2) EXERCISE OF WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The President may exercise the authority under paragraph (1) with respect to—

(A) all United States nonhumanitarian assistance to Vietnam; or

(B) one or more programs, projects, or activities of such assistance.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SEVERE FORMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.—The term "severe form of trafficking in persons" means any activity described in section 103(8) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-386 (114 Stat. 1470); 22 U.S.C. 7102(8)).

(2) UNITED STATES NONHUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.—The term "United States nonhumanitarian assistance" means—

(A) any assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (including programs under title IV of chapter 2 of part I of that Act, relating to the Overseas Private Investment Corporation), other than—

(i) disaster relief assistance, including any assistance under chapter 9 of part I of that Act;

(ii) assistance which involves the provision of food (including monetization of food) or medicine;

(iii) assistance for refugees; and

(iv) assistance to combat HIV/AIDS, including any assistance under section 104A of that Act; and

(B) sales, or financing on any terms, under the Arms Export Control Act.

TITLE II—ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY IN VIETNAM

SEC. 201. ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide assistance, through appropriate nongovernmental organizations and the Human Rights Defenders Fund, for the support of individuals and organizations to promote internationally recognized human rights in Vietnam.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out subsection (a) \$2,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

TITLE III—UNITED STATES PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

SEC. 301. RADIO FREE ASIA TRANSMISSIONS TO VIETNAM.

(a) POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.—It is the policy of the United States to take such measures as are necessary to overcome the jamming of Radio Free Asia by the Government of Vietnam.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to such amounts as are otherwise authorized to be appropriated for the Broadcasting Board of Governors, there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the policy under subsection (a) \$9,100,000 for the fiscal year 2008 and \$1,100,000 for fiscal year 2009.

SEC. 302. UNITED STATES EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS WITH VIETNAM.

It is the policy of the United States that programs of educational and cultural exchange with Vietnam should actively promote progress toward freedom and democracy in Vietnam by providing opportunities to Vietnamese nationals from a wide range of occupations and perspectives to see freedom and democracy in action and, also, by ensuring that Vietnamese nationals who have already demonstrated a commitment to these values are included in such programs.

TITLE IV—UNITED STATES REFUGEE POLICY

SEC. 401. REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT FOR NATIONALS OF VIETNAM.

(a) **POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.**—It is the policy of the United States to offer refugee resettlement to nationals of Vietnam (including members of the Montagnard ethnic minority groups) who were eligible for the Humanitarian Resettlement (HR) Program, the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), Resettlement Opportunities for Vietnamese Returnees (ROVR) Program, the Amerasian Homecoming Act of 1988, or any other United States refugee program and who were deemed ineligible due to administrative error or who for reasons beyond the control of such individuals (including insufficient or contradictory information or the inability to pay bribes demanded by officials of the Government of Vietnam) were unable or failed to apply for such programs in compliance with deadlines imposed by the Department of State.

(b) **AUTHORIZED ACTIVITY.**—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Department of State for Migration and Refugee Assistance for each of the fiscal years 2008, 2009, and 2010, such sums as may be necessary are authorized to be made available for the protection (including resettlement in appropriate cases) of Vietnamese refugees and asylum seekers, including Montagnards in Cambodia.

TITLE V—ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS TOWARD FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN VIETNAM

SEC. 501. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act and every 12 months thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Congress a report on the following:

(1)(A) The determination and certification of the President that the requirements of subparagraphs (A) through (E) of section 101(a)(2) have been met, if applicable.

(B) The determination of the President under section 101(b)(1), if applicable.

(2) Efforts by the United States Government to secure transmission sites for Radio Free Asia in countries in close geographical proximity to Vietnam in accordance with section 301(a).

(3) Efforts to ensure that programs with Vietnam promote the policy set forth in section 302 and with section 105 of the Human Rights, Refugee, and Other Foreign Policy Provisions Act of 1996 regarding participation in programs of educational and cultural exchange.

(4) Steps taken to carry out the policy under section 401(a).

(5) Lists of persons believed to be imprisoned, detained, or placed under house arrest, tortured, or otherwise persecuted by the Government of Vietnam due to their pursuit of internationally recognized human rights. In compiling such lists, the Secretary shall exercise appropriate discretion, including concerns regarding the safety and security of, and benefit to, the persons who may be included on the lists and their families. In

addition, the Secretary shall include a list of such persons and their families who may qualify for protections under United States refugee programs.

(6) A description of the development of the rule of law in Vietnam, including, but not limited to—

(A) progress toward the development of institutions of democratic governance;

(B) processes by which statutes, regulations, rules, and other legal acts of the Government of Vietnam are developed and become binding within Vietnam;

(C) the extent to which statutes, regulations, rules, administrative and judicial decisions, and other legal acts of the Government of Vietnam are published and are made accessible to the public;

(D) the extent to which administrative and judicial decisions are supported by statements of reasons that are based upon written statutes, regulations, rules, and other legal acts of the Government of Vietnam;

(E) the extent to which individuals are treated equally under the laws of Vietnam without regard to citizenship, race, religion, political opinion, or current or former associations;

(F) the extent to which administrative and judicial decisions are independent of political pressure or governmental interference and are reviewed by entities of appellate jurisdiction; and

(G) the extent to which laws in Vietnam are written and administered in ways that are consistent with international human rights standards, including the requirements of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

(b) **CONTACTS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.**—In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall, as appropriate, seek out and maintain contacts with nongovernmental organizations and human rights advocates (including Vietnamese-Americans and human rights advocates in Vietnam), including receiving reports and updates from such organizations and evaluating such reports. The Secretary shall also seek to consult with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom for appropriate sections of the report.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. **FALEOMAVAEGA**. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution. I would be remiss if I do not first recognize my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey. Not only do I have the highest respect for him but certainly as a champion of human rights issues all over the world, and for this I want to commend him for his authorship of this proposed bill. And I would like to also thank Chairman **LANTOS** and senior Ranking Member

ROS-LEHTINEN, the leadership of our Foreign Affairs Committee, for their support and efforts in bringing this proposed legislation for consideration by our colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, Vietnam stands at a crossroads, and the world is watching carefully to see the choices that it will make.

Like many other countries of the world, Vietnam has a responsibility to protect human and religious rights and provide political freedoms to its people. The Vietnamese people and their leaders should have a deep appreciation of the need to protect and foster the human rights of its people especially after being subjected to many years of abuse and dictatorial and colonial rule of the French Government.

I commend Vietnam's efforts to improve its economy, which grew by over 8 percent last year. In November also of last year, Vietnam played host to the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, and in January it joined the World Trade Organization. So we must recognize the extraordinary economic achievements Vietnam has made in a short time. This economic growth has bettered the lives of millions of the people of Vietnam.

But recent reports have given serious indications on how the Vietnamese Government has arrested and placed several religious and political leaders in prison without due process and in violation of their human rights.

Mr. Speaker, Congress played an important role in seeing that Vietnam became a member of the World Trade Organization. And yet since its accession, Vietnam has arrested numerous individuals simply for peacefully advocating for democracy.

Vietnam continues to limit freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of information. It remains as a one-party political system in which the Communist Party is the final arbiter of all decisions.

Mr. Speaker, U.S. engagement with Vietnam has helped spur economic growth and improvements in the lives of the Vietnamese people. But engagement must not be limited to foreign direct investment. We must also seize the opportunity to work with Vietnam to promote political openness and improve human rights.

This bill promotes just this kind of engagement. It prohibits increased assistance to Vietnam above fiscal year 2007 levels other than for humanitarian efforts. This bill makes it clear to Vietnam that the only factor limiting increased aid is positive action by the Vietnamese Government on political, human, and religious rights.

The bill also supports civil society groups in Vietnam that promote human rights. It supports educational exchanges that would enhance freedom and democracy in that country. And it makes it the policy of the United States to offer safe resettlement here to those who are forced to flee Vietnam and become refugees.

Mr. Speaker, Vietnam is increasingly integrated into the global economy; but to be considered a friend of our Nation, it must protect human rights and provide its people political and religious freedom. We all wish this future for Vietnam, and we hope there will be more positive results of our continued efforts to dialogue with the leaders of the people of Vietnam.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this proposed bill.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me begin by thanking my good friend and colleague, Mr. FALCOMA, for his leadership on human rights. We have worked together on those issues around the world. We have served on the Human Rights Committee for years, and he has been one of those champions with whom I am just so glad to associate myself. And I want to thank Mr. LANTOS, the chairman of our committee, for bringing this bill to the floor and express my strong gratitude to him and to Ranking Member ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and to the leadership for posting this bill for consideration today.

Mr. Speaker, Vietnam has long been known as a major violator of human rights. Sadly, in recent months the human rights situation in Vietnam has deteriorated and become substantially worse, and a new ugly wave of brutal repression has been launched by Hanoi. Over the last couple of months, some of the bravest champions of democracy have been dragged into court and sent to the gulag for simply promoting human rights and justice and free trade unions.

I would note to my colleagues that the House of Representatives has gone on record time and time again condemning and deploring these violations, but this is a new wave that comes on the heels of PNTR, as well as the WTO accession by the Vietnamese Government.

I would note that on May 2 of this year, this House unanimously adopted a resolution that I sponsored which called on the Government of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Father Nguyen Van Ly, Nguyen Van Dai, Le Thi Cong Nhan, and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. During consideration of that resolution, Mr. Speaker, I noted that I had been to Vietnam on many human rights trips. I have chaired several hearings on the issue of human rights in Vietnam and have been joined by my friend Mr. FALCOMA, Mr. ROYCE and others in those hearings. But on one of the most recent trips, I actually met with Father Ly, who was just sentenced to 8 years in prison. Just sentenced. I also met with Nguyen Van Dai and about 60 other human rights activists and religious leaders and peo-

ple who are pressing for reform in that country. And one by one those individuals are being caught in this dragnet.

I was struck when I met with these individuals, Mr. Speaker, by how extraordinarily generous, compassionate, talented, and kind hearted these people are. They are extraordinary. They are Vietnam's best and brightest and certainly their bravest. I was amazed at how they harbored no malice, no hate towards the government that hates them, nor do they hate the government leaders. They only want a better future for their country. Each and every one of the people I met with is committed to peaceful, nonviolent reform.

I met with Father Ly when he was under house arrest, and he sounded just like the activists that I had met and spoken to during the dark years of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. My first human rights trip, I would note parenthetically, was in 1982 on behalf of Soviet refuzniks. It was like being right back there, *deja vu*, talking to these individuals just like back then, the Shcharanskys of this world or Vaclav Havel or Lech Walesa, people like the folks in Charter 77 in the Czech Republic who only wanted freedom, democracy, and human rights.

□ 1500

And none of them wanted violence. And these reformers of Vietnam want nothing whatsoever to do with violence. And yet, they are accused of slandering the state. To criticize an unjust policy is construed by the state to be slander. Father Ly has now been sentenced to 8 years, and that's in addition to the 14 years he had previously served in the Gulag on trumped-up charges.

Just days after the House adopted the Resolution 243 calling for a reversal of human rights violations, Nguyen Van Dai was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment and 4 years of house arrest. Attorney Van Dai is a tenacious campaigner for human rights who uses the rule of law in a nonviolent manner to press his case.

On the same day that Mr. Van Dai was sentenced, another human rights lawyer, a labor activist, Le Thi Cong Nhan, received 4 years imprisonment and 3 years of house arrest from the same ruthless regime. She, too, punished for engaging in activities recognized internationally as protected human rights.

I've read the 2007 trial proceedings and the government sentencing record, which I intend to put into the RECORD. And I ask every Member to read that and to read it very carefully. It reads like a chilling chapter out of George Orwell's book, "1984."

At the trial, the presiding judge, Nguyen Huu Chinh, accused and condemned Dai of being a member of an Independent Trade Union. A member of the Communist party in Poland, Jaruzelski, accused Lech Walesa of that same thing, an independent trade union. That accusation carries with it a time in the Gulag in Vietnam today.

In Vietnam today, men and women are going to jail for very long periods of time for what the government calls "disseminating propaganda against the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam."

I point out to my colleagues that the day after the House passed the resolution on May 2, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom indicated in its annual report that the removal of Vietnam from the State Department's List of Countries of Particular Concern was premature based on the evidence that the current situation in the country has not allowed religious freedom. Again, it was part of an effort, I think, of suggesting that if they just got into the World Trade Organization, somehow they would matriculate from dictatorship to democracy. Regrettably, that has not happened. And we've seen a snapback to repression that is very, very severe, cruel, and very, very ugly.

The legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, would prohibit an increase in U.S. nonhumanitarian assistance to Vietnam unless the government makes substantial progress in the following areas: the release of political and religious prisoners; respect for religious freedom; allowing open access to the United States for our refugee program, because very often those who would like to become a part of that have to pay bribes to communist officials or they are simply detained and not allowed to apply; and respect for the rights of ethnic minority groups, including the Montagnard.

Beginning in fiscal year 2009, there would also be a need to show that neither any official of the government nor any government agency was complicit in the trafficking of human persons. The president may waive this restriction on assistance if he determines that the assistance would promote human rights or would otherwise be in the national interests of the U.S.

Other important provisions would authorize \$2 million of assistance in both 2008 and 2009 to support democracy in Vietnam, and approximately \$10 million over 2 years to overcome the jamming of Radio Free Asia by Vietnam. Let me tell my colleagues, they're jamming Radio Free Asia, jamming it, so the message that we think is so important simply cannot get through. And again, the only thing that any dictatorship needs anywhere to survive and prosper is a secret police, got that in Vietnam, and a control of the message, the propaganda. And by jamming Radio Free Asia, they preclude other voices, other opinions from reaching the people.

The bill would also extend U.S. refugee programs to Vietnamese who were previously eligible but were unable to apply for reasons beyond their control, like I said, like not wanting to pay bribes to Vietnamese officials.

Mr. Speaker, in November of 2006, pursuant to a boatload of assurances and solemn promises that the human

rights situation would improve, Vietnam became the first country to be removed from the Countries of Particular Concern. It was also part of an effort to try to get into the World Trade Organization.

Despite this flurry of international recognition, tangible economic benefit, despite the hopes of many, including and especially the Vietnamese people, Vietnam has reverted with a vengeance to its repressive practices and has arrested, imprisoned and imposed lengthy prison sentences on numerous individuals who only want freedom.

Mr. Speaker, these massive human rights violations perpetrated by the Government of Vietnam cannot be overlooked, they cannot be trivialized. These human rights violations occur as we meet here today, and they cannot continue without equally serious consequences.

I do believe that this snapback to human rights abuse underscores perhaps the unwitting naivete on the part of some who think if we just trade, things will get better. It has not.

And finally, I would ask my colleagues to take a look at pages H 4248 and H4249 from the May 1, 2007 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, a manifesto that was written and signed on April 8, 2006, called the 8406 Block. It is a call for freedom and democracy and non-violence.

One by one, those who have signed this very important human rights document in Vietnam have been hunted down, arrested and incarcerated by the government. That's like the people who signed the Declaration of Independence, or again, during the Soviet years, those who would sign manifestos calling for human rights, like Charter 77, who because they espoused freedom, found themselves in a Gulag or being mistreated by the government.

I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to support this. This is a bipartisan bill, and I appreciate that. This is the kind of expression that I think this body is known for, speaking with one voice, truth to power, on behalf of human rights.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself with the distinguished and most eloquent statement made by my good friend from New Jersey.

I have not had the privilege of visiting Vietnam since the days of the war in 1967, 1968, but I do intend to visit that country since it comes under the jurisdiction of my subcommittee.

But again, I want to thank my good friend for the facts and the data that he just presented. I hope my colleagues will take him up on reading some of these important documents that he had shared with us in his presentation.

At this time, I would like to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished lady from California, my good friend, Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I thank the chairman for allow-

ing me to speak today on this issue of the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007.

As you know, I represent the largest Vietnamese community outside of Vietnam in the world, and so I've had the chance to visit Vietnam now three times. Actually, I just finished visiting in April of this year. Before that, I had been denied a visa to visit Vietnam for three times in the past 2½ years.

Now, I rise today in support of my colleague's House Resolution 3096, because this is a very critical time in our relationship with Vietnam.

Before being accepted in the World Trade Organization in January, the Government of Vietnam assured the world that they would make significant progress in the area of human rights, things that we, as Americans, really sometimes take for granted; freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of collective bargaining, freedom to assemble as we wish, and most importantly, really one of the reasons our country was founded, freedom of religion.

As my colleague from New Jersey stated, we had put Vietnam on the List of Particular Concern with respect to the infringement on religious beliefs of the people of Vietnam, and even they were taken off in anticipation of this issue of going into the WTO. Many, many promises in the 11 years that I have served in the Congress, many, many promises by the communist Government of Vietnam, yet nothing ever holds up. And in this particular case, every person who has stood up to speak inside of Vietnam for democracy, for democracy, for something other than the communist party, for free elections, for return of land confiscated by that government, for their ability to practice the religion that they want, for their ability to assemble three or four or five on a street corner with a simple sign, asking, wanting, searching for democracy. And each and every one of these people are under house arrest, have been put in prison. One of them, Father Ly, for example, was given a trial, a trial that lasted one day, no attorney available to him, in a very famous photograph sent across the world of the communist government with their hand over his mouth at his very own trial because they didn't want him to be heard by the world.

The venerable Thich Quang Do, a Buddhist, through peaceful means saying we need religious freedom, recognize the church where most of the Buddhists in Vietnam want to belong. But nothing. Instead, he is under house arrest. All of these dissidents, and yet they continue to speak up and try to tell the world that there is no human right in Vietnam. And they continue to fight.

Many of my colleagues on the other side and on our side of the aisle have been working to get this message out. So then they got WTO, and they imprisoned everybody. I was there in April. There were no dissidents to meet. I asked to go to the prisons. I

asked to go see those who had been put behind bars. They laughed. They would not let me. They said, How dare you ask. You know better than to ask to see these people. And our ambassador, at his residence there, put together a tea of the wives and the mothers of the dissidents, not people who had spoken up, simply because they were married and these women were worried about their husbands. And they came to talk to us. They were stopped at their homes. They were barricaded in their homes. The streets were barricaded to their homes so they couldn't get out. And the two who made it, now in a very famous video playing on the Internet, as I came to the home, so did those women, the two who got through. And about 25 communist government soldiers descended upon us, pulling us apart and dragging away one of the women. The ambassador came out. He said these women are simply here to come and have tea with us. But they would have none of it. This is democracy? These are the human rights that this government promised?

So I say today, let us not be conspirators with this government in the backslide of progress. Please, I ask my colleagues, join us in voting for this resolution today.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), who has spoken out on behalf of human rights in Vietnam with great faithfulness, is also a cosponsor of this legislation, and also promoted legislation that was successful in expanding Radio Free Asia.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007.

I join Congressman SMITH, and the efforts made by others here that have been tireless, the strategy of trying to shine some light on Vietnam, trying to get the international community to look at what is happening there.

I've worked with Congressman SMITH on this legislation since 2001, and I know the importance of having it passed, but also, I know the trouble that it has been met with in the other body. And if we can overcome the objections of a few in the other body, this bill will be an important tool in pressing Hanoi to end its wanton disregard for human rights.

I think the necessity of this legislation is because since early this year the crackdown has intensified in Hanoi, in Vietnam to such an extent that especially students, especially spokesmen for religious organizations there are receiving these one-hour show trials where afterwards they're being sent to a penitentiary, 8 years in the case of Father Ly. It was 14-some years ago when he was sent away the first time. And Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity there, in Vietnam, to meet with the venerable Thich Quang Do, when he was under house arrest, and Le Quang Liem and see the incredible repression that they face, and to

see what is really a slow strangulation of the culture and of the traditional religion as the state attempts to rewrite religion without the support of the religious leaders, and thus come down hard on those religious leaders and try to remove them from society and try to imprison them certainly when they speak out.

□ 1515

As Human Rights Watch said, this is the worst crackdown that we have seen in Vietnam in 20 years. In the past year, Vietnamese officials brought this harassment to religious leaders and political dissidents and student activists to these new draconian levels that, unfortunately, force us to act here.

This bill's focus on Vietnam suppression of the democratic movement and its tight control over the media will be an important component in bringing change. Why? Because with this legislation, Radio Free Asia will now better be able to bring objective news and to be a surrogate voice for opinions and news outside of the state-sponsored propaganda, so the Vietnamese people will hear of the spread of democratic values in Asia.

Frankly, the spread of democratic values in Asia is critical to U.S. security interests. It is important to note that Vietnam has recently ratcheted up its efforts to block radio broadcasts from Radio Free Asia. This tells me that not only are these broadcasts having a positive effect in combating state propaganda, but Hanoi is feeling increased political pressure. This bill provides the means to overcome radio jamming and the funds for continued broadcasts.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill. I think it sends a firm message to Hanoi that abuse of this kind to nonviolent citizens in the country will not be met with silence, but, frankly, that we will take action not only in terms of the broadcasting, but this also authorizes our administration to provide U.S. assistance through appropriate nongovernmental organizations and the Human Rights Defenders Fund for the support of the individuals and organizations to promote human rights and to promote nonviolent democratic change inside the country.

So besides capping U.S. nonhumanitarian assistance, this other leverage will be very helpful in terms of trying to protect the human rights and dignity of the students and of the religious leaders right now that are facing such persecution inside Vietnam.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues from California, Mr. ROYCE and Ms. SANCHEZ, for their most outstanding statements and their support of this proposed legislation offered by my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey.

It saddens me because of the times and the periods that I have had the op-

portunity of meeting with several delegations that have represented Vietnam for the past couple of years. As my good friend from New Jersey has stated earlier, they have made a lot of promises. We have taken their promises in good faith, and now we find ourselves in a situation where their promises have been severely questioned. I kind of like to think that when a country makes a promise, they like to keep it. If this is the way Vietnam is doing business, then certainly we ought to do something about it.

Again, I want to thank my good friend from New Jersey for his authorship of this bill.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, before yielding back the balance of our time, again, I want to thank Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and just remind my colleagues that this is the third time this legislation, both under the Republican leadership, and now, thankfully, the Speaker has seen fit to bring this to the floor, as well, the third time I have brought this bill to the floor. Twice it passed the House. Hopefully, it will pass it again.

I think there is a greater sense of urgency now because there is this new, and I would call it an ugly and pervasive, crackdown. They got all their economic benefits. They got their World Trade Organization accession, and, as I said before, PNTR was passed by this House and the bilateral agreement before that. So they got all of that. Now, they just have gone right back to the ugliest commissions of crimes against their own people.

Mr. Speaker, let me just also say to my colleagues that we have heard from some very reliable sources that those who have been incarcerated, those who are being intimidated are being told that the United States really doesn't care about human rights; that all that we care about is the almighty buck, the dollar, and making profits. I want to remind them that we have not walked away. This is a bipartisan expression of concern for their well-being.

Of course, we know why they do this. I will never forget Wei Jingsheng, the great human rights Democracy Wall leader, who spent years in the Chinese laogai, or gulag, coming and testifying at a hearing that I convened on human rights abuses in China. He said that one of the ways that they break people in prison is to say that nobody cares and that everybody has forgotten. It says in the Bible that without hope, the people perish. And that is I think doubly, triply true when you are an incarcerated political prisoner and you are told that you have been abandoned.

I want those individuals to know we have not abandoned them. We care deeply for them. We pray for them; and we are trying to do what we can do, using legislation to try to effectuate their release and hopefully, some day, welcome a Vietnam that is democratic,

free, and a protector of human rights, not a violator.

Mr. Speaker, let me also finally say that right after we passed this legislation out of committee in the International Relations Committee in a totally bipartisan effort, the Communist Party of Vietnam's online newspaper berated me and my colleagues very, very, I think, viciously. They did what all human rights abusers always do. They said, Don't interfere with our internal affairs.

Well, we have heard that before, Mr. Speaker. We have heard it from the Soviet Union. We have heard it from Cuba. We have heard it from countries where gulags are filled with human rights activists and freedom-loving individuals. We heard it from South Africa in the 1980s when many of us spoke out passionately against apartheid. They said, Don't intervene in our internal affairs.

I hope the Senate takes note. I hope my colleagues will read what is truly going on in Vietnam today. I have put this in the RECORD, the 8406 Manifesto, a great statement of human rights call, and will include as the judge's findings in the sentencing of the two people, including Dai that I mentioned earlier. You read this and you realize why we get so concerned, those of us like Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and others who follow this day in and day out. This is an indictment on the system, not on the individuals who have been sent to prison.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to read this. I urge passage of this bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3096, the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007, introduced by my distinguished colleague, Mr. SMITH. This important legislation provides economic and political incentives for the Vietnamese government to improve its human rights record and ensure freedom and democracy. This bill also encourages the dissemination of information to the people of Vietnam through promoting free media and encouraging educational exchanges with the United States that will allow for a true democracy of truth and knowledge develop.

Mr. Speaker, despite a recent history of warfare and an oppressive command economy, Vietnam is now making extraordinary progress. Last year, Vietnam's economy grew by over 8 percent, and it hosted the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit. In January 2007, Vietnam joined the World Trade Organization.

This rapid economic progress has improved the lives of millions of Vietnamese. However, I remain concerned about the lack of political openness and reported human rights abuses. In this repressive atmosphere, the government arrests individuals who are peacefully advocating democracy as well as limiting the freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of information.

Vietnam today is at a crossroads, the government must now choose to accept its responsibilities to its citizens or continue upon its trajectory of shunning them, facing increasing international scrutiny. The United States and the Congress must react to the situation in Vietnam with firmness and resolve; we are

unable and unwilling to ignore human rights abuses and political suppression anywhere in the world.

By limiting the amount of funds the United States provides to the Vietnamese Government pending a substantial and documented improvement in its human rights record, the United States will show its commitment to the promotion of freedom and democracy throughout the world. This bill will prohibit the provision of additional non-humanitarian funds unless the Vietnamese Government has released political prisoners, made progress on respecting freedom of religion, made progress on returning church properties, allowed the Vietnamese people access to U.S. refugee programs, made progress on protecting ethnic minority rights, and has held accountable any official who is found to have been complicit in the trafficking of humans.

The provisions of this legislation work to ensure that the Vietnamese Government halts any and all human rights abuses, while also respecting and ensuring the rights of its citizens. I believe that this legislation provides the necessary administrative outline that will allow the United States to pursue the best possible relationship with Vietnam and cement our position as an advocate of human rights in the realm of international affairs. The bill makes it the policy of the United States to actively promote democracy and freedom through educational exchanges, as well as offering refugee resettlement to all eligible nationals of Vietnam. This bipartisan resolution is a crucial step toward securing the promotion of freedom, democracy, and a respect for universal human rights in Vietnam, the United States and the world as a focal point of United States foreign policy.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3096, the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007, a bill which I am pleased to co-sponsor. Introduced by my good friend and colleague, Representative CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, a champion of human rights in this House, this is an important measure which speaks to the deteriorating state of human rights in Vietnam.

After joining the World Trade Organization in January 2007, the politburo of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) has carried out a large-scale brutal campaign of arrest against the nascent movement for democracy in Vietnam. Ignoring all international criticism and strenuous protests of the Vietnamese people, inside Vietnam and abroad, the communist regime in Hanoi has shamefully pushed ahead with its crackdown. Among others, the following events were particularly disconcerting to me:

On February 18, 2007, the second day of the Lunar New Year, which is the most sacred time in Vietnamese culture, the communist security forces raided Father Nguyen Van Ly's office within the Communal Residence of the Hue Archdiocese. Father Ly was later banished to a remote, secluded area in Hue.

On March 8, 2007, Reverend Nguyen Cong Chinch and his wife were brutally assaulted by security forces of Gia Lai Province in the Central Highlands, who then arrested Reverend Chinch on undisclosed charges.

Also on March 8, 2007, two prominent human rights activists and lawyers, Mr. Nguyen Van Dai and Ms. Le Thi Cong Nhan,

were arrested in Hanoi and were told that they would be detained for four months as part of an undisclosed investigation.

On March 9, 2007, Mr. Tran Van Hoa, a member of the People's Democracy Party in Quang Ninh Province, and Mr. Pham Van Troi, a member of the Committee for Human Rights in Ha Tay, were summoned by security forces and threatened with "immeasurable consequences" if they do not stop their advocacy for human rights in Vietnam.

Also on March 10, 2007, state security forces also raided the home of Ms. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, a writer, on the grounds that she advocated for "people with grievances" against the government. They took away two computers, two cell phones, and hundreds of appeals that she had prepared for victims of the government's abuses.

On March 12, 2007, lawyer Le Quoc Quan, a consultant on local governance for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, and Swedish International Development Agency, was arrested in his hometown, Nghe An, less than a week after he returned from a fellowship at the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, D.C. His whereabouts are unknown at this time.

On April 5, 2007, the Vietnamese authorities in Hanoi rudely prevented Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ (D-CA) from meeting with several dissidents' wives at a gathering organized at the U.S. Ambassador's home. The police reportedly used very hostile and undignified manners to intervene in the meeting.

Furthermore, the Hanoi communist regime is still imprisoning many political dissidents and labor advocates such as Huynh Nguyen Dao, Truong Quoc Huy, Nguyen Tan Hoanh, Doan Huu Chuong, and more than 350 lay people of the Protestant churches in the Central Highland.

I share the concerns of the Vietnamese-Americans in my district, as well as all across the country, who are very angered and distressed by what they perceive as a new and aggressive plan of the Hanoi government to reverse the progress of human rights in Vietnam. It seems to me that the Vietnamese government is conducting this crackdown on advocates of human rights and religious freedom because it believes that the U.S. has no further leverage in the region. Now that Vietnam has been admitted to the WTO, and met with the Holy See, they believe they can respond in this brutal fashion to supporters of democracy and freedom and we will not respond.

Throughout my years in Congress, I have worked to foster human rights and religious freedom throughout the world. I have raised this issue with U.S. government officials often, especially since this recent crackdown, in an effort to pressure the Vietnamese government to stop persecuting its citizens. I believe the State Department should consider putting Vietnam back on the list of Countries of Particular Concern if the human rights situation in Vietnam does not improve. I believe that the State Department is failing the Vietnamese people struggling for human rights, and is not doing all that it can do to advocate on behalf of the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese people should be able to choose their own leaders through free and fair elections and to use the Internet freely without censorship or restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a unanimous vote for passage of this legislation so that the Vietnamese people will know that the U.S. House

of Representatives stands in support of their freedom.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3096, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 motion will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ACEH, A PROVINCE IN SUMATRA, INDONESIA

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 238) commending the first democratic elections in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia, and expressing support for the further democratic development and implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 238

Whereas for three decades there has been a continuous armed conflict in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia;

Whereas violence between the Indonesian military and the Free Aceh Movement has resulted in an estimated 15,000 deaths in the region;

Whereas the tsunami on December 26, 2004, killed at least 165,000 people in Aceh, devastated the landscape, and led to the loss of livelihood for 600,000 people;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement signed a Memorandum of Understanding on August 15, 2005, in Helsinki;

Whereas the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), led by the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Norway, and Switzerland, has supported the implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding successfully;

Whereas the Free Aceh Movement has demobilized its military troops and decommissioned its arms;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia has withdrawn its nonorganic military and police forces from Aceh;

Whereas the Law on the Governing of Aceh (LoGA) was signed into law by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on August 1, 2006;

Whereas the general life situation of the Acehnese has improved significantly since the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding and the Acehnese populate markets and celebrate festivities in public;

Whereas the first democratic and peaceful gubernatorial and district administrative

elections in Aceh were held on December 11, 2006, and more than 80 percent of entitled Acehese voted; and

Whereas Irwandi Yusuf, a former leader of the Free Aceh Movement, won the gubernatorial election with the highest support of more than 38 percent of total votes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the first democratic elections in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia, in which the Acehese have shown their strong commitment to democracy and peace, and congratulates Irwandi Yusuf, the first democratic elected governor of Aceh;

(2) expresses its ongoing support for the further democratic development of Aceh and the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement on August 15, 2005;

(3) encourages both parties to live up to their commitments under the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, especially with regard to establishing a Human Rights Court for Aceh and a Commission of Truth and Reconciliation; and

(4) encourages the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to commit resources in supporting the peace and building a strong civil society in Aceh.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution being considered.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the leadership of our House Foreign Affairs Committee, the distinguished gentleman from California, Chairman TOM LANTOS, and our senior ranking member, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support and their leadership in bringing this bill to the floor. I would also like to thank our distinguished colleague from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for introducing this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, on December 11, 2006, the Indonesian province of Aceh was host to one of the truly exceptional events in recent world history. Only 2 years after a devastating tsunami claimed some 165,000 lives of the people of Aceh, which is a province of Indonesia, and following three decades, almost 30 years, of violent conflict that ravaged this region, the courageous people of Aceh held peaceful and democratic elections. It was an inspiring testament to the human spirit.

More than 80 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in this landmark

election. It signaled a new chapter in the lives of the beleaguered people of Aceh and served as a bold demonstration of the power of democracy and diplomacy throughout the world.

Diplomacy, Mr. Speaker. This election could not have taken place without the willingness of the Government of Indonesia and the armed fighters of the Free Aceh Movement to take the important step of choosing peace over violence to settle their differences. After decades of bloody battle, the two sides put down their arms and negotiated the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding on August 15, 2006.

□ 1530

Mr. Speaker, we have seen it from Northern Ireland to South Africa and around the world. When government and rebel groups are finally willing to lay down their arms and come to the negotiating table, agreements previously thought not possible can suddenly come to fruition.

In addition to calling for elections, the Aceh Memorandum of Understanding also calls for the establishment of a Human Rights Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, very similar to what happened in South Africa. It is important that these bodies be established without delay so that Aceh can begin to heal and then fulfill its potential.

In choosing to settle their dispute peacefully and committing to a democratic process, the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement showed true leadership by putting the people of Aceh first. This resolution commends this bold choice and the elections that it produced, supports the full implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, recognizes how far Aceh has come, and expresses hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to recognize the leadership of the President of Indonesia, President Susilo Yudhoyono. I know he played a most critical role in bringing about a peaceful solution to the province of Aceh. Just as in my recent discussions with him a couple of months ago, he had given promise that he is also totally committed to the full implementation of the autonomy law that was passed by the Indonesian Parliament to provide for greater democracy and self-rule for the people of West Papua. I know this issue is not related to the Aceh situation, but I do know it is connected to the fact that Jakarta or the Government of Indonesia is the government responsible for what has happened between these two provinces.

But I do want to give recognition to President SBY, as he is usually known in Indonesia, for his leadership and for his efforts in bringing finally to a peaceful solution the situation in the province of Aceh.

I fully support this resolution, and I ask my colleagues to support its passage.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume and rise in support of H. Res. 238, which commends the momentous Democratic elections held in Aceh, Indonesia this past December.

For decades, that region of northern Sumatra was caught in seemingly endless cycles of retribution. Separatist violence by the Free Aceh Movement, known as the GAM, provoked brutal crackdowns by the Indonesian military, and far too often it was the civilians in the middle who paid the price. That conflict and the mistrust of both sides appeared insurmountable.

Then, on December 26, 2004, an even more terrible tragedy struck the area. The Indian Ocean tsunami suddenly snuffed out over 165,000 lives in Aceh alone, devastated the coastline, and displaced hundreds of thousands more.

In January of 2005, within days of the tsunami, I visited the devastated coastline and the Banda Aceh aid center, along with the United States Navy crews who were providing water and logistical support from the USS *Abraham Lincoln* for humanitarian relief efforts.

It was a cataclysm of biblical proportions. But the immensity of the suffering it caused also diminished the relative significance of the political conflicts that had afflicted those communities for so long. Since then, we have seen progress towards democracy and reconciliation that would have not appeared possible beforehand.

The signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, the withdrawal of Indonesian troops and military from outside of Aceh, the demobilization of the GAM forces and the enactment of the law on the governing of Aceh were all and are very positive and hopeful signs.

Over 80 percent of the eligible Acehese voters participated in last December's peaceful district and gubernatorial elections, and in an unmistakable sign of change, the former GAM leader, Irwandi Yusuf, was elected as governor.

Of course, the work of long-term reconciliation and building of a strong civil society will take time and continued cooperation from all parties. Thus, it is appropriate that this resolution encourages both sides to live up to their commitments under the Helsinki Memorandum, particularly with regard to establishing a Human Rights Court for Aceh and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Having personally witnessed the suffering of the Acehese and the devastation of their homes and livelihoods following the tsunami, I am particularly hopeful that we are witnessing the springtime of democracy, peace and development in Aceh.

I want to thank Mr. CROWLEY for presenting us with this opportunity to congratulate the people of Aceh and the Government of Indonesia on the progress they have achieved so far.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, as much as we recognize what has happened and is developing there in Indonesia, especially in this province of Aceh where great democratization or, I suppose, having a better relationship with the central government in Jakarta, there are a couple of things I want to share with my colleague.

That is not all. Indonesia happens to be the fourth most populous country in the world. Indonesia also is the largest, most populous Muslim country in the world, with some 223 million people there. And they are Sunni Muslims. I want to share that with my colleagues as a point of interest.

I think it was just last week that, if the media reports are accurate, Indonesia also just recently signed a \$1 billion arms trade agreement with Russia. That is a real twist there in terms of what is happening in the Asia-Pacific region and why this country ought not be neglected in terms of our interest and what we should be doing to work closely with the leaders of Indonesia or Jakarta, for that matter.

Indonesia is going through transition and some very serious problems. I indicated earlier about the serious problems it had had with the province of West Papua. West Papua is part of Indonesia. It was a former colony of the Dutch. Then the dictator, Suharto, by use of military force colonized West Papua again, if you want to put it in those terms.

The largest gold mining operation in the world happens to be in West Papua in this province in Indonesia. It is tremendously rich in terms of minerals and oil and all these things that are part of this country.

As much as I want to express that sense of hope that the resolution to some 30 years of war, this revolt between the people of Aceh and Indonesia, I just want to express a sense of concern to my colleagues that the situation in West Papua is still not clear, and I sincerely hope in the coming weeks and months that President Susilo Yudhoyono will be more forthcoming in terms of the commitment that he has made.

I want to thank the Government of Indonesia for allocating some \$2 billion, hopefully, finally, after some 50 or 60 years of not even giving the time of day for the needs of the people of West Papua, some \$2 billion to build an infrastructure, to provide better schools, better roads, better hospitals. I sincerely hope that President SBY will follow through with this commitment concerning the province of West Papua.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 238.

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.

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CALLING ON GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO RELEASE CERTAIN PRISONERS AND END SUPPRESSION OF UYGHUR PEOPLE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 497) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately release from custody the children of Rebiya Kadeer and Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and should refrain from further engaging in acts of cultural, linguistic, and religious suppression directed against the Uyghur people, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 497

Whereas the protection of the human rights of minority groups is consistent with the actions of a responsible stakeholder in the international community and with the role of a host of a major international event such as the Olympic Games;

Whereas recent actions taken against the Uyghur minority by authorities in the People's Republic of China and, specifically, by local officials in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, have included major violations of human rights and acts of cultural suppression;

Whereas the authorities of the People's Republic of China have manipulated the strategic objectives of the international war on terror to increase their cultural and religious oppression of the Muslim population residing in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

Whereas an official campaign to encourage Han Chinese migration into the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has resulted in the Uyghur population becoming a minority in their traditional homeland and has placed immense pressure on those who are seeking to preserve the linguistic, cultural, and religious traditions of the Uyghur people;

Whereas the House of Representatives has a particular interest in the fate of Uyghur human rights leader Rebiya Kadeer, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and her family as Ms. Kadeer was first arrested in August 1999 while she was en route to meet with a delegation from the Congressional Research Service and was held in prison on spurious charges until her release and exile to the United States in the spring of 2005;

Whereas upon her release, Ms. Kadeer was warned by her Chinese jailors not to advocate for human rights in Xinjiang and throughout China while in the United States or elsewhere, and was reminded that she had several family members residing in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

Whereas while residing in the United States, Ms. Kadeer founded the International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation and was elected President of the Uyghur American Association and President of the World Uyghur Congress in Munich, Germany;

Whereas two of Ms. Kadeer's sons were detained and beaten and one of her daughters was placed under house arrest in June 2006;

Whereas President George W. Bush recognized the importance of Ms. Kadeer's human rights work in a June 5, 2007, speech in Prague, Czech Republic, when he stated: "Another dissident I will meet here is Rebiyah Kadeer of China, whose sons have been jailed in what we believe is an act of retaliation for her human rights activities. The talent of men and women like Rebiyah is the greatest resource of their nations, far more valuable than the weapons of their army or their oil under the ground.";

Whereas Kahar Abdureyim, Ms. Kadeer's eldest son, was fined \$12,500 for tax evasion and another son, Alim Abdureyim, was sentenced to seven years in prison and fined \$62,500 for tax evasion in a blatant attempt by local authorities to take control of the Kadeer family's remaining business assets in the People's Republic of China;

Whereas another of Ms. Kadeer's sons, Ablikim Abdureyim, was beaten by local police to the point of requiring medical attention in June 2006 and has been subjected to continued physical abuse and torture while being held incommunicado in custody since that time;

Whereas Ablikim Abdureyim was also convicted by a kangaroo court on April 17, 2007, for "instigating and engaging in secessionist" activities and was sentenced to nine years of imprisonment, this trial being held in secrecy and Mr. Abdureyim reportedly being denied the right to legal representation;

Whereas two days later, on April 19, 2007, another court in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, sentenced Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil to life in prison for "splittism" and also for "being party to a terrorist organization" after having successfully sought his extradition from Uzbekistan where he was visiting relatives;

Whereas Chinese authorities have continued to refuse to recognize Mr. Celil's Canadian citizenship, although he was naturalized in 2005, denied Canadian diplomats access to the courtroom when Mr. Celil was sentenced, and have refused to grant consular access to Mr. Celil in prison;

Whereas a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson publicly warned Canada "not to interfere in China's domestic affairs" after Mr. Celil's sentencing; and

Whereas Mr. Celil's case was a major topic of conversation in a recent Beijing meeting between the Canadian and Chinese Foreign Ministers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(1) should recognize, and seek to ensure, the linguistic, cultural, and religious rights of the Uyghur people of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

(2) should immediately release the children of Rebiya Kadeer from both incarceration and house arrest and cease harassment and intimidation of the Kadeer family members; and

(3) should immediately release Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and allow him to rejoin his family in Canada.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. 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 H. Res. 497.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank again my colleague from New Jersey for his participation in managing the other side of the aisle on this proposed legislation. I thank the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California, Mr. TOM LANTOS, for his leadership and for his support of this legislation. Especially I want to thank my good friend and colleague, the distinguished senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for her authorship of this human rights resolution.

With passage of this measure, Congress will shine its spotlight on the brutal suppression of the Muslim Uyghur people by the Chinese Government, and the despicable retaliatory actions of the Chinese Government against the leading Uyghur human rights voice, Rebiya Kadeer.

Similar to the Tibetans, the Turkic Muslim Uyghur have long sought to protect their cultural survival in the face of the Chinese Government-supported migration of the Han Chinese to the Uyghur homeland. Chinese authorities severely restrict economic and educational freedoms for the Uyghurs, regularly destroying books and closing places of worship.

Most trials of Uyghur prisoners are held in secret and many political prisoners are routinely executed without the knowledge of their families. Thousands of Uyghur political prisoners are held without charge or even trial and are routinely abused or tortured.

Mr. Speaker, the People's Republic of China continues to brutally suppress even the slightest attempts of peaceful political, religious and cultural expression of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Province. After the attacks in the U.S. on September 11, the People's Republic of China has used the pretext of the war on terrorism to justify these severe human rights violations in Xinjiang and routinely labels the Uyghurs as terrorists and as splitists.

When the Uyghur people found their human rights voice in Rebiya Kadeer, the Chinese Government immediately moved against her and sentenced her to 8 years in prison. They arrested her while she was on her way to meet representatives of our Congressional Research Service.

After international lobbying efforts, the Chinese Government finally released her from prison. They told her that her children would pay a steep

price if she continued to lobby for human rights in Xinjiang.

When you carry the hopes and dreams of your entire people on your shoulders, it is impossible to be quiet in the face of such brutal oppression. Upon arriving in the United States, Rebiya continued her human rights work through the International Human Rights and Democracy Foundation and as president of the Uyghur American Association and the World Uyghur Congress in Munich, Germany.

Mr. Speaker, the Chinese Government held to their word and arrested her sons in Xinjiang. Her daughter was placed under house arrest. Using the pretext of a tax investigation to strip the family of all the remaining possessions and business interests, one son was fined \$12,500 for tax evasion. Another was sentenced to 7 years in prison and fined \$62,500. Yet another was sentenced to 9 years in prison on April 17, 2007, for secessionism.

The Ros-Lehtinen resolution before us, Mr. Speaker, also raises the human rights of Uyghur Canadian Huseyin Celil. He was recently convicted by a Chinese court to life imprisonment on bogus charges. The Canadian Government has been denied access to him throughout his trial.

The blatant refusal to accept even the most basic norms of diplomatic conduct and refusing Canadian embassy officials to visit Mr. Celil not only flies in the face of long-established diplomatic norms and standards, but it is a flagrant violation of Mr. Celil's internationally recognized human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join me in supporting this resolution and in sending the Chinese Government a strong message that it needs to respect the minority rights of the Uyghur people, that it needs to immediately release the children of Rebiya Kadeer and cease all harassment of her family members, and set free Mr. Celil so he can return to Canada to be reunited with his family.

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

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this resolution offered by Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN that asks the Chinese Government to recognize the rights of the Uyghur people and to free the children of Rebiya Kadeer, an extraordinary human rights activist and Uyghur spokeswoman.

At turning points in history, Mr. Speaker, of oppressed peoples, one honest and courageous man or woman often comes to represent the entire people in the eyes of the world. In the United States, on matters related to civil rights, it was the Reverend Martin Luther King. In Burma, it is Aung San Suu Kyi. In India, it was Gandhi. For Chinese Catholics, it was Cardinal

Kung. In Poland, it was Lech Walesa and John Paul II. For Tibetans, it is his Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

For the Uyghur people, deprived of their religious freedom, robbed of their cultural and linguistic rights and marginalized in their own homeland by the government-organized Han Chinese migration, it is Rebiya Kadeer.

For years, Ms. Kadeer was a voice crying in the wilderness, asking the serial human rights abusers in Beijing to recognize the rights of the Uyghur people. In 1999, the Chinese Government imprisoned her. In 2005, it released her into exile into the United States, warning her not to advocate for her people. Her husband and several children were already in exile here. Others remained behind. In 2000, while she was in prison, one of her daughters testified at a human rights hearing that I chaired on the Uyghurs, and she was very powerful in her statement on behalf of her mom.

Even though some of her children still lived in China, this incredibly brave woman established a Uyghur human rights foundation. Now she has become the quintessential symbol of Uyghur aspirations and hopes. She is a recognized leader in the Uyghur exile and human rights communities, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and a friend of President Bush after their meeting in Prague this past summer.

Mr. Speaker, we all want Beijing to act like a responsible stakeholder in the world. I make no secret of my conviction that Beijing has a very long way to go. The list of serious human rights abuses committed by the Chinese Government is long. It includes the persuasive systematic exploitation of women and the murder of their children through forced abortion as part of its coercive one-child-per-couple policy. Against the Uyghurs, it is used as a means of genocide, of trying to destroy an entire race and ethnic group of people because of their ethnicity. The imprisonment of democratic dissidents and religious believers remains a serious and pervasive problem in the PRC, as does the marginalization of the Tibetans in their homeland on the roof of the world.

The extensive use of torture has been documented time and time again. Manfred Nowak, the Special Rapporteur for the United Nations, went to China and came back, and his report is literally an indictment. If you are arrested, if a Han Chinese, a Uyghur or anyone is arrested, the way they get a conviction is they torture you. Eventually you sign on the bottom line and you admit your so-called crimes. They have also forcibly repatriated North Korean refugees. Again, there is abuse after abuse after abuse, and the Uyghurs are at the brunt of it.

The oppression of the Uyghurs in their homeland along the Silk Road must be included, Mr. Speaker, on any list of Chinese Government's most serious abuses. In the United States, Ms. Kadeer has ensured that the world does not forget the oppression of the Uyghur

people, and the Chinese Government has retaliated now, as they have in the past, by harassing her children who live in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by placing them under house arrest, by incarcerating them and by beating them.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats alike, ask that Beijing end this campaign of retaliation against the Kadeer family. We join the voice of those who care for those kids, an anguished mother who cries, "let my children go."

□ 1545

We also ask that Beijing immediately release Hussein Celil, an ethnic Uyghur who is a citizen of Canada, so he can rejoin his family living in that country.

Finally, in the darkness of the political oppression of the Uyghur people, Rebiya Kadeer stands out as a beacon of light and hope. Let us honor her and her family and her work by enthusiastically supporting this resolution.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend and thank my good friend from New Jersey. I call him the champion of human rights all over the world. Wherever there is violation of human rights, he is there; and I commend him for his efforts all these years that I have been privileged to work closely with him on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, I recall years ago Mr. Mandela was accused by a former Prime Minister of Great Britain as being a terrorist. Of course, having served in prison for 29 years, all he was trying to say was that something was wrong in South Africa. They call it apartheid. If that isn't a human rights violation, I don't know what is.

But the fact that these two people, the lady and her children and this Canadian citizen, whether it is 2 or 3 or 3 million, our government and this Congress should give every attention as far as to the needs of those people as far as human rights violations are concerned.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 497, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately release from custody the children of Rebiya Kadeer and Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and should refrain from further engaging in acts of cultural, linguistic, and religious suppression directed against the Uyghur people, and for other purposes. I want to congratulate my good friend and colleague, the distinguished ranking member of this Committee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for this important human rights resolution. It is the responsibility of the Congress to remind the government of the People's Republic of China of their obligations to live up to international standards to protect ethnic cultural identities and minority rights.

Mr. Speaker, not only does the People's Republic of China systemically abuse the basic human rights of its minority citizens, but its repressive tactics extend to the members of po-

litically active human rights advocates' families. Furthermore, the government has manipulated the international war on terrorism to justify its repressive treatment of the Muslim population living in Xinjiang, as well as encouraging Chinese migration into the region in an attempt to purify the region of its traditional Uyghur occupants.

It is extremely important that the United States hold the government of the People's Republic of China responsible to international standards regarding political as well as basic human rights. The government brutally suppresses even the slightest attempts of peaceful political, religious, and cultural expression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. As a member of Congress, I feel particularly responsible to Uyghur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer, who was arrested while she was on her way to meet representatives of our Congressional Research Service. While she was released from prison following international lobbying efforts, deemed a prisoner of consciousness by Amnesty International, upon resumption of her human rights advocacy abroad, her sons in Xinjiang were arrested and remain imprisoned to this day.

This resolution also raises the human rights issues of Huseyin Cecil, a Uyghur Canadian who was recently convicted in a kangaroo court to life imprisonment on "bogus" charges. The Canadian government and Embassy Officials have been refused access to their citizen throughout the process, and the Chinese government has blatantly refused to accept even the most basic norms of diplomatic conduct.

By supporting this resolution, the United States will alert the Chinese government that it must respect the minority rights of the Uyghur people as well as the rights of human rights advocates. The resolution requires the immediate release of the children of Rebiya Kadeer as well as Mr. Cecil so that they might all return to their families.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 497.

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.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MALAYSIA'S INDEPENDENCE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 518) recognizing the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 518

Whereas Malaysia is a multi-religious and multi-racial democracy in Southeast Asia that is important to the United States' strategic interests;

Whereas Malaysia is one of the United States' key allies in efforts to combat international terrorism, and it condemns all terrorism, regardless of its cause or objectives;

Whereas the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, has condemned those seeking to incite race and religious hatred, including anti-Semitism;

Whereas Malaysia has taken a leading regional role in counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Southeast Asia, through intelligence sharing, close cooperation in law enforcement, participation in joint exercises and training, and other cooperative efforts with its neighboring countries and the United States;

Whereas Malaysia is the United States' 10th largest trading partner, and the two countries have signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement;

Whereas Malaysia has consistently been a favored destination of American investment due to its competitive advantages, including good infrastructure, a highly-trained, educated, and multilingual workforce, and a business-friendly government;

Whereas the Malaysian Constitution guarantees gender equality, and the many accomplishments of Malaysian women evidence Malaysia's commitment to the advancement of women's social, economic, and legal status;

Whereas Malaysia was ruled by the United Kingdom until 1957;

Whereas Malaysia gained independence from the United Kingdom on August 31, 1957; and

Whereas August 31, 2007, is the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence, as well as the United States-Malaysia relationship: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence;

(2) expresses congratulations to Malaysia on reaching this national milestone; and

(3) expresses its support for an ongoing strong bilateral relationship between the United States and Malaysia and the continued cooperation of the two countries in such important areas as counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, and trade.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and thank the leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support in bringing this legislation before the floor.

Let me also express my support and commendation to my good friend and senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for introducing this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Malaysia today is a far cry from its humble beginnings a half-century ago. From its start in 1957 as an underdeveloped nation struggling to gain its footing in uncertain terrain of post-colonial Southeast Asia, Malaysia has transformed itself into a confident country that attracts the attention of the world.

Malaysia now boasts a booming economy that is deeply integrated into the world's economic system. Its economy was mature enough to weather the Southeast Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s and rebound to produce strong growth again in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, few sights symbolize Malaysia's progress more aptly than Kuala Lumpur's dramatic modern skyline, dominated by the Petronas Twin Towers, which are currently the second-largest buildings in the world and a constant reminder of Malaysia's bright future.

Significant political transformations have accompanied Malaysia's dramatic economic development. But Malaysia's democracy remains incomplete, as evidenced by the fact that the same political party has held power for over 50 years.

The Internal Security Act is used to lock up people without charge, and defamation laws are used to silence critics of the government.

While Malaysia's democratic transition is not fully complete, it remains a democracy nonetheless, and a strong ally of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the United States today counts Malaysia as one of its most important partners in Southeast Asia. Malaysia works closely with the United States to combat terrorism and narcotics trafficking. We look forward to continuing to work with the people of Malaysia to bring peace, stability, and prosperity to this important region of the world.

With this resolution, we support Malaysia's golden anniversary, its 50th year of independence. It is a proud achievement for an important friend and ally of the United States, and I ask and urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 518, recognizing the 50th anniversary of Malaysian independence.

In this regard, I would like to recognize Representative MEEKS and Mr. SESSIONS for their longstanding interest in Malaysia and in expanding economic, political, and people-to-people ties with that important Southeast Asian country.

This year, Malaysia celebrates the 50th anniversary of its independence from Britain as well as the 50th anniversary of U.S.-Malaysia diplomatic relations. Malaysia has earned the reputation of being a moderate majority-Muslim democratic state and has integrated itself into the world economy while maintaining a multi-faith, multi-ethnic society. While recognizing Malaysia's achievements and regional, as well as global, influence, however, it is important to note several areas of concern both for Malaysia's people and the international community.

Malaysia has an established record of tolerance and respect among its varied religious and ethnic populations. However, recent reports raise troubling concerns as to whether the rights of religious and racial minorities are being threatened. For example, the May 30, 2007, decision by the Malaysian Federal Court in the apostasy case of Lina Joy has troubling implications for the question as to whether shari'a law takes precedence over civil law in matters of religious conversion. There are indications that this and other court rulings are eroding the constitutional rights of minorities, which in turn is aggravating a growing socio-religious divide in the country.

The resolution we are considering references the Prime Minister's condemnation of those seeking to incite racial and religious hatred. While commendable, the fact that the Prime Minister perceived it necessary to make this commendation only reinforces the growing perception that the government needs to be more vigilant to ensure that the rights of minorities in Malaysia are respected.

Another area of deep concern to me is in the area of human trafficking. Malaysia has progressively fallen in the tier rankings made by the State Department pursuant to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act until it reached tier 3 in 2007, and that is for the most egregious violators. According to the June 2007 Trafficking in Persons Report, Malaysia is failing to punish acts of trafficking, provide adequate shelters and social services to victims, protect its migrant workers from involuntary servitude, and prosecute traffickers who are arrested and detained under preventive laws. It is particularly disturbing that the Government of Malaysia recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of Indonesia that authorizes Malaysian employers to confiscate and hold the passport of Indonesian domestic employees throughout the term of their employment. Such authority could easily facilitate the involuntary servitude of domestic workers.

I would strongly encourage the Malaysian Government to take the opportunity on this 50th anniversary celebration of the country's independence to seriously address human trafficking so as to protect the rights of all individuals residing or transiting within its borders.

The United States and Malaysia have sometimes had sharp policy differences. Yet despite these occasional disagreements, this resolution points out that the U.S. and Malaysia have continued to work closely together in such important areas as counterterrorism, defense cooperation, counter-narcotics, and trade. Bilateral relations have grown stronger in recent years, and we value their relationship. Nevertheless, we continue to have different perspectives on important issues of concern.

One of these relates to Iran. As my colleagues are aware, the United States remains opposed to foreign investment in Iran's oil and gas sector, including Malaysian investment, as a matter of law and policy. Congress and the executive branch must continue to emphasize our concerns about such investment and related financial ties and to oppose business as usual with Iran. It is critical that the world community, including Malaysia, joins us in persuading Tehran to end its nuclear weapons program.

In addition, U.S. authorities have recently uncovered a number of plots to transship weapons technology and sensitive dual-use goods through Malaysia to Iran. This, together with past evidence of a Malaysian company's involvement in A.Q. Khan's clandestine nuclear proliferation network, point to an urgent need for Malaysia to implement reforms to its export controls. The failure to rein in proliferators not only endangers international security, but could also imperil legitimate trade. Thus, it would be in the country's best interest, as well as that of the international community, for Malaysia to enact a world-class export control system.

Another concern involves relations with the State of Israel. Although Malaysia is not a member of the League of Arab States, it appears to share much of the league's anti-Zionist ideology. Indeed, Kuala Lumpur does not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel.

A 2006 Congressional Research Service report on the then-proposed U.S.-Malaysia FTA pointed out that Kuala Lumpur appeared to be a de facto supporter of the trade embargo against Israel. In point of fact, Malaysia conducts virtually no trade with Israel.

The absence of normal commercial ties with Israel, let alone formal diplomatic relations, presents a stunningly awkward circumstance, one I hope Malaysian leaders would find time to reflect upon and to correct.

In conclusion, while I join this body in welcoming this 50th anniversary of Malaysian independence, I would simply note that U.S.-Malaysian relations could become even more constructive and mutually beneficial if Kuala Lumpur would take action to address these ongoing issues of concern.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Malaysia's 50th anniversary of their independence from the United Kingdom that was recently celebrated on August 31, 2007.

I am proud to serve as a Co-Chair of the Congressional Malaysia Trade, Security, and Economic Cooperation Caucus along with my good friend, the Honorable GREGORY W. MEEKS of New York. This is an important tribute from the House of Representatives to the people of Malaysia, as we honor a landmark day in their history. The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the newly independent Malaysia 50 years ago, and I am proud of how the United States/Malaysian relationship has prospered since their independence.

Malaysia has a population in excess of 25 million, and is a moderate-Muslim democratic nation in a key geo-politically sensitive region of the world. Malaysia is currently our 10th largest trading partner, and I hope that our trade relationship with Malaysia will expand. We have inked a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with Malaysia, and our countries are currently in talks for a free trade agreement. I am hopeful that these talks will produce a free trade agreement accord that Congress will be able to pass. This enhanced economic partnership would be of great benefit to the businesses and citizens of both countries.

Malaysia has been a regional leader in many areas of mutual concern to the United States and Malaysia, they are a leader in counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics in Southeast Asia. Through intelligence sharing, close cooperation in law enforcement, participation in joint exercises and training, and other cooperative endeavors with its neighboring countries and the United States, Malaysia is a leader in many of our shared interests.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our recently departed Ambassador to Malaysia, Ambassador Christopher J. LaFleur, for his service of representing the interests of the United States in Kuala Lumpur. Moreover, I would like to thank the current Charge d'affaires ad interim for the American Embassy in Malaysia, David B. Shear, and the Malaysia Desk Officer at the State Department in Washington, Michael P. Taylor, for their service and hard work. Recently, I had the opportunity to meet our new Ambassador to Malaysia, Ambassador James R. Keith. Ambassador Keith has my full confidence and gratitude; he is a seasoned diplomat of great skill, and I wish him a good start to his duties in representing the United States in Malaysia.

I have also had the pleasure of working with many fine diplomats from Malaysia; I would like to recognize the current Ambassador from Malaysia to the United States, H.E. Datuk Dr. Rajmah Hussain. I would also like to note her immediate predecessor, who I worked with for several years, H.E. Tan Sri Ghazzali B. Sheikh Abdul Khalid. Ambassador Ghazzali was Malaysia's long-tenured representative in Washington, and I am pleased that he is currently engaged in the free trade talks between our two countries. I thank Ambassadors Rajmah and Ghazzali for their services in representing Malaysia in Washington.

I congratulate the people of Malaysia on the occasion of this landmark day in their history, and firmly believe that our bilateral relationship will only continue to grow and prosper.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 518, which recognizes the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence. H. Res. 518 acknowledges the Federation of Malaysia's accomplishments

over the past 50 years. In addition, H. Res. 518 recognizes the importance to the United States' strong bilateral relationship with Malaysia and endorses this relationship to continue to prosper. It is important for the United States to make this demonstration and endorsement not only because of our relationship with Malaysia but also because we share a similar history of gaining independence and implementing democracy. Therefore, we are proudly participating in the celebration of a government that has liberated its people and provides freedom in the name of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, celebrating Malaysia's 50th anniversary is significant because it shows her strength and perseverance towards maintaining freedom. Malaysia shows its determination throughout its history by gaining its independence in 1957, defeating communists soon after gaining independence, surviving through turmoil in 1960s, recession and political repression in the 1980s, and more unrest in the 1990s.

Today, Malaysia is a nation of skyscrapers and microchip plants, fast highways and sprawling cities where the government talks of Malaysia's role in biotech, or conference hosting or Islamic finance. It is almost unrecognizable from the independent Federation of Malaya of 31 August 1957, when its first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al Haj stood tall in a specially built stadium in Kuala Lumpur and raised his right arm as the crowd echoed his three cries of "Merdeka!" which means freedom. At that time 60% of Malaysians were living below the national poverty line according to Dr. Richard Leete, head of the UN Development Program for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Over the past 50 years that proportion has declined remarkably and currently there are less than 5% of people in poverty in Malaysia.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 518 also gives us the opportunity to support key American values and interests. By supporting this bill the United States will essentially be supporting a multi-religious and multiracial democracy. In addition, the United States will be supporting the condemnation of racism, religious hatred, and anti-Semitism. Also, the United States will be supporting Malaysia's condemnation of all forms of terrorism and assistance in the War on Terror. Finally, the United States will be supporting the success of our 10th largest trade partner, who we are currently in talks with about a free trade agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 518 and commending Malaysia on the 50th anniversary of its freedom.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 518, 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.

RECOGNIZING THE REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF SIR NICHOLAS WINTON

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 583) recognizing the remarkable example of Sir Nicholas Winton who organized the rescue of 669 Jewish Czechoslovakian children from Nazi death camps prior to the outbreak of World War II.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 583

Whereas during the Holocaust, in which some 6,000,000 Jews were brutally put to death by the Government of Nazi Germany, a small number of individuals risked their lives and spent fortunes to save the lives of others because they were decent and courageous men and women of principle;

Whereas, in October 1938, the Nazi Government occupied the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia, which resulted in tens of thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing the occupied areas and seeking safety in the areas of as-yet unoccupied Czechoslovakia;

Whereas, in late 1938, a 29-year-old British businessman, Nicholas Winton, was encouraged by a friend at the British Embassy in Prague to forgo a ski vacation in the Alps to visit Prague and see first-hand the freezing refugee camps filled with Jewish families who had fled the Sudetenland;

Whereas, in the face of this enormous suffering, Winton, moved by feelings of deep compassion, undertook a massive effort to help the children of many of these Jewish families escape these horrible circumstances, though at that time neither he nor they knew the full extent of the horrors that awaited them;

Whereas Winton sought to find friendly governments which would grant asylum to these Jewish refugee children, and his efforts were rebuffed by the countries whose help he requested, until the Governments of Sweden and the United Kingdom agreed to accept children from the Czechoslovakian refugee camps;

Whereas Winton and other volunteers gathered names and other information on children whose parents recognized the importance of getting their children beyond the reach of the Nazi Government, and Winton was able to use this information to identify foster homes for these refugee children;

Whereas Winton took the lead in raising funds to pay for the transportation of the children from Prague to Britain and Sweden and to pay an enormous government-imposed fee to cover the costs of future repatriation;

Whereas, on March 14, 1939, the first 20 children left Prague under Winton's auspices, and the very next day the Nazi army overran the remainder of un-occupied Czechoslovakia;

Whereas the heroic effort of Winton and other volunteers to assist these young children flee occupied Czechoslovakia continued for over six months until the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, during which time 669 children were able to leave in a total of eight separate groups;

Whereas the ninth group of some 250 children was scheduled to leave Prague on September 3, 1939, but was halted following the outbreak of hostilities, and none of these 250 children lived to see the end of World War II six years later;

Whereas this group of 669 children, saved through the efforts of Winton and his collaborators, includes doctors, nurses, teachers, musicians, artists, writers, pilots, ministers, scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, and a Member of the British Parliament, and today they and their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren number over 5,000 individuals, and these individuals live in the United States, Canada, Australia, the Czech Republic, Britain, Germany, and other countries;

Whereas Winton's achievement went unrecognized and unacknowledged for more than half a century until his wife, who knew nothing of this life-saving work, came across an old leather briefcase in an attic in which she found lists of the children, letters from their parents and other materials documenting his efforts;

Whereas, of the 15,000 Czechoslovakian Jewish children who fled to refugee camps or who were forced into concentration camps during the Nazi occupation, only a handful survived World War II, and Vera Gissing, one of the children saved by Winton and the author of the script for the film "Nicholas Winton—the Power of Good", which won the Emmy Award in 2002, said that Winton "rescued the greater part of the Jewish children of my generation in Czechoslovakia. Very few of us met our parents again: they perished in concentration camps. Had we not been spirited away, we would have been murdered alongside them."; and

Whereas Winton has been honored with the title of Member of the British Empire (MBE), was awarded the Freedom of the City of Prague, received the Czech Order of T. G. Masaryk, and was given a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for services to humanity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends Sir Nicholas Winton and those British and Czechoslovakian citizens who worked with him, for their remarkable persistence and selfless courage in saving the lives of 669 Czechoslovakian Jewish children in the months before the outbreak of World War II; and

(2) urges men and women everywhere to recognize in Winton's remarkable humanitarian effort the difference that one devoted principled individual can make in changing and improving the lives of others.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I thank the leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman LANTOS and our senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support on this resolution.

Let me also especially congratulate the chief sponsor and author of this important resolution, my good friend and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman KLEIN, as well as the lead Republican cosponsor, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, for recognizing the unsung hero of World War II, Sir Nicholas Winton.

Mr. Speaker, whenever humanity is enshrouded in the darkness of atrocity and violence, there are a few scattered lights of moral decency and personal courage that give hope to all mankind that darkness will not prevail.

□ 1600

Arguably, Mr. Speaker, there has not been a more terrible period of darkness than that of World War II when Nazi Germany systematically murdered more than 6 million Jewish people. Even during that terrible period there were lights in the moral darkness and who kept alive the values of decency, compassion and courage. One such person was a 29-year-old British businessman, Mr. Nicholas Winton.

During his frequent business trips to Germany, Mr. Winton observed firsthand the virulent anti-Semitism that prevailed in that country and manifested itself in arrests, harassment, and physical attacks on Jewish people. In 1935, Germany codified anti-Semitism by enacting the Nuremberg Race Laws.

Mr. Speaker, after the Munich Agreement of 1938 and the subsequent annexation of Germany of the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Winton became concerned that Nazi Germany could not be appeased. Indeed, on November 9 of that year, 1938, anti-Semitic violence exploded across Germany and Austria. Because of the broken glass in the streets, that date is remembered as Kristallnacht.

Soon afterwards, Mr. Winton was encouraged even by a friend at the British Embassy in Prague to forgo a ski vacation in the Alps and instead to visit what was left of Czechoslovakia in order to see the refugee camps filled with freezing Jewish families who had fled the Sudetenland.

Mr. Speaker, he was deeply moved by the suffering he saw and was convinced immediate action had to be taken. Mr. Winton conceived of an idea. Upon his return to Great Britain, he organized volunteers to collect names of children whose parents were desperate to get them beyond the reach of the Nazi Government.

Mr. Winton then identified foster homes for those refugee children in Britain and in Sweden. He raised money to fund their transportation and to pay fees imposed by the government to cover the costs of future repatriation.

Mr. Speaker, on March 14, 1939, the first 20 children of this venture left Prague. The very next day the Nazi Army overran the remainder of unoccupied Czechoslovakia. Mr. Winton and his volunteers continued their dangerous work for another 6 months,

until the full outbreak of World War II on September 1st.

During this time, Mr. Winton and his volunteers saved 669 children. These were children who escaped the Holocaust and who later had their own lives and families, thanks to the efforts of this one man.

Mr. Speaker, tragically, a final group of 250 children scheduled to leave on September 3 was prevented from doing so. None of them lived to see the end of World War II.

It is by coincidence that we even learned about the heroic efforts of now 97-year-old Mr. Nicholas Winton, who never sought any recognition for his actions. Even his wife was unaware of what he had done until she found an old leather briefcase in an attic that contained documents pertaining to the rescue operations.

Mr. Speaker, the world has now begun to pay tribute to the brave acts of this modest hero, a true man, in my opinion. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and made a member of the British Empire. He received the honor of the Freedom of the City of Prague and was made a member of the order named for the father of Czechoslovakia.

It is appropriate, Mr. Speaker, for this House to recognize the courageous efforts of this one man, Sir Nicholas Winton, during one of history's darkest moments.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to take this opportunity to rise in support of House Resolution 583 recognizing the remarkable example of Sir Nicholas Winton, who organized the rescue of 669 Jewish Czechoslovakian children from Nazi death camps prior to the outbreak of World War II.

Sir Nicholas Winton, like many of life's heroes, sought no publicity for his efforts, which ultimately saved those young lives. In fact, for more than 50 years Winton's heroism went unrecognized until his wife, Greta, stumbled across a leather briefcase in their attic in which she found documentation of the children smuggled out of Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia and letters written by their parents.

Though less well known, Sir Nicholas' story has much in common with Oskar Schindler's, which has been celebrated in both print and film.

In 1938, Nicholas, a British subject, traveled to Prague, where he was haunted by the impression of refugee camps which were newly constructed there. This experience motivated him to tirelessly lobby the British Government in attempts to secure visas for Czechoslovakian Jewish refugee children.

Winton's efforts enabled the safe escape to Britain of almost 700 kids who surely would have perished without his intervention. Sir Nicholas' mission was

even more challenging, as it required that he first find a foster family to accept each child before they would be accepted into the country.

It is staggering to consider today that there are over 5,000 descendants of "Winton children" around the world, including the UK, Canada, Czech Republic and the United States, lives that would have perished without Sir Nicholas' selfless dedication to a remarkable humanitarian mission.

Nearly 100 years old today, Sir Nicholas Winton has been honored with the title Member of the British Empire and with knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II.

I encourage my colleagues to support this and I thank Mr. KLEIN for his authorship of this legislation.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I yield all the time that he needs to the author of this important resolution, my good friend and also a senior member of our committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN).

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen for the presentation and the support of the resolution, House Resolution 583. I would also like to thank Chairman LANTOS, who has a deep and abiding understanding of the circumstances leading up to and what occurred during the Holocaust, and of course Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and my cosponsor, Congressman LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true hero, Mr. Nicholas Winton, who saved more than 600 children from their death during the Holocaust. Nine months before the outbreak of World War II, Nicholas Winton, then only 29 years old, a young man, used his business and personal connections, urgently working from the dining room of a hotel room, and found safety for these hundreds of children.

Nicholas Winton took the lead in raising the necessary funds to assure transportation for these children. As was said already, he found foster homes and arranged for the necessary permits and documents. But let's understand this is not just an administrative function that we would think of today to place children. This was under threat of death of himself, his family and anybody who assisted. He saved these children's lives, since most of their families and contemporaries remained in Czechoslovakia, and they soon perished.

These children grew up to be doctors, nurses, teachers, musicians, artists, writers, pilots, ministers, scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, and even a member of the British Parliament. Today they and their children and grandchildren and great grandchildren number over 5,000 human beings, living in the United States, Canada, Australia, the Czech Republic, Britain, Germany and elsewhere.

Nicholas Winton, as was already indicated, was given a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his services to humanity. Sir Nicholas never sought credit for saving the lives of these children. In fact, his achievement went unrecognized for more than half a century, and until 1988 his family never knew about it.

For 50 years they were called "Winton's children," as the survivors called themselves, and did not know who to even thank or to whom they owed their lives. The story only emerged when his wife came across a satchel in the attic and found lists of children and letters from their parents.

In 1939, as he scrambled to save hundreds of lives, Nicholas Winton wrote in a letter: "There is a difference between passive goodness and active goodness, which is, in my opinion, the giving of one's time and energy in the alleviation of pain and suffering. It entails going out, finding and helping those in suffering and danger and not merely in leading an exemplary life in a purely passive way of doing no wrong."

The life of Sir Nicholas is certainly an example of active goodness. Just as we will never forget the horrors and deaths of the Holocaust, we must also never forget the examples of bravery and heroism that still serve as our role models today.

On a personal note, as with many people in this country, much of my grandparents' family was killed in the Holocaust. I think many of us in this country understand and recognize the importance of a man who stood up as bravely as he did, and there were many others who did the same and risked their lives in doing this.

I thank the members of Congress today. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to honor the life and accomplishments of Sir Nicholas Winton, a hero to many and a model for all.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for his most eloquent statement. Maybe some day these 5,000 children of Mr. Winton might have a reunion somewhere in the United States to express a real sense of appreciation to this gentleman.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, the statement by the late Martin Luther King, Jr., who said that in the end we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends. Here is one gentleman that was not silent about human rights and what he did for some 669 children whose descendants now enjoy the benefits of what he did some 60 years ago.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 583, recognizing the remarkable example of Sir Nicholas Winton, who organized the rescue of 669 Jewish Czechoslovakian children from Nazi death camps prior to the outbreak of World War II. I would like to thank my colleague, Congressman RON KLEIN, for introducing this important legislation, as well as the lead Republican cosponsor, Congressman LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART.

Mr. Speaker, today we recognize one of the great unsung heroes of World War II; a man who stood up against extraordinary evil to defend innocent children. Sir Nicholas Winton is an individual of profound moral decency and personal courage, who, in the midst of the immense darkness of World War II, offered hope that the perpetrators of horrendous atrocities would not prevail.

In 1938, Nicholas Winton, a 29-year-old clerk at the London Stock Exchange, visited Prague and was immediately concerned by the refugee situation. His frequent business trips to Germany had given him first-hand knowledge of the virulent anti-Semitism codified by the 1935 Nuremberg Race laws, manifesting itself in ever-increasing attacks, harassment, and arrest of Jewish people in Germany. The 1938 Munich Agreement, which gave Hitler control over the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia and was hailed by British Prime Minister as a "peace for our time," did not ease Winton's fears, and he came to recognize that Germany could not be appeased.

When Winton visited Prague, he found refugee camps, full of freezing Jewish families who had fled the Sudetenland. In particular, he was alarmed that nothing was being done to help the many innocent children, trapped in the gathering storm of war. Before returning to London, he set up a system of Kindertransport, where the names of children were collected and paired with foster homes in Britain and Sweden. When families could not pay to transport their children beyond the reaches of the Nazis, Winton raised money to fund transportation and other fees.

On March 14, 1939, only a day before the Nazi army occupied all of Czechoslovakia, the first 20 children left Prague. Over the next six months, a total of 669 children were sent via 8 trains to London, where families waited to shelter them. These children were spared the horror of the concentration camps by the courageous efforts of one man. Vera Gissing, one of the many children who, thanks to Winton's work, survived the war, later wrote, "He rescued the greater part of the Jewish children of my generation in Czechoslovakia. Very few of us met our parents again: they perished in concentration camps. Had we not been spirited away, we would have been murdered alongside them."

A 9th train was scheduled to leave on September 3, 1939, with 250 children onboard. Tragically, Great Britain entered the war that very day, and the train was prevented from leaving Prague, and it later disappeared. None of the children on board was ever heard from again, and none survived the war. In all, 15,000 Czech children were killed in the Holocaust.

Nicholas Winton is a reluctant hero, who never bragged about his courageous work. He never sought recognition for his actions, and we only learned about his efforts by coincidence. His good deeds did not end with the war's conclusion, and he was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire title in 1983 for his charitable work with the elderly. He was further recognized by the City of Prague and the nation of Czechoslovakia.

Sir Nicholas Winton epitomizes the greatness of the human spirit. He stood against the forces of darkness and helped the powerless during one of history's blackest hours, and then never sought recognition for his extraordinary accomplishments. Six hundred and

sixty-nine children were saved from suffering the horrific fate that befell so many of their friends and family members due to his daring, creativity, and compassion. I am grateful for the opportunity to pay tribute to this extraordinary man, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICHAUD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 583.

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.

COMMENDING GERMANY IN PREVENTING A LARGE-SCALE TERRORIST ATTACK

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 639) commending the actions of the Government of Germany and its cooperation with United States intelligence agencies in preventing a large-scale terrorist attack against locations in Germany, including sites frequented by Americans, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 639

Whereas on September 4, 2007, German police arrested three individuals for planning large-scale terrorist attacks against locations in Germany, including sites frequented by Americans;

Whereas possible targets included Ramstein Air Base, which serves as headquarters for United States Air Forces in Europe and is also a North Atlantic Treaty Organization installation, and Frankfurt Airport, the third largest airport in Europe;

Whereas according to German authorities, the three suspects belonged to a German cell of Islamic Jihad Union, a radical Sunni group based in Central Asia with links to Al Qaeda;

Whereas 300 police and other law enforcement officials were involved in the investigation and 41 homes across Germany were raided in a highly well-planned operation;

Whereas German and United States authorities worked closely together in the investigation;

Whereas United States intelligence agencies reportedly provided critical information that alerted their German counterparts as to the travels of the suspects between Germany and Pakistan and the suspects' affiliation with the Islamic Jihad Union;

Whereas German authorities acted swiftly and decisively to prevent a horrific attack that could have come within days of the arrests;

Whereas the successful collaborative action by United States and German authorities prevented the possible deaths of many innocent people;

Whereas Germany and the United States have been close allies in the fight against terrorism;

Whereas the law enforcement, intelligence, diplomatic, and military organizations in

Germany and the United States continue to work together to combat the terrorist threat and prevent future attacks;

Whereas acts of terror have profoundly affected citizens of many different countries across the globe; and

Whereas victory in the fight against terrorism is critical to preserve the liberty and ensure the safety of all people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the efforts of German law enforcement authorities in preventing a large-scale terrorist attack on numerous targets in Germany, including sites frequented by Americans;

(2) recognizes the role of United States intelligence agencies in providing critical information to German authorities in their investigation and apprehension of the suspected terrorists and notes the continuing importance of such United States intelligence efforts with Germany;

(3) commends the intelligence community of Germany for its outstanding work in identifying the individuals suspected of seeking to carry out this terrorist plot;

(4) condemns those individuals who would use acts of violence against innocent civilians to spread a message of hate and intolerance;

(5) urges the allies of the United States to remain steadfast in their efforts to defeat international terrorism; and

(6) expresses its readiness to provide any necessary assistance to the Government of Germany in its counterterrorism efforts and to bring to justice those individuals involved in this terrorist plot.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this proposed resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the leadership of our Foreign Affairs Committee, the distinguished gentleman, the chairman of our committee, Mr. LANTOS, and our senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, for their leadership and their support of this bill.

I also want to congratulate my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), for introducing this important resolution that highlights ongoing efforts to keep our country and allies safe.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her help in bringing this resolution to the floor so promptly.

On September 4th, German police arrested three individuals who were sus-

pected of planning a large-scale terrorist attack against several locations in Germany. These included sites frequented by Americans, such as Ramstein Air Force Base and Frankfurt Airport. Had these plotters successfully carried out their planned assault on such populous facilities, the levels of death and destruction would have been too terrible to imagine, let alone American lives that would have been compromised.

Mr. Speaker, thankfully, the world was spared yet another day of horror caused by the heartless acts of terrorists bent on causing large-scale loss and chaos. I strongly commend the Republic of Germany and their intelligence community for its skillful monitoring activities, as well as its swift and decisive action in preventing an appalling act of violence and destruction by terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, I praise the excellent work of our own intelligence community, which, as I understand it, played a pivotal role in foiling their terror plot by providing essential information to the German authorities. This successful collaboration between German and U.S. intelligence communities underscores the continued importance of cooperative measures across the Atlantic to ensure the safety of American lives both here and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, as part of the broader fight against terrorism, there are many nameless individuals whose deeds might not be readily apparent to the public. However, their tireless efforts and personal sacrifice are crucial to preserving the safety of our Nation. I am thinking in particular of our intelligence community as well as members of the United States diplomatic corps, members of our armed services, whom I wish to thank publicly today for their continued efforts to prevent future terrorist attacks.

The discovery of this plot highlights that the threat of terrorism remains real, that it is multifaceted, and that it permeates the neighborhoods of our closest allies. It is, therefore, important that we remain vigilant, yet collective, poised, yet humble, in our efforts to identify and expunge such threats to our national security.

Again, I want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), for his initiative in providing this resolution for Members for its passage. I urge my colleagues to approve this resolution.

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

□ 1615

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Mr. GALLEGLY for offering this resolution. I think it is a very timely and a very important one.

I rise in support of House Resolution 639, which commends the German Government for its cooperation with our American intelligence community in

apprehending several terrorists in Germany who were bent on killing large numbers of Americans and Germans.

Just last week, this House and the American people took time to commemorate and to remember the tragic loss of life of almost 3,000 American lives killed 6 years ago in the cowardly attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Due to the cooperation of the intelligence agencies in the U.S. and Germany, many Americans are alive today who might well have suffered a similar fate in just the past few days who, quite likely, would have been killed or injured in explosions masterminded by extremists who care nothing for innocent civilians that they are intent on destroying.

We are fortunate, Mr. Speaker, to have allies in Europe who are working with us in this important fight against terrorism as well as our own intelligence community that is working around the clock to protect not only Americans but people around the world.

This resolution expresses to both our friends in the Federal Republic of Germany and to the hardworking people of our intelligence agencies the profound thanks and gratitude for saving American lives.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALDOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 639, 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.

AWARDING A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO MICHAEL ELLIS DEBAKEY, M.D.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1154) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1154

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D. was born on September 7, 1908 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Shaker and Raheea DeBakey.

(2) Dr. DeBakey, at the age of 23 and still a medical student, reported a major invention, a roller pump for blood transfusions, which later became a major component of the heart-lung machine used in the first successful open-heart operation.

(3) Even though Dr. DeBakey had already achieved a national reputation as an authority on vascular disease and had a promising

career as a surgeon and teacher, he volunteered for military service during World War II, joining the Surgeon General's staff and rising to the rank of Colonel and Chief of the Surgical Consultants Division.

(4) As a result of this first-hand knowledge of military service, Dr. DeBakey made numerous recommendations for the proper staged management of war wounds, which led to the development of mobile army surgical hospitals or MASH units and earned Dr. DeBakey the Legion of Merit in 1945.

(5) After the war, Dr. DeBakey proposed the systematic medical follow-up of veterans and recommended the creation of specialized medical centers in different areas of the United States to treat wounded military personnel returning from war and from this recommendation evolved the Veterans Affairs Medical Center System and the establishment of the Commission on Veterans Medical Problems of the National Research Council.

(6) In 1948, Dr. DeBakey joined the Baylor University College of Medicine, where he developed the first surgical residency program in the City of Houston, and today, guided by Dr. DeBakey's vision, the College is one of the most respected health science centers in the Nation.

(7) In 1953, Dr. DeBakey performed the first successful procedures to treat patients who suffered aneurysms leading to severe strokes, and he later developed a series of innovative surgical techniques for the treatment of aneurysms enabling thousands of lives to be saved in the years ahead.

(8) In 1964, Dr. DeBakey triggered the most explosive era in modern cardiac surgery, when he performed the first successful coronary bypass, once again paving the way for surgeons world-wide to offer hope to thousands of patients who might otherwise succumb to heart disease.

(9) Two years later, Dr. DeBakey made medical history again, when he was the first to successfully use a partial artificial heart to solve the problems of a patient who could not be weaned from a heart-lung machine following open-heart surgery.

(10) In 1968, Dr. DeBakey supervised the first successful multi-organ transplant, in which a heart, both kidneys, and lung were transplanted from a single donor into 4 separate recipients.

(11) In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Dr. DeBakey to the position of Chairman of the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke, leading to the creation of Regional Medical Programs established "to encourage and assist in the establishment of regional cooperative arrangements among medical schools, research institutions, and hospitals, for research and training."

(12) In the mid-1960's, Dr. DeBakey pioneered the field of telemedicine with the first demonstration of open-heart surgery to be transmitted overseas by satellite.

(13) In 1969, Dr. DeBakey was elected the first President of Baylor College of Medicine.

(14) In 1969, President Lyndon B. Johnson bestowed on Dr. DeBakey the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction, and in 1985, President Ronald Reagan conferred on him the National Medal of Science.

(15) Working with NASA engineers, he refined existing technology to create the DeBakey Ventricular Assist Device, one-tenth the size of current versions, which may eliminate the need for heart transplantation in some patients.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the

presentation, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design, to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D., in recognition of his many outstanding contributions to the Nation.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

SEC. 4. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

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

SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant to this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 3 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN 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 this bill, H.R. 1154.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be the original sponsor of this bill. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it conspicuously clear that to award this Congressional Gold Medal to the Honorable Michael DeBakey, many other persons are to be thanked.

I would like to start by thanking the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, my chairman, Chairman BARNEY FRANK, for helping us to expeditiously get this bill out of committee. I would also like to thank the majority leader, STENY HOYER, for the outstanding work that he has done to get this bill to the floor; my colleagues, Congressman MICHAEL BURGESS and the Congressman who is with

me right now, Congressman BURGESS is en route, Congressman JOHN CULBERSON. They have both worked with me, Mr. Speaker, to help us acquire the necessary votes, 290, and I assure you we have acquired more than 300 votes, to get this bill to the floor. The Texas delegation has worked with us and deserves an expression of appreciation. The 313 cosponsors in the U.S. House, the leadership of the U.S. House of Representatives, and of course we would like to thank Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, and the Members of the Senate for what they have done with this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Gold Medal has many judges. In fact, 535 people act as judges with reference to the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal. Each Member of the House, 435, and each Senator has a vote. Each one judges the merits of a candidate for a Congressional Gold Medal.

I want you and all others to know, Mr. Speaker, and I understand this and I guess I want people to understand that I understand, that it is not easy to get 290 Members of the House and 67 Members of the Senate to agree. However, with Dr. Michael DeBakey, I found that it was a labor of love, and I found all of the Members that we approached to be most receptive to having this medal be accorded the Honorable Dr. Michael DeBakey.

Let me at this time explain what a Congressional Gold Medal is. It is the Nation's highest and most distinguished civilian award. It was originally awarded to military leaders and later became a civilian medal. It is the congressional equivalent of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Each medal is unique, and it will be coined by the United States Mint and designed by the United States Mint. There will be duplicates made in bronze, and they will be available for public consumption.

The Congressional Gold Medal has been awarded approximately 134 times to approximately 300 individuals. Some noted recipients include the first President of our Nation, George Washington; General Andrew Jackson; the Wright Brothers; Thomas Edison; Sam Rayburn, a former Speaker of this august body; sir Winston Churchill; Robert Kennedy; Lady Bird Johnson; Mother Teresa; Nelson Mandela; Rosa Parks; Pope John Paul II; the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King; and Coretta Scott King. And the last recipients were the Tuskegee Airmen.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank God for Dr. Michael DeBakey. He is truly one who epitomizes the American Dream. Born the oldest of five children, his parents were of Lebanese descent. He was born in my home State, New Orleans, Louisiana. And, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that he had his residency at Charity Hospital, the hospital where I was delivered, and I am currently researching to find out if it is entirely possible that I might be a person who was delivered by the Honorable Michael DeBakey.

He received his degree from Tulane Medical School. He was on the faculty of Baylor University from 1948 to 1993. He chaired the department of surgery at Baylor. He was the president of Baylor College and also a chancellor.

Mr. Speaker, the Honorable Michael DeBakey has earned the right to receive a Congressional Gold Medal. He served his country during World War II, helped to develop the mobile army surgical hospital units known as the MASH units. We probably would not have a MASH TV series if not but for the Honorable Michael DeBakey.

He helped to develop and establish the VA hospitals. He helped to establish the current Veterans Affairs medical system. He established the field of surgery in the area of strokes. He led the movement to establish the National Library of Medicine. He performed the historic multiple transplantation procedure. He was a leader in the development of the artificial heart. He operated on more than 60,000 patients in Houston alone. He has published more than 1,600 articles. He has been awarded 57 honorary degrees. He helped to establish health care systems around the world, in Jordan, Morocco, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Spain, to name a few.

Dr. DeBakey is a great citizen not only of the United States of America but also of the world. He has been a humanitarian par excellence, and he has helped both rich and poor alike.

Mr. Speaker, if we did not have a Congressional Gold Medal, we would have to create one to honor the Honorable Dr. Michael DeBakey. On his 99th birthday, I am proud to say, we called him to let him know that we had reached the 290 signatures necessary in the House. And his comments were, "I am so grateful that I am a citizen of the United States."

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

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

It is my singular honor to stand before the House today to support H.R. 1154, a bill that Mr. GREEN is the lead author of, which he has coauthored with Mr. BURGESS and I and other members of the Texas delegation, which Senator HUTCHISON has carried in the Senate, to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Michael DeBakey.

AL GREEN and I are proud to represent the Texas Medical Center in Houston, the largest assembly of medical institutions and hospitals, learning facilities in the world, and certainly the greatest collection of medical talent, human talent in the entire world. And Dr. Michael DeBakey has had an impact on medicine based out of the Texas Medical Center that just simply cannot be overstated. And my friend AL GREEN has spoken so eloquently and so well of many of Dr. DeBakey's accomplishments. I could not agree more that if the Congres-

sional Gold Medal did not exist, it certainly should be created just for Dr. Michael DeBakey.

He is an educator, surgeon, innovator. As Mr. GREEN has said, Dr. DeBakey comes from Louisiana, the oldest of five children. He was born in 1908. And it is important for people listening to know that this great good man is 99 years old, in great good health, is still active, and is, I hope, watching this afternoon.

He received both his bachelor's, his master's, and his medical degrees all from Tulane University in New Orleans and completed his internship at the Charity Hospital and his residency at the University of Strasbourg, France and Heidelberg, Germany.

At the age of 23, and still a medical student, he reported a major invention, the roller pump for blood transfusions, which later became a major component of the heart-lung machine used in the first successful open heart operation. And while Dr. DeBakey was still a resident in surgery, he invented a blood transfusion needle, suture scissors, and a colostomy clamp while still a student. He is also credited with inventing and perfecting countless other medical devices, techniques, and procedures that have saved untold number of lives and led to healthy hearts for millions of people throughout the world. The man is truly a pioneer in ways that I think most people may or may not know. He is a modest good man, and I just can't tell you how proud I am to be here and to be a part of this tonight.

When he returned to the United States in 1937, after completing his European studies, Dr. DeBakey accepted a position on the faculty of Tulane University's School of Medicine Department of Surgery. And although he had already achieved a national reputation as an authority on vascular disease and had a promising career as a surgeon and teacher, Dr. DeBakey volunteered for medical service during World War II, joined the Surgeon General's staff, and rose to the rank of colonel and chief of the surgical consultant's division.

His firsthand knowledge led Dr. DeBakey to make a number of recommendations to properly stage the management of war wounds, which led to the development of the MASH units that we are all so familiar with because of the television show, and today the survival rate of soldiers in the field is remarkable. If they are injured or wounded in combat and defense of this Nation, the surgical attention they get from those mobile army surgical hospitals is a direct result of Dr. DeBakey's work in World War II. And for this contribution, Dr. DeBakey earned the Legion of Merit in 1945.

After World War II, Dr. DeBakey recommended the creation of specialized medical centers in different parts of the United States to treat wounded military personnel returning from the war; and from this recommendation, Dr. DeBakey's ideas led to the creation

of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center System. He also proposed a systematic follow-up of veterans, as he had done so with soldiers in the field, which led to the establishment of the Commission on Veterans Medical Problems of the National Research Council and an extensive VA Medical Center Research program. And in 2003, in honor of Dr. DeBakey's accomplishments, with the help of my friend AL GREEN and SHEILA JACKSON-LEE and other members of the Houston delegation, the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Houston, Texas, was renamed the Michael DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

In 1948, Dr. DeBakey moved to Houston and started at the Methodist Hospital in Baylor College of Medicine in the Texas Medical Center. Shortly after he arrived, he secured commitments to improve the institutions and quickly developed the first surgical residency program in the city of Houston. Guided by his vision, Baylor College of Medicine is today one of the most respected health science centers in the Nation and in the world.

In 1969, as Al mentioned, Dr. DeBakey was elected the first president of the Baylor College of Medicine, and today he is chancellor emeritus of the Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. DeBakey has been crucial to the growth of the Methodist Hospital in the Texas Medical Center.

At Methodist, Dr. DeBakey performed many of his groundbreaking surgeries, including the first removal of a carotid artery blockage in 1950.

□ 1630

Today Dr. DeBakey is a senior attending surgeon at the Methodist Hospital.

Convinced that there must be a way to improve existing methods of vascular surgery, Dr. DeBakey went out on his own and purchased fabric from a Houston area fabric store, using a craft he had learned from his mother as a child. Dr. DeBakey created the first Dacron prosthetic artery on his wife's sewing machine. Intensive studies and testing followed, and with the collaboration of a research associate from the Philadelphia College of Textiles and Sciences, a knitting machine was developed that produced the first seamless artificial artery in history called Dacron tubes.

In 1953, Dr. DeBakey performed the first successful procedures to treat patients who suffered aneurysms leading to severe strokes. He later developed a series of innovative surgical techniques for the treatment of aneurysms enabling thousands of lives to be saved in the years ahead.

During Dr. DeBakey's tenure as a member of the Task Force on Medical Services of the Hoover Commission, he initiated the concept and led the movement to establish a national facility for valuable and historical medical papers and artifacts. His efforts led to the dedication on June 12, 1959, of the Na-

tional Library of Medicine housed at the National Institutes of Health. Today the National Library of Medicine is the world's largest and most prestigious repository of medical archives.

In 1964, President Johnson appointed Dr. DeBakey to the position of chairman of the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke, which led to the creation of the Regional Medical Programs established "to encourage and assist in the establishment of regional cooperative arrangements among medical schools, research institutions and hospitals for research and training."

In 1964, Dr. DeBakey also triggered the most explosive era in modern cardiac surgery when he performed the first successful coronary bypass in history. That's an extraordinary achievement, and everyone should focus on that. Dr. DeBakey was, once again, paving the way for surgeons worldwide to offer hope to thousands of patients who might otherwise succumb to heart disease.

Two years later, Dr. DeBakey made medical history again when he was the first to use, successfully, a partial artificial heart to solve the problems of a patient who could not be weaned from a heart-lung machine following open heart surgery.

And in the mid-1960s, Dr. DeBakey pioneered the field of telemedicine with the first demonstration of open heart surgery to be transmitted overseas by satellite, a technique that is today used extensively in Iraq. When soldiers in the field are injured and brought into the hospital and they need medical care, physicians in the Texas Medical Center, which AL GREEN and I are so proud to represent, are able to view those procedures live via satellite, of the x-rays, of the CAT scans and the procedure itself being done in Iraq. A doctor sitting in Houston, Texas is able to help observe and offer advice on that procedure to help save those soldiers' lives. And that technique was first pioneered by Dr. DeBakey back in the mid-1960s.

In 1968, Dr. DeBakey supervised the first successful multi-organ transplant where a heart, both kidneys and a lung were transplanted from a single donor to four separate recipients. In 1968.

In 1969, President Johnson bestowed on Dr. DeBakey the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction.

Dr. DeBakey has always focused on education and bringing young people into the field of medicine and strengthening and expanding the reach of our medical schools. And in 1962, he supported an educational outreach program that led to the creation of Houston High School for Health Professions, now recognized as one of the best high schools of its kind in the United States. And in 1996, Houston's High School for Health Professions was renamed the Michael E. DeBakey High School for Health Professions in honor of this great, good man.

And he was recognized by President Reagan in 1985 with the National Medal of Science.

In 1999, Time Magazine chose Dr. DeBakey as one of the 100 Great Americans of the 20th Century and honored him for his pioneering work and innovation in cardiovascular surgery and the artificial heart.

Dr. DeBakey continues his pioneering research today. Working with NASA engineers, he refined existing technology to create the DeBakey ventricular assist device for patients with dying hearts. This device is one tenth the size of current versions and restores the cardiac output of a heart to normal function in order to relieve the patient's failing heart and could eventually eliminate the need for heart transplant in some patients. And, in fact, the technology that Dr. DeBakey was able to develop for the ventricular assist device is very similar to and helped NASA in developing the fuel pumps for the space shuttle, which to this day the space shuttle fuel pumps on those engines are able to move more fuel, more fluid more rapidly than any other pump ever invented. And Dr. DeBakey's work was a key part of that.

I have a particular soft part in my heart. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I do my best to avoid spending money. The starting answer is no, unless it's medical or scientific research. And when it comes to medical or scientific research, that's our Nation's insurance policy and the investment that we make. And the research that's done at the Texas Medical Center, other medical institutions around the country and in scientific research and in the space program is truly a part of our national insurance policy. And the research work that Dr. DeBakey has done with NASA has truly led to saving lives and improved technological spin-offs in many other areas as well.

In 1999, Dr. DeBakey was one of eight individuals chosen to commemorate the United Nations' International Day for Tolerance and received the prestigious U.N. Lifetime Achievement Award.

In 2000, Dr. DeBakey was recognized by the Library of Congress, which designated him a Living Legend.

Throughout his many years of public service, Dr. DeBakey has been awarded over 50 honorary degrees from colleges, universities and medical schools worldwide, as well as numerous awards from educational institutions, professional and civic organizations and governments worldwide.

I want to again, Mr. Speaker, say thank you to my colleagues, Representative AL GREEN and Representative MICHAEL BURGESS, for bringing this bill to the House floor, and a special thank you to Chairman BARNEY FRANK for expediting its approval through the Financial Services Committee.

I could not agree more with my friend, AL GREEN. There is no better

way to express the merit of this good man, that if the Congressional Gold Medal did not exist, it truly would need to be invented for Dr. DeBakey. With his extraordinary achievements, his contributions to mankind, to improving the lives and health of not only the people of the United States but of the world, I am proud to join my friend, AL GREEN, in urging the House to support and pass H.R. 1154 to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Michael Ellis DeBakey.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we have been joined by the other lead author of this bill, my colleague and good friend from Dallas, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. And I would like, if I could, at this time to yield time to Dr. BURGESS.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I want to come to the floor of the House today to talk and honor the legacy that is that of Dr. Michael DeBakey, the father of cardiovascular surgery, and to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of H.R. 1154, the bill to designate a Congressional Gold Medal for the famed Houston heart surgeon.

This bill was introduced by my good friend from Texas, Representative AL GREEN. And Mr. Speaker, we've heard in great detail the number of accomplishments of this singular individual. But, Mr. Speaker, I felt it was incumbent upon me, as one of the very few physicians in the House of Representatives, to come to the floor and talk just a little bit about how Dr. DeBakey forever changed the face of the practice of medicine in this country.

As a fellow physician, Dr. DeBakey's work and medical advancements are indeed legendary. His dedication to healing those around him came not only from his talent as a physician, but his ongoing commitment to medical education, the larger medical community, and indeed, the entire profession, the practice of medicine.

His motto, as always, was "Strive for nothing less than excellence." This motto should be adopted by every one of us in this House and indeed across the country.

His education and his entrepreneurial spirit made him worthy of the Nation's highest expression of appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.

Dr. DeBakey received his bachelor's and M.D. degree from Tulane University down in New Orleans. While in medical school, Dr. DeBakey invented what became known as the roller pump, later to become a major component in the heart-lung machine used in open heart surgery. Think of that, Mr. Speaker. He was in medical school. He was not yet an M.D. and he devised a revolutionary concept for the engineering of a pump that dealt with a roller mechanism, as opposed to the piston mechanism that resulted in the destruction of red blood cells by the very mechanism that was intended to pump those red blood cells. He had an unusual knack for looking at things in a new light and developing new ideas.

He completed his internship at Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Charity Hospital. Think of that, Mr. Speaker. One of the venerable institutions of medical education in this country; an institution that was unfortunately lost to us just two short years ago to the ravages of Hurricane Katrina. Charity Hospital has turned out a number of medical icons of my generation and the generation before, now lost to us forever.

But it was Dr. DeBakey at his residency in surgery or doing his internship at Charity Hospital to then go on to his residency in surgery at the University of Strasbourg, France and the University of Heidelberg in Germany.

He volunteered for service in World War II and was subsequently named director of the surgical consultants division of the United States Surgeon General's Office. His work during that war led that office to the development of the mobile army surgical hospital, which we now know as a MASH unit. These units were the forerunners of our forward surgical combat teams that have saved so many lives in the present conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Previous conflicts in Korea and Vietnam certainly benefited from the mobile army surgical hospitals, but those forward surgical teams, to be able to deliver the type of care in the battlefield that those critically injured patients need, many of us have traveled to Iraq and seen those hospitals at Ballad and Imbue Sinai in Baghdad, the Baghdad ER. And it's the principles put forward by Dr. DeBakey that are at work at this hour in those centers where our men and women are fighting today.

He helped establish the specialized medical and surgical center system for treating military personnel returning home from war, subsequently known as the Veterans Administration medical center system.

But it was at Methodist Hospital in Houston in the Texas Medical Center represented so capably by my friends from Texas Mr. CULBERSON and Mr. GREEN where Dr. DeBakey performed many of his groundbreaking surgeries, including the first removal of a carotid artery blockage. Mr. Speaker, the year was 1950. That's the year I was born. The first coronary artery bypass graft in 1964, the first use of a ventricular assist device to pump blood and to support a failing heart in 1966, and then some of the first heart transplants performed in this country in 1968 and '69.

He developed a self-contained miniaturized left ventricular assist device pump, again, to assist the diseased left ventricle and allow it an opportunity to either heal, get the patient to surgery, or perhaps provide stabilization leading up to a transplant. This is something that is in use today, and indeed I saw it used on one of my family members a number of years ago.

The techniques used to miniaturize the device's inner workings were developed with engineers working with engineers right next door at the nearby NASA program.

He served as an advisor to nearly every United States President for the last 50 years. He traveled, in 1966 very famously to Russia to consult on the surgery for Russian President Boris Yeltsin. And knowing Dr. DeBakey, I have to suspect he did a good deal more than consult on that surgery.

During his professional surgical career, he performed more than 60,000 cardiovascular procedures, trained thousands of surgeons who practice around the world. His name is affixed to a number of organizations, centers for learning, and projects devoted to medical education and health education for the general public.

But think of this, Mr. Speaker. Dr. DeBakey also underwent an operation that was named for him. Reading in the New York Times on the way up here to Washington last December, I read a story about how Dr. DeBakey had undergone the surgery that he himself had described many years before. In fact, Dr. DeBakey admitted at the time, although he knew he was quite ill, he never called his own doctor and he never called 911.

Now, I'm quoting here. He said, "if it becomes intense enough, you're perfectly willing to accept cardiac arrest as a possible way of getting rid of the pain." That's what he told the New York Times. You just have to marvel at the pragmatism of that individual.

As previously noted by the other two speakers, he did help establish the National Library of Medicine, which is now the world's largest and most prestigious repository for medical archives. Indeed, I will probably use the medline in the National Library of Medicine this evening as I prepare for hearings on the Energy and Commerce Committee tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, as we talk in Congress about the need for improving the practice of medicine, Dr. DeBakey was on the forefront of that, while most of us in this body hadn't even started school yet. In fact, many in this body were not even born yet.

These accomplishments have been honored before. In 1969, he received the highest honor a United States citizen can receive, the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction. In 1976, his students founded the Michael E. DeBakey International Surgical Society.

His contributions to medicine and his breakthrough surgeries and innovative devices have completely transformed our view of the human body and of our longevity and, indeed, of the planet.

□ 1645

He has been designated a living legend by the Library of Congress, and today we take another opportunity to honor a full and important life by conferring on Dr. DeBakey the Congressional Gold Medal.

I want to thank my colleagues who joined me in cosponsoring H.R. 1154, introduced by Congressman GREEN and cosponsored by Congressman CULBERSON.

Mr. Speaker, imagine a simple country doctor from Louisville, Texas. I got to sit on the phone last Friday with AL GREEN and sing Happy Birthday to Dr. DeBakey on his 99th birthday. What an honor for me, what an honor for America to be able to afford this individual the rightful accolades that he so richly deserves.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to just make a few closing comments, if I may.

Mr. Speaker, as was indicated by Dr. BURGESS, who has worked tirelessly, I might add, to help us get the necessary signatures to bring this bill to the floor, as was indicated, Dr. DeBakey is a living legend. But he is really more than that. He is a person who is loved by many people. The people over at Baylor College of Medicine, the staff, they have worked with us to help us get this piece of legislation through the Congress.

I am honored to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that Mrs. DeBakey is a real asset as well, and we don't want to overlook her.

He is a gentle spirit, a person who is warm, a person who exudes a sense of confidence that is almost infectious. He is a person who is not only a great citizen of the United States, a great humanitarian, but a person who will be remembered throughout history for all that he has done to help humankind.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with a poem, the author whose name is not known to me, but it is most appropriate for Dr. DeBakey:

“While some measure their lives by days and years

Others by heartthrobs, passions, and tears

The surest measure under God's sun

Is what for others in your lifetime have you done.”

Dr. DeBakey, we thank you for what you have done, and we honor you today for your great place in history that you will acquire.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as a citizen of Houston, the greatest city in the greatest state of the world's greatest country, and as an original co-sponsor of the legislation, I rise proudly to support H.R. 1154, which authorizes the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest expression of national appreciation for exceptional service and for lifetime contributions. The medal has been awarded to individuals from all walks of life. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King, Pope John Paul II, the Navajo Code Talkers, Rosa Parks, Frank Sinatra, and Elie Wiesel are among those who have been honored. Dr. Michael DeBakey is exceptionally well qualified to join the list of individuals who have received this most distinguished of honors. As I would like to discuss briefly, Dr. DeBakey is one of the greatest Americans of the 20th Century.

Dr. Michael Ellis DeBakey, internationally renowned physician, is known foremost for his pioneering work as a cardiovascular surgeon.

Although he is widely regarded as “the father of modern cardiovascular surgery” due to his path-breaking introduction of now commonplace procedures such as arterial bypass operations, artificial hearts, and heart transplants, Dr. DeBakey's contributions in fields diverse as military medicine, veterans affairs, and public health policy would place him in the first rank of all the practitioners of the healing arts who ever lived.

Born in 1908 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Dr. DeBakey received his undergraduate and medical degrees from Tulane University. After receiving surgical training in Europe, Dr. DeBakey returned to the United States and enlisted in the Army at the onset of World War II. His service on the Surgeon General's staff during the war was pivotal; studies conducted by Dr. DeBakey and his colleagues led to the creation of “mobile army surgical hospital” (MASH) units that revolutionized battlefield medicine would go on to save hundreds of thousands of lives in that and subsequent wars. For his wartime contributions to the Nation, Lt. Col. DeBakey was awarded the Legion of Merit Award in 1945.

Following the war, Dr. DeBakey's expertise in the development of specialized medical and surgical center-systems contributed greatly to the design and formation of the Veterans Administration Medical Center System. In addition, Dr. DeBakey played a leading role in persuading the Congress to create and fund the National Library of Medicine, where records of the Nation's medical research activities are stored for the benefit of future researchers.

Dr. DeBakey's arrival in Houston at the Baylor College of Medicine heralded the development of Baylor and Houston's Texas Medical Center into world-renowned centers of medical excellence. As Baylor's Chairman of Surgery and later President, Dr. DeBakey spearheaded efforts to associate Baylor with the TMC's network of hospitals, secured Federal funding for research, and recruited numerous highly-acclaimed faculty and researchers to Baylor. During that time, Dr. DeBakey was also an active and innovative clinician: introducing the Dacron artificial arteries in 1953, the first successful coronary bypass in the early 1960s, and the first successful multi-organ transplant in 1968.

Dr. DeBakey's wisdom has been sought by virtually every U.S. president since Harry S. Truman. He served on presidential commissions during both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and thus provided essential support in the passage of the landmark 1965 Medicare legislation. Dr. DeBakey was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction in 1969 and the National Medal of Science by President Ronald Reagan in 1987. He currently serves as Chancellor Emeritus of the Baylor College of Medicine and continues to see patients, pursue his research, serve on national advisory committees, and consult on projects to help develop health care systems in the Middle and Far East.

It is for these reasons and more, Madam Speaker, that I led the fight throughout the 107th and 108th Congress to pass legislation naming the Houston Veterans Hospital in my Congressional district after this great American. This effort finally came to fruition in the 108th Congress when the President signed into law Pub. L. 108–170.

The awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to Dr. Michael Ellis DeBakey is an ap-

propriate act of recognition from a grateful nation to a person who has devoted his life to improving life in America and around the world. I strongly support H.R. 1154 and urge my colleagues to join me in voting to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D., one of Houston's greatest sons and America's greatest citizens.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1154, a resolution to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D.

Dr. DeBakey has been a dedicated public servant, especially to veterans.

The developments in organ transplant medicine developed by him have enabled millions of people to lead happy and productive lives.

Early in life, he volunteered for military service during World War II, joining the Surgeon General's staff and rising to the rank of Colonel and Chief of the Surgical Consultants Division. His recommendations led to advances in mobility military medicine and earned him the Legion of Merit in 1945.

His work contributed to the ultimate development of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center System and the establishment of the Commission on Veterans Medical Problems of the National Research Council.

Mr. Speaker, I served as Chief Psychiatric Nurse at the V.A. Hospital in Dallas and have 15 years of experience in hands-on patient care.

Medical follow-up after active service is extremely important for our veterans.

Dr. DeBakey's intelligence, dedication and other talents were directed early in his career to assist men and women serving in our military.

For decades, his innovations in cardiovascular medicine revolutionized the field and have forever changed the way surgery is conducted.

Many millions who will never know him have Dr. DeBakey to thank for pioneering surgical techniques that have saved their lives.

Mr. Speaker, as a Texan, I have great pride for our own Dr. Michael DeBakey. It is fitting for the U.S. House of Representatives to honor him in this way.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation to award Dr. Michael E. DeBakey with the Congressional Gold Medal. I would also like to thank my friend and neighbor, AL GREEN, as well as my fellow Texan, Dr. BURGESS, for introducing this bill to honor and celebrate the life and achievements of Dr. Michael DeBakey.

Over the course of his long life, Dr. DeBakey has been a tremendous asset to his long-time home of Houston and has made a considerable contribution to the advancement of medicine. His accomplishments are numerous, both in traditional medicine and military medicine. Dr. DeBakey volunteered for enlistment in World War II where he helped to develop mobile army surgical hospitals. His commitment to military medicine continued with his work to establish both the Veterans Affairs Medical Center System and the establishment of the Commission on Veterans Medical Problems of the National Research Council. In recognition of his service to the U.S. Armed Forces and our country's wounded soldiers and veterans, the VA Medical Center in Houston is formally known as the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Dr. DeBakey is a medical pioneer in the area of cardiac surgery, which is his expertise. His career is highlighted by a number of "firsts." While still a student, he invented a roller pump for blood transfusions. He performed the first successful coronary bypass; he was the first to successfully use a partial artificial heart; he supervised the first successful multi-organ transplant and then led the way for telemedicine with the first demonstration of open-heart surgery broadcasted overseas by satellite.

Mr. Speaker, this list represents only a snapshot of Dr. DeBakey's service. He also was the first president of Baylor College of Medicine where he developed the fellowship and residency programs at his namesake Department of Surgery. Today, Baylor is one of the jewels of the Texas Medical Center, in large part due to Dr. DeBakey's leadership, and has been the site of countless medical miracles for patients from Texas and around the world. A true testament to Dr. DeBakey's impact is the admiration he has earned from the Houston community, more than 60,000 members of which count Dr. DeBakey as their physician.

Internationally, Dr. DeBakey has been recognized and honored by well over a dozen governments and even inducted into the Academy of Athens, a society founded by Plato. His many awards include the U.S. Army Legion of Merit and the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded by President Johnson and the National Medal of Science awarded by President Reagan.

I can think of no physician better suited for the Congressional Gold Medal, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill to bestow that honor upon Dr. DeBakey.

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

Mr. AL GREEN 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 gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1154.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES TO FILE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON H.R. 1852, EXPANDING AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP ACT OF 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Financial Services be authorized to file a supplemental report on the bill, H.R. 1852.

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

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARDOZA) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

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. 3246, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1657, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3527, by the yeas and nays.

The vote on H.R. 3096 will be taken tomorrow.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT 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. 3246, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk reads the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3246, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 152, not voting 55, as follows:

[Roll No. 867]

YEAS—225

Abercrombie	Butterfield	DeLauro
Ackerman	Capito	Dent
Aderholt	Capps	Dingell
Alexander	Capuano	Doggett
Altmire	Cardoza	Donnelly
Andrews	Carnahan	Doyle
Arcuri	Castor	Edwards
Baca	Chandler	Ellison
Baird	Clarke	Ellsworth
Baker	Clay	Emanuel
Baldwin	Cleaver	English (PA)
Barrow	Clyburn	Eshoo
Bean	Coble	Etheridge
Becerra	Cohen	Farr
Berkley	Cooper	Fattah
Berman	Costa	Ferguson
Berry	Courtney	Filmer
Bishop (NY)	Cramer	Fortenberry
Blumenauer	Crowley	Frank (MA)
Boozman	Cuellar	Giffords
Boren	Cummings	Gillibrand
Boucher	Davis (AL)	Gonzalez
Boustany	Davis (CA)	Gordon
Boyd (FL)	Davis (IL)	Graves
Boyda (KS)	Davis, Lincoln	Green, Al
Brady (PA)	DeFazio	Green, Gene
Braley (IA)	DeGette	Grijalva
Buchanan	Delahunt	Hall (NY)

Hare	Matheson	Rush
Harman	Matsui	Ryan (OH)
Hastings (FL)	McCarthy (NY)	Salazar
Hayes	McCollum (MN)	Sanchez, Loretta
Hereth Sandlin	McCrery	Sarbanes
Higgins	McDermott	Schakowsky
Hill	McGovern	Schiff
Hinchey	McHugh	Schwartz
Hinojosa	McIntyre	Scott (GA)
Hirono	McNerney	Scott (VA)
Hodes	McNulty	Serrano
Holden	Meek (FL)	Sestak
Holt	Meeks (NY)	Shea-Porter
Honda	Melancon	Sherman
Hoyer	Michaud	Shuler
Inslee	Miller (NC)	Sires
Israel	Mitchell	Skelton
Jackson (IL)	Mollohan	Smith (NJ)
Jackson-Lee	Moore (KS)	Snyder
(TX)	Moore (WI)	Solis
Johnson (GA)	Murphy (CT)	Souder
Johnson, E. B.	Murphy, Patrick	Spratt
Jones (OH)	Murphy, Tim	Stark
Kagen	Murtha	Stupak
Kanjorski	Nadler	Sutton
Kaptur	Napolitano	Tanner
Kennedy	Obey	Tauscher
Kildee	Olver	Taylor
Kilpatrick	Ortiz	Thompson (CA)
Kind	Pallone	Thompson (MS)
Klein (FL)	Pascrell	Tiberi
Kuhl (NY)	Pastor	Tierney
Lampson	Payne	Udall (NM)
Langevin	Perlmutter	Velázquez
Larson (CT)	Peterson (MN)	Walsh (NY)
Latham	Pomeroy	Walz (MN)
LaTourette	Price (NC)	Wasserman
Lee	Rahall	Schultz
Levin	Rangel	Waters
Lewis (GA)	Renzi	Watson
Lipinski	Reyes	Watt
Loeb sack	Richardson	Weiner
Lofgren, Zoe	Rodriguez	Welch (VT)
Lowey	Rogers (AL)	Wexler
Mahoney (FL)	Ross	Wilson (OH)
Maloney (NY)	Rothman	Woolsey
Markey	Roybal-Allard	Wu
Marshall	Ruppersberger	

NAYS—152

Akin	Fox	Miller (MI)
Bachmann	Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary
Barrett (SC)	Frelinghuysen	Moran (KS)
Bartlett (MD)	Gallegly	Musgrave
Barton (TX)	Garrett (NJ)	Myrick
Bigert	Gilchrest	Neugebauer
Bilbray	Gingrey	Nunes
Billakis	Gohmert	Pearce
Bishop (UT)	Goode	Pence
Blackburn	Goodlatte	Petri
Blunt	Granger	Pitts
Boehner	Hall (TX)	Platts
Bonner	Hastert	Porter
Bono	Hastings (WA)	Price (GA)
Brady (TX)	Heller	Putnam
Broun (GA)	Herger	Radanovich
Brown (SC)	Hobson	Regula
Brown-Waite,	Hoekstra	Rehberg
Ginny	Hulshof	Reichert
Burgess	Inglis (SC)	Reynolds
Burton (IN)	Issa	Rogers (KY)
Calvert	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (MI)
Camp (MI)	Jones (NC)	Rohrabacher
Campbell (CA)	Jordan	Ros-Lehtinen
Cantor	Keller	Roskam
Carter	King (IA)	Royce
Castle	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Chabot	Kingston	Sali
Cole (OK)	Kirk	Saxton
Conaway	Kline (MN)	Schmidt
Crenshaw	LaHood	Sensenbrenner
Culberson	Lamborn	Sessions
Davis (KY)	Lewis (CA)	Shadegg
Davis, David	Lewis (KY)	Shimkus
Davis, Tom	Linder	Shuster
Deal (GA)	LoBiondo	Simpson
Diaz-Balart, L.	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lungren, Daniel	Smith (TX)
Doolittle	E.	Stearns
Drake	Mack	Sullivan
Dreier	Manzullo	Thornberry
Duncan	McCarthy (CA)	Tiahrt
Emerson	McCaul (TX)	Turner
Everett	McCotter	Upton
Fallin	McHenry	Walberg
Feeney	McMorris	Walden (OR)
Flake	Rodgers	Wamp
Forbes	Mica	Weldon (FL)
Fossella	Miller (FL)	Weller

Westmoreland Wilson (NM) Young (AK)
Whitfield Wilson (SC) Young (FL)
Wicker Wolf

NOT VOTING—55

Allen Hooley Poe
Bachus Hunter Pryce (OH)
Bishop (GA) Jefferson Ramstad
Boswell Jindal Sánchez, Linda
Brown, Corrine Johnson (IL) T.
Buyer Knollenberg Shays
Cannon Kucinich Slaughter
Carney Lantos Smith (WA)
Carson Larsen (WA) Space
Conyers Lynch Tancred
Costello Marchant Terry
Cubin McKeon Towns
Davis, Jo Ann Miller, George Udall (CO)
Dicks Moran (VA) Van Hollen
Ehlers Neal (MA) Visclosky
Engel Oberstar Waxman
Gerlach Paul Wynn
Gutierrez Peterson (PA) Yarmuth
Hensarling Pickering

□ 1857

Messrs. GOODLATTE, WALDEN of Oregon, AKIN, and EVERETT changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. ALEXANDER, COBLE, BUCHANAN, and Ms. CLARKE changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

ESTABLISHING A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1657, 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 Indiana (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1657.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 360, nays 16, not voting 56, as follows:

[Roll No. 868]

YEAS—360

Abercrombie Bono Clay
Ackerman Boozman Cleaver
Aderholt Boren Clyburn
Akin Boucher Coble
Alexander Boustany Cohen
Altmire Boyd (FL) Cole (OK)
Andrews Boyda (KS) Conaway
Arcuri Brady (PA) Cooper
Baca Brady (TX) Costa
Bachmann Braley (IA) Courtney
Baird Brown (SC) Cramer
Baker Brown-Waite, Crenshaw
Baldwin Ginny Crowley
Barrow Buchanan Cuellar
Bartlett (MD) Burgess Culberson
Barton (TX) Butterfield Cummings
Bean Calvert Davis (AL)
Becerra Camp (MI) Davis (CA)
Berkley Campbell (CA) Davis (IL)
Berman Cantor Davis (KY)
Berry Capito Davis, David
Biggart Capps Davis, Lincoln
Billray Capuano Davis, Tom
Bilirakis Cardoza DeFazio
Bishop (NY) Carnahan DeGette
Bishop (UT) Carter Delahunt
Blackburn Castle DeLauro
Blumenauer Castor Dent
Blunt Chabot Diaz-Balart, L.
Boehner Chandler Diaz-Balart, M.
Bonner Clarke Dingell

Doggett LaHood Renzi
Donnelly Lamborn Reyes
Doyle Lampson Reynolds
Drake Langevin Richardson
Dreier Larson (CT) Rodriguez
Edwards Latham Rogers (AL)
Ellison LaTourette Rogers (KY)
Ellsworth Lee Rogers (MI)
Emanuel Levin Rohrabacher
Emerson Lewis (CA) Ros-Lehtinen
English (PA) Lewis (GA) Roskam
Eshoo Lewis (KY) Ross
Etheridge Linder Rothman
Everett Lipinski Roybal-Allard
Fallin LoBiondo Royce
Farr Loeb sack Ruppertsberger
Fattah Lofgren, Zoe Rush
Feeny Lowey Ryan (OH)
Ferguson Lucas Ryan (WI)
Filner Lungren, Daniel Salazar
Forbes E. Sanchez, Loretta
Fortenberry Mack Sarbanes
Fossella Mahoney (FL) Saxton
Foxy Maloney (NY) Schakowsky
Frank (MA) Manzullo Schiff
Frelinghuysen Markey Schwartz
Gallegly Garrett (NJ) Marshall Scott (GA)
Giffords Matheson Scott (VA)
Gilchrest Matsui Sensenbrenner
Gillibrand McCarthy (NY) Serrano
Gingrey McCaul (TX) Sessions
Gohmert McCollum (MN) Sestak
Gonzalez McCotter Shea-Porter
Goode McCreery Sherman
Goodlatte McDermott Shimkus
Gordon McGovern Shuler
Granger McHenry Shuster
Graves McHugh Simpson
Green, Al McIntyre Sires
Green, Gene McMorris Skelton
Grijalva Rodgers Smith (NE)
Hall (NY) McNeerney Smith (NJ)
Hall (TX) McNulty Smith (TX)
Hare Meek (FL) Snyder
Harman Meeks (NY) Solis
Hastert Melancon Souder
Hastings (FL) Mica Spratt
Hastings (WA) Michaud Stark
Hayes Miller (MI) Stearns
Heller Miller (NC) Stupak
Herger Miller, Gary Sullivan
Herseeth Sandlin Mitchell Sutton
Higgins Mollohan Tanner
Hill Moore (KS) Tauscher
Hinchey Moore (WI) Taylor
Hinojosa Moran (KS) Thompson (CA)
Hirono Murphy (CT) Thompson (MS)
Hobson Murphy, Patrick Thornberry
Hodes Murphy, Tim Tiaht
Holden Murtha Tierney
Holt Musgrave Turner
Honda Myrick Udall (NM)
Hoyer Nadler Upton
Hulshof Napolitano Velázquez
Inslee Neugebauer Walberg
Israel Nunes Walden (OR)
Issa Obey Walsh (NY)
Jackson (IL) Oliver Walz (MN)
Jackson-Lee Ortiz Wamp
(TX) Pallone Wasserman
Johnson (GA) Pascrell Schultz
Johnson, E. B. Pastor
Johnson, Sam Payne
Jones (NC) Pearce Waters
Jones (OH) Perlmutter Watson
Jordan Brady (MN) Peterson (MN) Watt
Kagen Petri Weiner
Kanjorski Pitts Welch (VT)
Kaptur Platts Weldon (FL)
Keller Pomeroy Weller
Kennedy Porter Wexler
Kildee Price (GA) Whitfield
Kilpatrick Price (NC) Wicker
Kind Putnam Wilson (NM)
King (IA) Radanovich Wilson (OH)
King (NY) Rahall Wilson (SC)
Kirk Rangel Wolf
Klein (FL) Regula Woolsey
Kline (MN) Rehberg Wu
Kuhl (NY) Reichert Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—16

Barrett (SC) Flake
Broun (GA) Franks (AZ)
Burton (IN) Hoekstra
Deal (GA) Inglis (SC)
Doolittle Kingston
Duncan Miller (FL)

NOT VOTING—56

Allen Hooley Poe
Bachus Hunter Pryce (OH)
Bishop (GA) Jefferson Ramstad
Boswell Jindal Sánchez, Linda
Brown, Corrine Johnson (IL) T.
Buyer Knollenberg Schmidt
Cannon Kucinich Shays
Carney Lantos Slaughter
Carson Larsen (WA) Smith (WA)
Conyers Lynch Space
Costello Marchant Tancred
Cubin McKeon Terry
Davis, Jo Ann Miller, George Towns
Dicks Moran (VA) Udall (CO)
Ehlers Neal (MA) Van Hollen
Engel Oberstar Visclosky
Gerlach Paul Waxman
Gutierrez Peterson (PA) Wynn
Hensarling Pickering Yarmuth

□ 1906

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 867 and 868, due to unavoidable delays in travel, I missed the votes on H.R. 3246 and H.R. 1657. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on both.

EXTENDING THE AUTHORITIES OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3527, 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 American Samoa (Mr. FALOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3527.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 347, nays 30, not voting 55, as follows:

[Roll No. 869]

YEAS—347

Abercrombie Blumenauer Capps
Ackerman Blunt Capuano
Aderholt Boehner Cardoza
Alexander Bonner Carnahan
Altmire Bono Carter
Andrews Boozman Castle
Arcuri Boren Castor
Baca Boucher Chandler
Bachmann Boustany Clarke
Baird Boyd (FL) Clay
Baker Boyda (KS) Cleaver
Baldwin Brady (PA) Clyburn
Barrow Brady (TX) Coble
Bartlett (MD) Braley (IA) Cohen
Barton (TX) Brown (SC) Cole (OK)
Bean Brown-Waite, Cooper
Becerra Ginny Costa
Berkley Buchanan Courtney
Berman Burgess Cramer
Berry Burton (IN) Crenshaw
Biggart Butterfield Crowley
Billray Calvert Cuellar
Bilirakis Camp (MI) Culberson
Bishop (NY) Campbell (CA) Cummings
Bishop (UT) Cantor Davis (AL)
Blackburn Capito Davis (CA)

Davis (IL) Kirk
 Davis (KY) Klein (FL)
 Davis, Lincoln Kline (MN)
 Davis, Tom Kuhl (NY)
 DeGette LaHood
 Delahunt Lampson
 DeLauro Langevin
 Dent Larson (CT)
 Diaz-Balart, L. Latham
 Diaz-Balart, M. LaTourrette
 Dingell Lee
 Doggett Levin
 Donnelly Lewis (CA)
 Doyle Lewis (GA)
 Drake Lewis (KY)
 Dreier Linder
 Edwards Lipinski
 Ellison LoBiondo
 Ellsworth Loebsock
 Emanuel Lofgren, Zoe
 Emerson Lowey
 English (PA) Lucas
 Eshoo Lungren, Daniel
 Etheridge E.
 Everett Mack
 Fallin Mahoney (FL)
 Farr Maloney (NY)
 Fattah Manzullo
 Feeney Markey
 Ferguson Marshall
 Filner Matheson
 Forbes Matsui
 Fortenberry McCarthy (CA)
 Fossella McCarthy (NY)
 Frank (MA) McCaul (TX)
 Frelinghuysen McCollum (MN)
 Galleghy McCotter
 Garrett (NJ) McCrery
 Giffords McDermott
 Gilchrest McGovern
 Gillibrand McHugh
 Gonzalez McIntyre
 Goodlatte McMorris
 Gordon Rodgers
 Granger McNeerney
 Graves McNulty
 Green, Al Meek (FL)
 Green, Gene Meeks (NY)
 Grijalva Melancon
 Hall (NY) Mica
 Hall (TX) Michaud
 Hare Miller (FL)
 Harman Miller (MI)
 Hastert Miller (NC)
 Hastings (FL) Miller, Gary
 Hastings (WA) Mitchell
 Hayes Mollohan
 Heller Moore (KS)
 Herger Moore (WI)
 Hersheth Sandlin Moran (KS)
 Higgins Murphy (CT)
 Hill Murphy, Patrick
 Hinchey Murphy, Tim
 Hinojosa Murtha
 Hirono Musgrave
 Hobson Myrick
 Hodes Nadler
 Holden Napolitano
 Holt Neugebauer
 Honda Nunes
 Hoyer Obey
 Hulshof Olver
 Inglis (SC) Ortiz
 Inslee Pallone
 Israel Pascrell
 Issa Pastor
 Jackson (IL) Payne
 Jackson-Lee Pearce
 (TX) Pence
 Johnson (GA) Perlmutter
 Johnson, E. B. Peterson (MN)
 Jones (OH) Petri
 Kagen Pitts
 Kanjorski Platts
 Kaptur Pomeroy
 Keller Porter
 Kennedy Price (GA)
 Kildee Price (NC)
 Kilpatrick Putnam
 Kind Radanovich
 King (IA) Rahall
 King (NY) Rangel

NAYS—30

Akin Davis, David
 Barrett (SC) Deal (GA)
 Broun (GA) DeFazio
 Chabot Doolittle
 Conaway Duncan
 Flake
 Foxx
 Gingrey
 Gohmert
 Goode

Regula
 Rehberg
 Reichert
 Renzi
 Reyes
 Reynolds
 Richardson
 Rodriguez
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothman
 Roybal-Allard
 Ruppelberger
 Rush
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Salazar
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Saxton
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schmidt
 Schwartz
 Scott (GA)
 Scott (VA)
 Serrano
 Sessions
 Sestak
 Shea-Porter
 Sherman
 Shimkus
 Shuler
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Sires
 Skelton
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Snyder
 Solis
 Souder
 Spratt
 Stark
 Stearns
 Stupak
 Sutton
 Tanner
 Tauscher
 Taylor
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thornberry
 Tiahrt
 Tiberi
 Tierney
 Turner
 Udall (NM)
 Upton
 Van Hollen
 Velázquez
 Walden (OR)
 Nunes
 Walsh (NY)
 Walz (MN)
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Watson
 Watt
 Weiner
 Welch (VT)
 Weldon (FL)
 Weller
 Wexler
 Whitfield
 Wicker
 Wilson (NM)
 Wilson (OH)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wolf
 Woolsey
 Wu
 Young (AK)
 Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—55

Allen Hensarling Pickering
 Bachus Hooley Poe
 Bishop (GA) Hunter Pryce (OH)
 Boswell Jefferson Ramstad
 Brown, Corrine Jindal Sánchez, Linda
 Buyer Johnson (IL) T.
 Cannon Knollenberg Shays
 Carney Kucinich Slaughter
 Carson Lantos Smith (WA)
 Conyers Larsen (WA) Space
 Costello Lynch Tancredo
 Cubin Marchant Terry
 Davis, Jo Ann McKeon Towns
 Dicks Miller, George Udall (CO)
 Ehlers Moran (VA) Visclosky
 Engel Neal (MA) Waxman
 Franks (AZ) Oberstar Wynn
 Gerlach Paul Yarmuth
 Gutierrez Peterson (PA)

□ 1916

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.” So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I took a leave of absence on September 17, 2007, as I was attending to personal business. The following list describes how I would have voted had I been in attendance today.

“Yea”—H.R. 3246—Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act of 2007 (Rep. OBERSTAR, JAMES L.)

“Yea”—H.R. 1657—To establish a Science and Technology Scholarship Program to award scholarships to recruit and prepare students for careers in the National Weather Service and in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration marine research, atmospheric research, and satellite programs. (Rep. ROHRBACHER, DANA)

“Yea”—H.R. 3257—To extend for two months the authorities of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. (Rep. SHERMAN, BRAD)

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, due to personal business in Iowa, I was unable to return to Washington for votes on Monday, September 17, 2007. If I had been here, I would have voted “yea” on H.R. 3246, H.R. 1657 and H.R. 3527.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1852, EXPANDING AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP ACT OF 2007

Ms. MATSUI, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-330) on the resolution (H. Res. 650) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1852) to modernize and update the National Housing Act and enable the Federal Housing Administration to use risk-based pricing to more effectively reach underserved borrowers, and for other purposes,

which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2881, FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, the Rules Committee is expected to meet Wednesday, September 19, to grant a rule which may structure the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 2881, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007.

Members who wish to offer an amendment to this bill should submit 30 copies of the amendment and a brief description of the amendment to the Rules Committee in H-312 in the Capitol no later than 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 19. Members are strongly advised to adhere to the amendment deadline to ensure the amendments receive consideration.

Amendments should be drafted to the amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 2881. The amendment reflects an agreement between the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Science and Technology Committee. A copy of the text is posted on the Web site of the Rules Committee.

Amendments should be drafted by legislative counsel and also should be reviewed by the Office of the Parliamentarian to be sure that the amendments comply with the rules of the House. Members are also strongly encouraged to submit their amendments to the Congressional Budget Office for analysis regarding possible PAYGO violations.

HONORING DR. MICHAEL E. DEBAKEY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleague, Congressman AL GREEN, in congratulating Dr. Michael E. DeBakey for having the Congressional Gold Medal that was passed today in the House acknowledge his outstanding leadership.

Dr. DeBakey is not only a great American, a great Texan, and a great Houstonian, but he is a great lover of freedom and peace. He does so by evidencing it through his wonderful hands of surgery.

Dr. DeBakey was in World War II. He established the MASH unit that is now saving lives of our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. His wisdom has been sought by virtually every U.S. President since Harry S. Truman. He served on Presidential commissions during both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and thus provided essential support in the passage of the landmark 1965 Medicare legislation.

Dr. DeBakey was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction in 1969 and the National Medal of Science from President Ronald Reagan in 1987. I want to thank Dr. DeBakey and my former colleague, Chris Bell, for initiating the legislation that will allow us to award him the Congressional Gold Medal. He is deserving on his birthday of September 7 when he reached almost 100 years old. He is deserving of this great honor. We in Houston love him and admire him. We thank him for the service he has given and all of the lives that he has served. This is a great day when we have passed legislation to honor Dr. Michael E. DeBakey of Houston Texas, the Texas Medical Center, with a Congressional Gold Medal.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARDOZA). 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.

FREQUENCY OF WITNESS INTIMIDATION

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, this evening I will continue my discussion on a growing and often deadly plague on our society, witness intimidation.

Each day, there is a story reported about civic-minded citizens being threatened with violence or becoming victims of fire bombings or shootings, all of which are designed to prevent them from testifying to crimes that they have witnessed.

Unfortunately, these tactics are working to form what has become commonly known as a "conspiracy of silence." Witnesses are literally afraid for their lives. If you do not believe me, listen to these recent reports: in Newark, New Jersey, for 2 years Reginald Roe was the star and sole witness that prosecutors were relying on in a case involving an ambush gang killing in a parking lot there. Having picked two men's pictures out of a photo array and sworn before a grand jury, he said: "I saw everything, I was there."

But when the case came to trial, with a group of gang members glaring at him in open court, Roe changed his story, testifying that he had heard the shots, but never saw who fired them. The two suspects were acquitted.

In Philadelphia, as the culture of fear continues to deter witnesses from coming forward, a Federal grand jury accused a drug dealer and his girlfriend of conspiring to intimidate a government witness by having the witness's neighborhood plastered with flyers labeling him "a rat and a snitch."

In Parachute, Colorado, Garfield County deputies arrested five teenagers

they believed threatened to beat someone with a baseball bat who planned to testify against them.

In my hometown of Baltimore, a 16-year-old witness in the case of the murder of 15-year-old Christine Richardson was moved from the city by relatives due to mounting threats. Indeed, the teenager was beaten the day after the murder occurred and was threatened by three girls, one of whom brandished a gun.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation is simply unacceptable. We should be making it easier for witnesses of crime to come forward. It should be the norm, rather than an odd occurrence, for criminals to be prosecuted. This issue must be addressed because without witnesses, there can be no justice in America.

Some success stories do exist. On August 31, Baltimore City State's Attorney Patricia Jessamy was able to get a witness to testify, which helped secure the conviction of 39-year-old Joseph Brinkley on two counts of attempted first-degree murder and handgun charges. In November of 2005, Brinkley approached two men as they hailed a cab and shot them in the back multiple times with a 9 millimeter semi-automatic handgun. The victim originally told detectives that he did not see the shooter, but recanted his statement after Brinkley approach him and his 9-year-old son.

Unfortunately, such bravery is rare. Our constituents must know that taking an interest in their community and reporting crime is the right thing to do and that the government will do everything possible to ensure their safety.

This is why I urge my colleagues to become a cosponsor of H.R. 933, the Witness Security and Protection Act of 2007, and to support its passage when it comes to the House floor. Upon enactment, this legislation authorizes \$90 million a year over the next 3 years to assist State and local law enforcement for witness protection while fostering Federal, State, and local partnerships. Priority will be given to prosecuting offices in States with an average of at least 100 murders during the immediate past 5 years; however, smaller entities also have a chance to receive funding.

State and local prosecutors will also be able to use these funds to provide witness protection on their own or to pay the cost of enrolling their witnesses in the short-term State witness protection program to be created within the U.S. Marshal Service.

Mr. Speaker, finally, improving protection for State and local witnesses will move us one step closer toward alleviating the fears of and threats to prospective witnesses and help to safeguard our communities from violence.

CONSTITUTION DAY

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, the Preamble of the Constitution reads: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

On this day, 220 years ago, the 55 delegates to the Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia to hold their final meeting and sign a document that would change the course of history. Our Founding Fathers created a monumental plan to govern a sprawling young country dedicated to the idea that citizens were sovereign and should be as free from the tyranny of unchecked authority.

Constitution Day presents us with an opportunity to pause and reflect on what a magnificent job these 55 individuals did in crafting a compromise which has provided us with a unified and stable Nation. In their wisdom, they sought to protect the rights and liberties of individuals by dividing power and authority between States and the national government. The result is a system of shared roles designed to prevent any one element from gaining too much power.

Members of Congress have taken an oath to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution and with that responsibility in mind it is vital for us to fully understand this sacred document. That is why today on the 220th anniversary of the signing of our Constitution I am introducing the AMERICA Act: A Modest Effort to Read and Instill the Constitution Again.

The AMERICA Act simply states that Members of Congress, Senators, and their respective staff read the Constitution annually.

Mr. Speaker, we Members of Congress are pledged to uphold this Constitution, to defend this Constitution, write the laws that implement this Constitution and from time to time propose constitutional amendments to change this Constitution. It is my hope that this modest yearly effort will renew and deepen our appreciation for the brilliance of the Constitution and the division and constraints on power contained within it.

The AMERICA Act is meant to be a reminder to lawmakers to stay within our country's founding framework as we conduct our legislative business. To our detriment, we often take the path of political expedience and ignore the limits so clearly written into the Constitution.

Today, I call on all Members of Congress to join me and rededicate ourselves to our founding principles of limited, constrained governance as enshrined in our Constitution. By studying our founding document, we will continue the legacy of these great men and their groundbreaking ideas, as well as develop the habits of citizenship

that keep the Constitution alive and relevant for our new generation of Americans.

I urge you all to join me in cosponsoring the Support America Act and its vital passage.

□ 1930

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

END THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, last week, the President called for an enduring relationship with Iraq, a relationship that extends beyond his administration. He did not tell us exactly how long this would last, but we have to have a good idea, because the White House and the Secretary of Defense have said that our involvement on the Korean peninsula should be the model for Iraq. That would mean they are planning to occupy Iraq for 50 years or more.

Consider what this means: A lame duck administration is committing the United States to decades of occupation that will cost trillions of dollars and result in the deaths of countless American troops and Iraqi civilians. This is simply, simply, intolerable.

We were also told last week that the next Petraeus report will come in this coming March and we must wait for that report before we act. But we can't sit around and we can't wait. We can't wait for another Petraeus report; we can't sit around and wait for another Crocker report, because we are fiddling while Iraq burns. We have already had a 4½-year sugar-coated spin and TV show from the Oval Office.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. The occupation is damaging America morally, politically and economically, and it must end. The Congress has the constitutional power and the Congress has the responsibility to end it.

It is time to take bold action. It is time to use our power, our power of the purse, to bring our brave troops home. We must pass a bill requiring that all war spending be used for one purpose and one purpose only, to fully fund the safe, orderly and responsible withdrawal of American troops and military contractors. Commanders on the ground would be given what they need to ensure the safe redeployment of all troops. The bill should also set firm and doable dates for the start and the end of the withdrawal.

We can then help the Iraqis by replacing military action that isn't working with the strong regional and international diplomatic efforts that can work, work to bring about reconciliation and reconstruction to Iraq.

By using our power of the purse, the Congress can set the political agenda. We can build political momentum for withdrawal by offering the American people a clear and easily understood plan for ending our involvement in Iraq. And we can change the terms of the debate from the narrow "is the surge working" to "how soon can we get on with the job of bringing peace to Iraq and restoring America's moral leadership in the world."

If we use our constitutional power of the purse, the administration would surely attack us. They would say we are cutting off funding for the troops. But that would be false. The troops would get every single last dollar they need to come home to their families, come home safe and come home sound.

To those who might have objections to this plan, I would say, is there a better way to end the occupation once and for all? I think the answer is no, there is none.

I ask all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me. Do what the American people sent us here to do: End the occupation of Iraq, and end it now.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT NICHOLAS CARNES

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

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to Sergeant Nicholas Carnes, a citizen soldier who believed in our Nation and acted on that belief to answer the Nation's call to serve.

Nick Carnes was from Dayton, Kentucky. He lost his life on August 26, 2007, in Orgun-e, Afghanistan. Sergeant Carnes served with Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery Regiment in the Army National Guard in Carrollton, Kentucky.

Nick Carnes was a lifelong Kentuckian who grew up in Dayton and graduated from Dayton High School in 2000. Nick joined the Army National Guard at 17 and began working at BB Riverboats. Shortly before his deployment in October 2006, he became a riverboat captain and married his sweetheart, Terri Bernstein Carnes. Sergeant Carnes was due back in Kentucky this month to celebrate his first anniversary with his wife.

I was at the sendoff for Alpha Battery in October of 2006. We saw the families. We saw the motivated soldiers who were ready to go and answer the call of service. I had the great honor and privilege to see Nick, to meet him and talk with him while I was there. And I was impressed with him. The one thing that this old soldier can say is I know a good noncommissioned officer, the backbone of our military, representing the character of our Nation, when I see one, and he clearly showed me that.

A man or a woman is the product of many things. First, Nick's mom, Wray Jean, and dad, Gove, you gave the Na-

tion a great young man. You gave our community a great young man. And that was reflected in a letter that he sent to Terri on November 11, 2006, a few weeks after the unit had activated. He wrote this:

"Dear Terri:

"Hello, beautiful. I hope this letter finds you in good spirits. Also, I hope you are coping well with my absence. You mean the world to me, my beautiful wife. I am so sorry that my decisions in life have forced me to be away from you. Unfortunately, I can't change those decisions. Even if I could, I believe that I would sacrifice time with you to be part of helping another country and defending our own. If the other soldiers who came before me did not stand up for freedom, then we would not have freedom. So I feel that I am obligated to stand up for freedom to ensure that everyone else after me has the same freedoms we do today.

"I am not going to Afghanistan to kill Afghans. I am going there to help them stand up to the Taliban and regain control of their country. As people, sometimes we need help. Afghans happen to need help. Yes, helping the Afghans may put me in harm's way, but I have been well trained and will continue to receive training for the rest of my military career.

"Everything will be fine. I feel confident and will do everything within my power to bring myself home safely. You need not worry, baby doll. I will go and do the job that is asked of me and return myself to your arms. I love you. Nick."

The greatest value of our citizens serving is not simply their military proficiency, but the amazing character of a free people, embodied in the life of a young man like Nick Carnes, who understood the call that he was accepting and saw the higher good and the greater purpose.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, I ask that we honor Sergeant Carnes and his service to our great Nation. Sergeant Carnes was a brave soldier, dedicated husband, loving son, who was taken from us all too quickly fighting for a cause that he truly believed in. I honor his bravery. I honor his legacy. My thoughts and prayers are with his friends and family during this solemn time.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting to rise and honor this young man who laid down his life for the defense of our Nation on Constitution Day. As I stand here tonight, we talk about the Constitution as one of the great cornerstones of the form of government that we have as a free people. Yet, its preservation will not occur unless there are young men and women like Nick Carnes to come forward in every generation to answer that call, to be willing, as he said, to place himself in harm's way to preserve the ideals that he believed in.

As we look tonight, I am reminded of the words of Jesus in John 15:13, who

declared, "No one has greater love than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

To you, Nick, I say thank you. Thank you for the example of your life. To his comrades in Alpha Battery who are here in this country now and also back in the theater, I say thank you for carrying on the mission. Thank you for honoring the flag, the highest ideals of service and what we represent as Americans.

Four special people in his life also need to be thanked, because as much of our country does not know, serving in the military is a family business that only 1 percent of our population responds to.

To Terri, I bear condolences for you, as I shared with you at the funeral home on behalf of a grateful Nation. Despite political differences that fly in the air, the backbone of our freedom is founded in sacrifices like your family has made, and I thank you for lending us Nick for a time. To Wray Jean and Gove, Nick's mom and dad, I say thank you for your son's service and for the example of his character. To his father-in-law Alan, thank you for your example and work. Raising a young leader who impacted our community, his duty and honor to country represent the best and greatest aspects of our national character. His sacrifice is not in vain.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MINORITIES IN THE MEDIA

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the contributions of minorities in the media and encourage greater media diversity.

The past year marked a breakthrough for Latinos in the media. Just last night, America Ferrera won the Emmy award for best actress in a comedy series for her work on ABC's "Ugly Betty." In her portrayal of Betty Suarez in "Ugly Betty," Ms. Ferrera portrays an intelligent, caring young Latina professional trying to break into the field of publishing. Her character has a strong connection to her family, while at the same time she is dedicated to her work.

America Ferrera is the daughter of Honduran immigrants. Through her work on "Ugly Betty" and in films, including "Real Women Have Curves," she is a role model for many young Latinas and women of color everywhere.

We need to improve the image of American Latinos and Latinas as portrayed by the media. We can do this by increasing the number of American Latinos employed in all facets of the media industry.

"Ugly Betty" is one of the few programs on broadcast television that portrays a Latino family and main char-

acters. The show has waded into tough issues like immigration by portraying the struggle of Betty's father to successfully navigate the immigration process.

In describing her Emmy last night, America Ferrera said the win, "Symbolizes the wonderful blessings of the past year. I am so happy and humble to be on a show that is not only fun, but is making a difference and inspiring people and changing the way we look at prejudice and diversity."

Other Latinos also have important roles to play as well in the media. Characters such as Dr. Callie Torres, portrayed by Sara Ramirez on "Grey's Anatomy," and Gabrielle Solis, portrayed by Eva Longoria on "Desperate Housewives," portray dynamic Latinas in television.

Behind the scenes, Selma Hayek, a premier actress herself, is also producer of the "Ugly Betty" show. Another new program called "Cane," featuring a Latino family in Florida involved in the sugar business, is premiering this fall on CBS.

This is important because the characters that Americans see on television can help shape their view of the world and attitudes toward different groups of different backgrounds. In fact, 40 percent of American youth ages 19 and under are children of color, and very few of those faces that we see on television actually represent the races and cultural heritage here in America.

With increasing positive portrayals of minorities and programs, television can reflect a broader majority of hard-working American families, families that are indeed diverse. We should not stifle diversity of voices in the news and entertainment that consumers see, hear and read. The success of programs like "Ugly Betty" and the recognition of actresses like America Ferrera show that the American public is paying attention and wants to see more quality and diverse programming.

In this new and exciting time, minority performers and programs are not only increasing, but are also being honored. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the FCC and media companies to promote diversity in the media.

Again, I want to congratulate America Ferrera on her Emmy win and commend America and everyone on the cast of "Ugly Betty" for breaking down those stereotypes of Latinas. I hope that this is one of the first in a long line of successes for minority performers and that programs that retain positive minority characters will flourish. Working together, we can provide diversity, promote it, and have a better understanding here in our country.

□ 1945

DEMOCRATS SEEK TO USE AMT AS WEDGE

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, nobody wants tax increases, and a tax increase right now would be detrimental to the economy of the United States. In fact, the Treasury Secretary thinks it would be disastrous. It would put the economy into a tailspin.

Chairman RANGEL of the Ways and Means Committee recently tried to use as a wedge the AMT, the alternative minimum tax, as a way to create a new system down the road that would raise billions and billions of dollars in new taxes across this country. As a matter of fact, they would raise the top tax rate on capital gains to 36 percent. On people making over \$200,000 a year, it would raise their tax rate to 36 percent; and these tax increases would be absolutely devastating to the people of this country and to the economy of this country.

Chairman RANGEL in 1996 had an opportunity to vote against the alternative minimum tax, but he voted for it. And now he is saying he is against it, and he is using it as a wedge to get other taxes increased, which over the long term, over the next 10 years, will result in billions and billions of dollars of new tax increases for the people of this country.

Tonight, I would like to enter into the RECORD some statements made by Grover Norquist and Bob Novak in a column he wrote, so that the people of this country will be aware of what is coming about. Explaining all of these tax changes is very difficult in 5 minutes. It is very difficult for the people of this country to understand. But I want the people of this country to know that the Democrats are planning to use the AMT as a wedge so they can raise taxes across the board and hit everybody. And it is going to hurt the economy of this country and hurt every American taxpayer.

All I would like to say is that the American people need to know this. I hope everybody reads this. Everybody wants to do away with the alternative minimum tax on our side of the aisle, but we want to do it cleanly in one fell swoop. At least we ought to reduce it over a period of time so it goes away, but they are using it as a wedge so they can raise taxes in the next 10 years. And it will be very detrimental to the American economy.

[From the New York Sun, Sept. 7, 2007.]

RANGEL'S PRIORITY IS REPEALING THE AMT

(By Russell Berman)

WASHINGTON.—Amid mounting opposition to a proposed tax hike on the managers of hedge funds and private equity firms, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Rep. Charles Rangel, is making clear that his first priority is fixing the widely reviled alternative minimum tax.

Congressional Democrats have zeroed in on private equity taxation in their search for new revenue sources to pay for expanded health care and other domestic spending priorities. Mr. Rangel convened a marathon hearing yesterday to delve into an array of tax "fairness" issues.

"It has not been the goal of this committee to target any tax provisions other than the AMT," the Harlem Democrat said at the outset of the hearing, which featured 20 witnesses. "However, it is fair to say that since the AMT is such an expensive revenue loser—because the revenue it brings in was never expected—that naturally we have to look at the entire tax code."

Created in 1969 to ensure that the wealthiest Americans assumed at least a minimum tax burden, the AMT, because it is not adjusted for inflation, increasingly is affecting middle-income taxpayers and has drawn criticism from both sides of the political aisle. More than 23 million Americans could be subject to it this year.

"It's the perfect storm of bad tax policy," the director of the Urban Institute's Tax Policy Center, Leonard Burman, told lawmakers yesterday, adding that the AMT is "hideously complex."

Yet the cost of repealing the AMT is estimated at more than \$800 billion over the next decade, leading to the proposed tax hike on private equity. A bill sponsored by Mr. Rangel and Rep. Sander Levin of Michigan would more than double the tax rate that hedge fund and private equity managers would pay on their investment gains, known as "carried interest." Carried interest is currently subject to the capital gains rate of 15 percent, but the proposed change would treat it as income subject to the marginal rate of as much as 35 percent.

Citing annual incomes for managers as high as \$500 million, one Democrat, Rep. Artur Davis of Alabama, made no secret of his view that the party should look for revenue from "individuals who are making massive amounts of money," saying they "frankly won't really miss the difference."

Economists and tax lawyers testifying yesterday debated the likely impact of the tax increase on the financial sector and the economy, as Republicans on the committee pressed them on whether it would drive investment overseas or whether managers would shift the burden to investors by charging higher rates.

A Republican congressman from Virginia, Eric Cantor, said Democrats were on a "hunt" for new revenues and that the private equity proposal "targets one of the most innovative sectors of the economy."

In a prepared opening statement, the ranking Republican on the committee, Rep. James McCrery of Louisiana, warned that the proposal "will move us backward while the rest of the world moves forward to improve their competitive position." He added: "I seriously doubt this proposal will become law during the 110th Congress."

The debate over the taxation of hedge funds and private equity has raged on Capitol Hill amid heightened scrutiny of the \$2 trillion industry and of the vast profits the firms have taken in.

The effort to raise the tax rate on carried interest faces opposition from the private equity industry, and more recently from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and a coalition of minority and women business groups.

As he did at a Senate committee hearing in July, Bruce Rosenblum, the chairman of the industry's lobbying group, the Private Equity Council, warned that a tax hike on carried interest could discourage investment and hurt American competitiveness.

The proposal has divided New York's two senators. Following her top Democratic rivals in the presidential campaign, Senator Clinton has come out in favor of the tax hike. Senator Schumer, the third-ranking Democrat in the Senate, has signaled his opposition, citing the potential harm to Wall Street and New York's competitiveness worldwide. He also has said targeting part-

nerships only in the financial sector would be unfair, suggesting that a similar increase be considered for partnerships in the oil and gas industries. Mayor Bloomberg, meanwhile, has mostly stayed silent on the issue.

The Senate Finance Committee held its third hearing on the issue of carried interest yesterday, focusing on pensions.

[September 10, 2007]

CONFRONTING HIS MONSTER

(By Grover Norquist)

The House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Rep. Charles Rangel, held a hearing this month supposedly about simplifying the tax code for middle income families. What it really was about was a monster Mr. Rangel created, fed, defended, and now has turned on its master: the Alternative Minimum Tax. This tax was changed around a bit throughout the 1970s, and found its modern form in 1982. That year, Mr. Rangel voted for an AMT rate of 20 percent, which still only affected several thousand taxpayers.

In 1986, he voted to raise the AMT rate to 21 percent, and several thousand more taxpayers were affected. Mr. Rangel did not vote for an increase in the top rate to 24 percent that followed.

In 1999, Mr. Rangel voted against repealing the AMT beast and slaying it forever. Had that bill become law, the AMT would have been permanently repealed on December 31, 2007—this year. Instead, Mr. Rangel is forced to deal with a monster of his own creation. The monster has gotten hungry. According to official estimates, failure to restrain the AMT will lead to 27 million taxpayers having to pay this tax. A tax that would be dead, gone and buried this year if not for President Clinton and Mr. Rangel.

The irony is almost poetic. The typical AMT taxpayer lives in a state like Mr. Rangel's New York, Nancy Pelosi's California, and Robert Menendez's New Jersey. They have a jumbo mortgage, sky-high state income taxes, a couple of kids, and a six-figure income. For the most part, these are the inner-suburb-urbanite, center-left voters who supported the AMT authors in the first place. It is unlikely that there is a thousand dollar contributor who is not paying the AMT.

Now there is considerable pressure on Mr. Rangel to help these constituents. So, he has been supporting a plan to eliminate the AMT—and raise taxes on everyone else to pay for it.

He has to find a way to "pay" for AMT repeal because of the return of PAYGO rules with the new Democrat majority. You can't cut any taxes, according to these bizarre rubrics, without raising other ones.

If Mr. Rangel can't find enough tax increases to kill the AMT, he can try a "patch" that will keep the AMT-paying households at "only" several million taxpayers. This requires fewer tax increases, all of which will be permanent, in order to pay for only one year of this AMT "patch."

There is a better way. Senator Grassley, the ranking member on the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee, has a good way of describing the AMT: It's a mistake. It is not doing what it was intended to do. Instead, thanks to proper care and feeding by zookeepers, the AMT beast is threatening to ensnare tens of millions of American families.

To paraphrase Mr. Grassley, "you don't 'fix' a mistake, or 'patch' a mistake—you correct the mistake." In this case, that means a clean kill of the AMT. Revenue losses shouldn't be counted, since the AMT mistake is yielding a windfall of income never intended by policymakers.

There is legislation to do just that in both chambers of Congress. This legislation is not sponsored by the likes of Mr. Rangel, who ostensibly wants to help AMT taxpayers, but by conservative Republicans who want to kill the AMT because it's the right thing to do. Phil English of Pennsylvania, and has 54 cosponsors. In the Senate, it's sponsored by none other than Mr. Grassley as S. 55. Quite simply, it would fully and totally repeal the AMT immediately.

Some prefer a more incremental approach, which is also fine. Forty percent of the AMT problem would be eliminated if Congress were to simply repeal the Clinton AMT that Mr. Rangel supported. That is, Congress could simply undo the AMT tax hike that was part of the 1993 Clinton tax increase. Doing that would take the top AMT tax rate from the current 28 percent to a lower 24 percent.

The "AMT Rate Reduction Act of 2007" does just that and reduces the current top rate of 28 percent to 24 percent. It's sponsored by Rep. Ed Royce of California and Eric Cantor of Virginia in the House as H.R. 2253 and has 20 cosponsors. In the Senate, it's sponsored by Senator Specter as S. 734.

In politics, you have to wear bifocals—long and short sight. Repealing the Clinton AMT may be the best we can do this year, so supporters of full AMT repeal should also be supporters of Clinton AMT repeal.

In any event, taxpayers should see through Mr. Rangel's bluster. He's not riding in on a white horse, saving the middle class from the AMT. Rather, he's desperately running through the countryside, trying to get everyone to forget that the Frankenstein monster was one he helped create.

IRAQI REFUGEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have a conflict making it impossible for me to remain for the very important hour that the Congressional Black Caucus has taken on Iraq. I am about to go to the Senate floor tomorrow, though, as there is a test on whether there will be a filibuster on the D.C. voting rights bill even as D.C. residents are on the ground in Iraq fighting, even as I have gone to funerals at Arlington Cemetery because of this war.

We have a President who has announced a token drawdown at the same time he is Koreanizing the war, making sure we remain there at least as permanently as we have been in some parts of the world, like Korea and Germany already. He wants to make a piggy bank of the Congress of the United States, and the test is whether we are willing to go along with these now-clear goals of the President.

I want to devote my 5 minutes to asking a question that really needs to be asked. We are looking at the battle. I want to ask, is there really still an Iraq? Three million refugees have left the country since 2003. Another 3 million have been internally displaced. Some have called it ethnic cleansing. I believe it is involuntary ethnic cleansing, because in a civil war you want to win, not chase the other people out. We

didn't want the Southerners to go; we just wanted to win the Civil War.

There is a kind of ethnic cleansing going on in Iraq, and let me show it and urge Members to focus on it. Thousands leave every month, and 95 percent remain in the Middle East. What kind of a cauldron are we making in the Middle East?

Syria has been best in taking them, and they are full up. Iraqis are the leading nationality seeking asylum in industrialized countries. Three hundred Iraqis returned after the fall of Saddam Hussein. So encouraged were they that they came back to their land, many of them from Iran.

By 2006, hundreds of thousands of new refugees were fleeing the country, and last week we heard there is less violence? Sure, those people that are leaving. They are being driven out of their own country as a result of a civil war.

What is most shameful as I looked at the data was to find who was taking the refugees. We know who is responsible for them leaving. We know who invaded their country. Well, the U.K. has taken 22,300, a much smaller country than we. Australia has taken 11,000, and the United States has taken 6,000. And they say if we leave, there will be a major fratricide. So why aren't we taking some of these people? Why are our allies willing to take them, even though they had less to do with the fleeing in the first place.

The number of people displaced internally is shocking. It has risen in 2006 alone by 50 percent. Let me show you how we are failing in our duties. In 1992, 1993 and 1994, we were taking over 4,000 Iraqi refugees and settling them. Now in 2005, we report settling 200. This is a moral failing when you invade somebody else's country and you won't take their refugees and you insist upon staying there and fomenting violence when 80 percent say they want you out of the country.

Let me read from an independent journalist. I don't think you can say Iraq exists any more. There has been very effective systemic ethnic cleansing of Sunnis from Baghdad, of Shias from areas that are now mostly Shia, but the Sunnis especially have been a target, as have mixed families. With a name like "Omar," a person is distinctly Sunni. It is a very Sunni name. You can be executed for having the name "Omar" alone, and Baghdad is now firmly in the hands of sectarian Shiite militias, and they are never going to let it go.

The refugee story alone is reason enough to begin the exodus from Iraq tomorrow. That is what they want. That is what the majority of the American people want. That's what we must see happen before we leave this Congress this year.

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 addressed the House. His remarks will ap-

pear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONSTITUTION RATIFIED 220 YEARS AGO

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 220th anniversary of the ratification of one of the greatest documents written in the history of man.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, it is safe to say that other than the Bible and our Declaration of Independence, no other document has so impacted the course of human history and freedom throughout the world.

That is because 220 years ago, the Framers of our Constitution did something singular in the long account of tyrannies, governments, and institutions invented whereby man sought to govern his fellow man.

A small courageous set of soldiers, farmers, aristocrats and tradesmen banded together and forever threw off the yoke of the crown of England to "secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity."

Their resolve was ratified with the Declaration of Independence that was in fact a promise to future generations to never again subject our children to the unchecked tyranny of arbitrary human government.

In those tumultuous days, there was perhaps no better or more justifiable case for establishing a permanent monarchy than under the noble and flint-like leadership of General George Washington. Many urged the general to do just that. But, Mr. Speaker, instead those first Americans took it upon themselves to do something completely revolutionary. Those men, who had seized for themselves potentially unlimited power over a nascent state completely vulnerable to the dictates of tyranny, chose instead to place immovable checks and limitations upon their own power and upon all those in government who would follow them.

The European model of life said that God gave authority to kings and a government of kings who would hold the rights of men in their hands. The American model encapsulated the divine message of human dignity: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created, that they are all equal, and that they are all endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights and that government exists to secure those rights.

Mr. Speaker, those first Americans understood that all men were individ-

ually accountable to God and that he first gave each of them the right to live. Without this first right of life firmly secured and clearly understood, they knew that all other rights would become meaningless; but with it, all other rights would follow.

They were right, Mr. Speaker. The Constitution of the United States built upon the Declaration of Independence and its proclamation of a self-evident truth that all men are created equal, and laid upon that foundation the rights of freedom of all kinds, of speech and religion, the right to own property, the right of individuals to bear arms, and the right to choose a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution of the United States is a statement of eternal truths as much as it is a statement of principles that govern a nation. Now more than ever as we take this day to commemorate the framing and establishment of that Constitution that for 220 years has served as the archetype of free democratic nations and governments all over the world, it is absolutely incumbent upon all of us to desperately remember the meaning of those words and to renew our commitment to guard against every erosion of that document and the liberties it embodies. But most importantly, the protection of the right to live.

Daniel Webster's admonition to all of us is so appropriate. He said: "Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution and to the Republic for which it stands. Miracles do not cluster and what has happened once in 6,000 years may never happen again. If the American Constitution should fall, there will be anarchy throughout the world."

Mr. Speaker, Senator Webster's voice no longer sounds in these Chambers, but I pray that we hear his message anew in our hearts, and I hope we can renew our own oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, that miraculous document that has so valiantly and nobly served the cause of humanity for 220 years.

□ 2000

OPPOSE PERU AND PANAMANIAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

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

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the pending Peru and Panama free trade agreements. Over 3 million American manufacturing jobs, one out of every six jobs, have been lost during the fast-track era. How many more manufacturing jobs will be lost with the passage of these two trade deals? How many more?

My district in particular has suffered the loss of 1,600 jobs when NAFTA forced Maytag to leave Galesburg, Illinois, for Sonora, Mexico. Every aspect of that town was hurt: its spirit, the

economy, the schools, and the small businesses that supplied goods to Maytag.

Now Galesburg is trying to rebuild its identity.

The November 2006 election showed that most Americans understand our past trade policies, which gave us NAFTA and the WTO, have failed; yet President Bush continues to bring more flawed trade agreements to this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, on May 10, Chairman RANGEL of the Ways and Means Committee reached a landmark deal with the Bush administration to include labor and environmental protection in free trade agreements. The deal requires our trading partners to adopt, maintain and enforce in their laws and practice the five basic international labor standards: freedom of association, right to collective bargaining, elimination of forced labor, abolition of child labor, and elimination of discrimination.

As positive as this deal was, I have absolutely no faith that this President will enforce any labor provisions included in any trade deal. In a statement released on May 11, AFL-CIO president John Sweeney reminded us of the Bush administration's enforcement failure in past agreements by saying, "The Bush administration's consistent unwillingness to enforce trade violations against nations like Jordan and China reminds us that there is no guarantee that this executive branch will enforce any new rights workers may gain through these negotiations."

This administration can't even enforce OSHA regulations here at home. How can we expect this President and this administration to enforce laws in these two countries? Recently, I received a letter from two Peruvian labor federations concerned about the labor provisions in the pending FTA between the United States and Peru. In reference to the May 10 announcement, the letter states, "These changes are important. Nevertheless, in order for there to be real progress that does not only exist on paper, it is necessary that the administrations of President Bush and Garcia adopt significant change that they do not appear willing to do."

Mr. Speaker, no one seems to have faith in this President or the Peruvian Government to enforce the law. The problem is that those who support the FTA in Peru are the same people that oppose labor reform in Peru.

Mr. Speaker, our trade policies must start to serve the interests of American working families and workers around the globe. I urge all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, to say "no" to President Bush's trade agreement with Peru. We have a moral responsibility to save the manufacturing jobs that this Nation has lost and to try to regain those jobs that we have outsourced.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PERU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow on Mr. HARE's remarks this evening and also oppose the pending Peru Free Trade Agreement, which we think is scheduled to come up on this floor in early October.

My question really is: With the United States trade deficit galloping out of control, this year it is likely to hit a trillion dollars in the red, as we continue to outsource jobs across this country. Recently, Ford Mazda in Monroe, Michigan, just north of our district, announced another 2,000 to 3,000 jobs gone. Those are not counting all the supplier jobs outsourced. So why would we be considering another NAFTA-like trade agreement here in this Congress?

The trade deficit with Mexico after NAFTA's passage has gotten worse every single year, going deeper and deeper and deeper into debt, more of our jobs outsourced to that country. Right before NAFTA's passage, there was a positive balance and they tried to make it look good to convince Congress it is getting better. Then we fell into heavy deficit every single year.

We are already in deficit with Peru. In fact, every year it has been getting worse and worse and worse with that nation. So we are even in worse shape with Peru than we were with NAFTA when that was signed. Why would we want more of the same based on that trade model?

Now, one can ask what is happening down there that we have to do this now, with the communities across this country, some of them like my own with over 8 percent unemployment, and why should we sacrifice more U.S. jobs to these flawed trade agreements.

I think I put my finger on it with Peru. There is something called the Camisea Natural Gas Project. In 2004, that country started exporting through this mega gas project exports to our country and other places in the world. Two pipelines started to deliver natural gas from the Amazon River basin at that time. One of the problems with this project is the number of spills and the environmental degradation that is occurring in that region due to this pipeline.

With America so energy dependent, rather than using our power to become energy independent here at home, we are getting ourselves involved in these trade agreements to try to bring more and import more power to this country rather than investing those dollars here. The price of that import of power is a loss of more of our jobs. That is

not a trade-off this Member is willing to make.

In addition to that, the Peru Trade Agreement, as we understand it, has several really terrible provisions in it. First of all, the privatization of social security. In Peru, under their system, the agreement would allow private companies like Citibank or other U.S. investors to sue Peruvian taxpayers if Peru itself tries to reverse the partial privatization of the social security system that occurred in that country in the last decade. What a terrible, terrible provision to have for the people of Peru. We believe in the integrity of our Social Security system. Why should we impact theirs?

In addition to that, the Peru agreement as proposed would affect the access to generic medicines to people who live in a very impoverished country like Peru where over half of the people are poor. A number of nongovernmental organizations based in the United States and Latin America have confirmed that this agreement would reduce access to essential medicines by the poor population of Peru and that the agreement's provisions far exceed international standards established by the WTO. Why would we want to do that to the people of Peru?

Moving on to food safety, why would we want to harm the people of our country, because the agreement does not address serious food safety issues that currently plague our relationship with Peru. Indeed, it is one of the 20 top exporters of shrimp to the United States market, and FDA inspectors have consistently rejected seafood from Peru for numerous reasons, including filth, adulteration, misbranding, and presence of various dangerous food pathogens.

There has been poisonous swordfish, salmonella in shrimp, dangerous histamines in mahi-mahi. Shipment after shipment of dried, canned, frozen and fresh fish products from Peru have proven to be damaged. Why would we want to encourage more of that?

Let me also say one of my concerns about this Peru agreement, as with Mexico, it has no adjustment policies for the poorest of the poor. In other words, the Peru Free Trade Agreement does not take into account many farmers in Peru who are going to be displaced because, as other First World agricultural products flood in there, there are no provisions in the agreement to take care of the poor farmers who will be displaced. Why would we do this to our continent?

Mr. Speaker, there are many other reasons to oppose the Peru Free Trade Agreement which I will put in the RECORD and come to the floor in future days to discuss.

IN PRAISE OF RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HEADQUARTERS BUILDING IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON

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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to President Lyndon Baines Johnson. We have the honor today of having his name placed on the building of the United States Department of Education. I was not able to attend because of a health crisis in one of my middle schools in Houston. I believe that President Johnson would understand.

As an original cosponsor of the legislation and certainly proud of him as a Texas President on the educational issues that he worked on, I am here today to call him the greatest education President in the history of our Nation.

It is appropriate this day when we honor our Constitution, which begins in this little book by saying, "We have organized to form a more perfect union," to be able to salute the education President. It is by no exaggeration that we watched the legislative history of President Johnson and have seen his commitment to education. He truly understood the importance of providing opportunities for those from prekindergarten to postgraduate school. It makes perfect sense, therefore, to name the headquarters building of the U.S. Department of Education in his honor. I congratulate my colleague Congressman GENE GREEN for leading on this legislation.

Lyndon Baines Johnson is one of the leading figures of the 20th century. He started as a teacher at San Marcos State College, and he then became President of the United States. He also was lieutenant commander in the United States Navy during World War II, and served in both Houses of Congress and as Vice President of the United States and as the 36th President of the United States as well.

He put his words into deed, making him a valuable asset to the education of our young people in America. He was known as "Landslide Lyndon" because of the narrow win that he achieved in 1948. He put that behind him and went forward to approve the Higher Education Facilities Act in 1963 as President, which authorized a 5-year program of Federal grants and loans for construction or improvement of public and private higher education academic facilities.

He laid the groundwork for prioritizing as important to Americans the education of its young people. The legislation was the largest education program enacted by Congress since the National Defense Education Act of 1958. It was a broad education bill enacted in post-World War II, a period that was not tied to national defense.

In 1964, Lyndon Johnson signed the Library Services Act to make high quality public libraries more accessible to both urban and rural residents, and today our children are able to go to our urban and rural libraries where those who don't have an access not only to books but now the Internet can participate in the Nation's libraries.

We know President Johnson as well through the era of the Civil Rights Movement, a very turbulent movement, a tough time, a time when he stood back and then he stood up. He signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act. He signed the 1965 Voting Rights Act and created opportunities for southerners and all Americans to vote and allowed for the redistricting to create the district in Atlanta for Andy Young and the district of Barbara Jordan in Texas.

We are delighted as well that he was instrumental in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that allowed the furtherance of secondary and elementary education. This was the first general aid to education program ever adopted by Congress. He started in 1965 Project Head Start, where we have seen now the reauthorization of a very important and very needed head start to our young people.

Just this week, I participated in a newly opened Head Start program, the legacy of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, the opportunity for low income families, low income children to have the jump-start that they need, creating the next presidents and astronauts and teachers.

In 1968, he signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act amendments establishing bilingual education programs for non-English-speaking children and providing more funds for special education for disabled children.

He continued, even after his leaving the White House, the organization of his own library, to focus on education. Certainly he was one of the strong supporters and encouragers of the Honorable Barbara Jordan, who then became a Member of Congress in 1972 pursuant to the Civil Rights Act and the Voter Rights Act of 1975.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge Claudia Alta Taylor, who became affectionately known as Lady Bird, his wife, who then started our great Capitol Beautification Project, the Society for a More Beautiful National Capital, and worked, of course, to beautify America. They made a good partnership. As they continued in their life, they never forgot education; they never forgot beautification.

President Johnson is someone who understood power, but he understood compassion. I am very delighted today, Mr. Speaker, to salute Lyndon Baines Johnson, who today now has his name on a very important building, the U.S. Department of Education. We salute you, we thank you to the late Lyndon Baines Johnson, President of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today the headquarters building of the United States Department of

Education was renamed in honor of President Lyndon Baines Johnson. As an original cosponsor of the legislation and as a proud Texan, I rise today to commend this action and to pay tribute to Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th President of the United States and the greatest "Education President" in the history of our nation.

President Lyndon Baines Johnson was a consequential president. It is no exaggeration to say, Mr. Speaker, that Lyndon Baines Johnson's record of extending the benefits of education to all Americans in every region of the country, of every race and gender, irrespective of economic class or family background, remains unsurpassed. Lyndon Johnson recognized that the educated citizenry is a nation's greatest economic asset and most powerful guardian of its political liberties.

Mr. Speaker, Lyndon Johnson did more than any single American, living or dead, to make the federal government a partner with states and localities in the vitally important work of educating the people of America, from pre-kindergarten to post-graduate school. It makes perfect sense, therefore, to name the headquarters building of the U.S. Department of Education in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, Lyndon Baines Johnson was one of the leading figures of the 20th century. The teacher from San Marcos State College who became a president served his country in numerous, distinguished ways, including as Lt. Commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II, as a Member of both houses of Congress, as Vice President of the United States, and as the 36th President of the United States.

Lyndon Baines Johnson was born on August 27, 1908, in Stonewall, Texas. In 1927, he enrolled in Southwest Texas State Teachers College at San Marcos, Texas (Texas State University-San Marcos). He took a leave of absence for a year to serve as principal and teach fifth, sixth, and seventh grades at Welhausen School, a Mexican-American school in the South Texas town of Cotulla. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in August 1930. After graduation he taught at Pearsall High School in Pearsall, Texas, and taught public speaking at Sam Houston High School in Houston, Texas. In the spring of 1931, his debate team won the district championship.

In a special election in 1937, Johnson won the U.S. House of Representatives seat representing the 10th Congressional District of Texas, defeating nine other candidates. He was re-elected to a full term in the 76th Congress and to each succeeding Congress until 1948.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Johnson became the first Member of Congress to volunteer for active duty in the armed forces (U.S. Navy), reporting for active duty on December 9, 1941. Johnson received the Silver Star from General Douglas MacArthur for gallantry in action during an aerial combat mission over hostile positions in New Guinea on June 9, 1942. President Roosevelt ordered all Members of Congress in the armed forces to return to their offices, and Johnson was released from active duty on July 16, 1942.

In 1948, after a campaign in which he traveled by "newfangled" helicopter all over the state, Johnson won the primary by 87 votes and earned the nickname "Landslide Lyndon",

and in the general election was elected to the U.S. Senate. He was elected Minority Leader of the Senate in 1953 and Majority Leader in 1955. He served in the U.S. Senate until he resigned to become Vice President in January 1961.

Lyndon Johnson became the 36th President of the United States on November 22, 1963, after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

During his administration, education was one of the many areas where President Johnson blazed new ground. He pursued numerous education initiatives, and signed many landmark education bills into law.

In 1963, President Johnson approved the Higher Education Facilities Act (P.L. 88-204) which authorized a five-year program of federal grants and loans for construction or improvement of public and private higher education academic facilities. This legislation was the largest education program enacted by Congress since the National Defense Education Act of 1958, and it was the first broad education bill enacted in the post-World War II period that was not tied to national defense.

In 1964, Johnson signed the Library Services Act (P.L. 88-269) to make high quality public libraries more accessible to both urban and rural residents. The funds made available under this Act were used to construct as well as operate libraries, and to extend this program to cities as well as rural areas. Later that year, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act (P.L. 88-352), which among its landmark provisions authorized federal authorities to sue for the desegregation of schools and to withhold federal funds from education institutions that practiced segregation.

In 1965, President Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 89-10) at the former Junction Elementary School in Stonewall, Texas, where he first attended school. Sitting beside him as he signed the bill was his first teacher, Mrs. Kathryn Deadrich Loney. This legislation was the first general aid-to-education program ever adopted by Congress, and it provided programs to help educate disadvantaged children in urban and rural areas. Later that year, he also signed the Higher Education Act (P.L. 89-329), which was the first program approved by the U.S. Congress for scholarships to undergraduate students.

In 1965, President Johnson launched Project Head Start, as an eight-week summer program, to help break the cycle of poverty by providing pre-school children from low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological needs. Recruiting children from ages three to school-entry age, Head Start was enthusiastically received by education and child development specialists, community leaders, and parents across the nation. Currently, Head Start continues to serve children and their families each year in urban and rural areas in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories, as well as many migrant children.

In 1966, President Johnson signed the International Education Act (P.L. 89-698), which promoted international studies at U.S. colleges and universities.

In 1968, he signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Amendments of 1967 (P.L. 90-247), establishing bilingual education

programs for non-English speaking children, and providing more funds for special education for disabled children. Later that year, he also signed the Handicapped Children's Early Education Assistance Act (P.L. 90-538), which authorized experimental programs for disabled children of pre-school age.

After leaving office, Lyndon Johnson returned to his native Texas and continued his involvement in public education. His presidential papers are housed at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum at the University of Texas, which in 1970 established the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs, The "LBJ School," as is commonly known, pioneered what was then regarded as a novel approach to training for public service. Because of her respect and admiration for President Johnson, the late Barbara Jordan, the first woman and African American to represent the citizens of the Eighteenth Congressional District of Texas, joined the LBJ School upon her retirement from Congress and was one of its most distinguished faculty members from 1979 until her death in 1996.

The curriculum combined courses in theory with courses that took students into government agencies to work and conduct research; the faculty included academics from various disciplines as well as practitioners from various levels of government; public service programs included an academic publishing program as well as workshops for government officials. This blend of the academic and the practical remains the distinguishing characteristic of the LBJ School and this highly effective approach to training for public service is today an accepted model for public affairs graduate programs across the country.

Mr. Speaker, Lyndon Baines Johnson, who died January 22, 1973, will be remembered not only as a great President and Member of Congress, but also as the greatest champion of accessible and affordable quality education for all. President Johnson truly understood the importance of leaving no child behind, and he didn't.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I failed to note one of President Johnson's greatest achievements and that was winning the hand and heart of Claudia Alta Taylor, affectionately known by all simply as "Lady Bird." As First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson started a capital beautification project (Society for a More Beautiful National Capital) to improve physical conditions in Washington, D.C., both for residents and tourists. Her efforts inspired similar programs throughout the country. She was also instrumental in promoting the Highway Beautification Act, which sought to beautify the nation's highway system by limiting billboards and by planting roadside areas. She was also an advocate of the Head Start program. Throughout his life, Lady Bird was LBJ's most trusted advisor and confidant. And our nation is better for it.

Robert A. Caro, author of "Path to Power," the Pulitzer Prize winning biography of Lyndon Johnson, has written that what set Lyndon Johnson apart from nearly every other politician of his era is that he alone possessed a "natural genius for politics." LBJ understood that politics was the art of the possible but he knew how to transform possibilities into realities. That is why we have a Civil Rights Act, a Voting Rights Act, Head Start, Public Broadcasting Systems, Higher Education assistance. That is why Thurgood Marshall was nominated

and confirmed as a member of the Supreme Court. That is why the first African American to head a Cabinet department, Dr. Robert C. Weaver, was nominated by Lyndon Johnson.

For all these reasons, Mr. Speaker, it is most appropriate that the headquarters building of the Department of Education located at 400 Maryland Avenue Southwest in the District of Columbia will now and forevermore be known as the "Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Building."

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JERRY LEWIS, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JERRY LEWIS, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 7, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of California, for testimony and documents in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JERRY LEWIS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE ROY BLUNT, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable ROY BLUNT, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, September 12, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

ROY BLUNT,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE NORM DICKS, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NORM DICKS, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the

Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

NORM DICKS,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOHN T. DOOLITTLE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN T. DOOLITTLE, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JOHN T. DOOLITTLE,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE J. DENNIS HASTERT, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable J. DENNIS HASTERT, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 17, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE PETER HOEKSTRA, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable PETER HOEKSTRA, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,

September 13, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

PETER HOEKSTRA,
Ranking Republican.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE DUNCAN HUNTER, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable DUNCAN HUNTER, Member of Congress:

SEPTEMBER 14, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony and documents in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

DUNCAN HUNTER,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE DARRELL E. ISSA, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable DARRELL E. ISSA, Member of Congress:

SEPTEMBER 7, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

DARRELL E. ISSA,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOE KNOLLENBERG, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Honorable Joe Knollenberg, Member of Congress:

SEPTEMBER 17, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JOE KNOLLENBERG,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOHN P. MURTHA, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN P. MURTHA, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony and documents in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JOHN P. MURTHA.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE SILVESTRE REYES, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable SILVESTRE REYES, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,

Washington, DC, September 11, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony and documents in a case, U.S. v Wilkes.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

SILVESTRE REYES,
Member of Congress.

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE IKE SKELTON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable IKE SKELTON, Member of Congress:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, September 13, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I write to notify you formally that I have been served with a subpoena. The subpoena was issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in relation to ongoing prosecutions related to former Congressman Randy "Duke" Cunningham and requests my testimony as a potential witness and the production of documents.

After consultation with counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena may be inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

IKE SKELTON,
Chairman.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JERRY WELLER, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JERRY WELLER, Member of Congress:

SEPTEMBER 12, 2007.

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

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JERRY WELLER,
Member of Congress.

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am so happy to have the opportunity and the honor to rise this evening to lead the Special Order of the Congressional Black Caucus. We are going to be talking about Iraq.

I want to recognize first for comment the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, my colleague and good friend, the gentlelady from Detroit, Michigan, Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK, and to thank her for her leadership of her wonderful caucus.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress and Ameri-

cans across the world, thank you. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Madam Chair STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, for accepting the responsibility for leading the Special Order. Thank you very much.

We need a new direction in America. We need a plan, one we never had 4 years, 5 months ago as this country struck a sovereign nation, Iraq. We need a plan. I would say a new plan, but we never had an old plan. So a plan is what this country must have. President Bush wants the same "no plan" to go forward. It is time for change: over 3,800 Americans dead, over 28,000 Americans wounded in battle. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, 43 members from 21 States, we represent over 40 million Americans. And to a person, all over our districts, they want a change. They want a new direction with this war in Iraq. Eighteen of our members represent less than 50 percent African Americans. Several of our members represent less than 15 percent African American. We represent the American people, almost 300 million in our country, 40 million represented by the members of our caucus. We represent Latino Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, Indian Americans, and African Americans. The entire multi-ethnic society are represented by members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

So when we start our Special Order tonight to talk about the war in Iraq, a war we never should have fought, a war that has lasted longer than World War I, World War II, the Civil War, and the war continues, you might remember, America, last spring they were all saying wait until September. We sent a bill with benchmarks to the Senate, to the House, passed the House, went to the Senate. The President vetoed it. We sent him another one. They say, okay, we won't do another one; we will wait until September. Well, now General Petraeus is saying not September 2007; let's now give them until March 2008. No new plan.

They are going to ask for \$200 billion in the next several weeks. Already have spent \$565.4 trillion of your tax dollars on a war we never should have fought.

America wants a change; we want a new direction, Mr. President. We want to bring our troops home in the most orderly possible plan that we can put together. And I hope and the American people hope this administration as well as our military leaders will come up with a plan. It is your responsibility to do that.

We support our troops. We support the veterans all over this country as well as those veterans who are fighting this war. The mental health needs that our country will have as a result of this war, we yet do not know. There will be significant needs for mental health services. This supplemental has very little money that is coming through. And this is a supplemental that we spent this year, 2007 and 2008.

Understanding, again, we have already spent \$565.4 trillion. Repeat that: \$565 trillion in this war.

We must bring our troops home. We must have a new direction. And as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we will say it over and over again: set a plan in motion. Change direction for our country.

Benchmarks. You heard also, benchmarks. What about these benchmarks that Congress, the President, and President Maliki put together earlier this year? It is really between President Bush's administration and the administration in Iraq, 18 benchmarks that they said they would meet by September. The General Accounting Office reported to this Congress last week they have met three of them. They are not sustaining their own government. They go on vacation, and they want us to fight their war.

Our people tell us to bring our soldiers home. We hear it across the country, Republicans and Democrats as well as independents: bring our troops home. It is unconscionable that this Congress would consider as an appropriator and as a Member of this body as well as a citizen of this country 200 billion new dollars for this ill-advised war in the next several months.

Rise up, America. Thank you for protesting over this last week. Keep the protests up. If you can't come to Washington, have them in your own State, in your own city. Let us hear your voices. It is too silent out there. This is a better country than that.

So as we come to you tonight as Members of this United States House of Representatives, 110th Congress, where there have been 110 African Americans elected and voting in this Chamber over these many years, we are proud to have that responsibility and we will remain the conscience of the Congress. Bring our troops home. End this ill-advised war. Rebuild America from the ground up. Our children deserve more. Our seniors who built this country need more.

There is no reason why we can't have top-quality education, good health centers, good environment, good infrastructure, bridges that don't collapse. But, you see, you can't spend \$565 trillion of your money in a war that we should not be fighting and at the same time invest in America's future.

So as one of 43 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we say to you, America, become engaged. Speak out. Ask that we bring our troops home. Ask for a new plan. Ask for a change of direction. Our theme for 2007 and 2008 is change course, do something different. Join. Volunteer. Work for a better America. Confront the crisis of the war, of education, of health care, of infrastructure needs. And then for us to continue the legacy, not just members of the caucus but all Americans, continue the legacy of people who have built this country, who have laid down their lives. And, for us, so many of our ancestors and forebears who fought the

civil rights movement who speak out today for a just America.

So my brothers and sisters, American citizens, rise up, change course. Fight to end this war today so that your grandchildren will have a better America tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: One of the costs of the war in Iraq that is often overlooked is the waste of tax dollars that could be used to fund programs and facilities that would improve our quality of life. America's families want access to well-paying jobs, affordable health care, and quality education. The War in Iraq presents a threat to our military readiness and the development of communities across our country. We must reinvest in programs that address the priorities of America's families to preserve the safety, security and stability of Americans everywhere.

I was against the War in Iraq from the beginning I will continue to stand strong for the citizens of the 13th Congressional District of Michigan and America. We must take America in a new direction. Let us work together to "Change Course, Confront Crises, and Continue the Legacy."

IT'S TIME TO CHANGE COURSE

The citizens of the 13th Congressional District of Michigan have collectively spent \$555.4 million in Iraq. For this much money, we could have provided, right here to citizens in the 13th Congressional District: 190,892 people with health care; 7,747 more elementary school teachers; 83,268 more places with Head Start; 379,635 children with health care; 4,477 more affordable housing units for working class people and senior citizens; 50 new elementary schools; 60,288 scholarships for college students; 7,670 music and arts teachers; 12,009 police officers, fire fighters and emergency medical technicians; 780,628 homes with renewable energy options; or 8,403 port container inspectors. [Progressive Congressional Caucus, 9/10/07]

IT'S TIME TO CONFRONT CRISES

On September 7, 2007, the non-partisan General Accounting Office concluded that the Iraqi government "met three, partially met four, and did not meet 11 out of 18 benchmarks. Overall, key legislation has not been passed, and it is unclear whether the Iraqi government will spend \$10 billion in reconstruction funds." [GAO-07-1230T]

As of September 10, 2007, 3,759 U.S. troops have been killed and more than 27,770 have been wounded in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003. [Department of Defense, 9/10/07]

IT'S TIME TO CONTINUE THE LEGACY

The Iraq Study Group stated that the use of the military in Iraq has passed; it is time for diplomacy to take place. Regrettably, diplomacy has not been seriously considered by the President, and internecine warfare and outright civil war has filled the vacuum of this viable option in Iraq. [Iraq Study Group, December 6, 2006].

Out of four million Iraqis who are refugees, the United States has taken in a total of 687 between April 1, 2003, and February 28, 2007. [Congressional Research Service, March 23, 2007]. 78 percent of Americans believe the U.S. should withdraw some or all of our troops from Iraq. [New York Times, 9/10/07]. 60 percent of Americans say the U.S. should set a timetable to withdraw our forces from Iraq and

should "stick to that timetable regardless of what is going on in Iraq." [USA Today, 9/10/07].

IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE

As of September 2007, U.S. troops have been in Iraq for four years and six months. The Revolutionary War lasted eight years and two months. The American Civil War lasted four years. The Spanish-American War lasted five months in 1898. World War I lasted four years and just under five months. The U.S. role in World War II started in December of 1941; it ended in 1945. U.S. involvement in Vietnam lasted more than a decade; until Saigon fell to North Vietnam in April 1975.

WHEN WILL ENOUGH BE ENOUGH? FUNDING A FIASCO: THE COST OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

We have spent, as Americans, more than half a billion dollars in Iraq since March 2003. The President is expected to request another \$200 billion. FY 2003—\$53 billion; FY 2004—\$75.6 billion; FY 2005—\$84.7 billion; FY 2006—\$101.7 billion; FY 2007—\$135.2 billion; FY 2008—\$116.3 billion; TOTAL—\$566.8 billion.

According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the U.S. spends about \$10 billion per month in Iraq. That's \$3,816 per second; \$228,938 per minute; \$329,670,330 per day, or \$2,307,692,380 per week.

IRAQ BY THE NUMBERS

Amount, in billions of dollars, that has been spent in Iraq—\$565; Amount, in billions of dollars, that the war has cost the State of Michigan—\$11.9; Number of wounded U.S. troops—27,770; Number of U.S. troops that have lost their lives—3,759; Percent of Americans who believe we should withdraw some or all of our troops from Iraq—78; Percent of Iraqis that want U.S. forces and our coalition allies to leave their country immediately—47; Years we have been at war in Iraq—4.5; Number of the 18 benchmarks the Iraqi government has met—3.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. In conjunction with what my colleague has already said, can you imagine that of the amount of money we spend in Iraq, we could put in place 4,072,709 additional housing units nationwide? In Ohio, we could put 142,849. Imagine this, right in the city of Cleveland where we have 2,185 homeless, we could take care of them and they would not have to be homeless.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield time to my colleague and good friend who has been at the forefront of issues around this war, the Congresswoman from California, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. And I yield to her 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the gentlelady from Ohio, who is the Chair of our House Ethics Committee, for yielding and for her tremendous leadership on so many issues, and for her consistent, and I mean consistent, opposition to this war from day one.

Also I would like to thank the Chair of our Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK, for your outstanding leadership and also for your commitment in changing the President's failed policy on Iraq and for making sure that the Congres-

sional Black Caucus speaks in one voice. Thank you, Congresswoman KILPATRICK.

Let me also salute all of our colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus who have opposed this war from the start, including Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS who actually boldly started the Out of Iraq Caucus. If our voices had been listened to, we would not have embarked upon this unnecessary, immoral war. I once again stand here as the daughter of a 25-year veteran who fought in two wars. It is past time to end this war.

Mr. Speaker, last week the President once again took to the air waves to make his case for the same old "stay the course" strategy. He said that he will return the number of troops in Iraq to pre-surge levels by July of 2008. He wants us to believe that by getting back to where we were last January sometime next summer, he wants us to think that that is progress. The American people aren't buying that. They know how to count. It is the same song and dance from the people who told us that there were weapons of mass destruction, who assured us that we would be greeted as liberators, who declared "mission accomplished," and said really it is mission impossible but he declared mission accomplished and who said we were turning the corner and that the insurgency was in its last throes.

The fact is that the Bush "stay the course" strategy put us on the path for 10 years of occupation in Iraq at the minimum. It is time to call this what it is. It is really the President's plan to run out the clock on his failed policy, to move the goal post once again so that he could sneak out the back door and leave the American people holding the bag after he leaves the White House.

Well, let me ask you, how many of our troops should die so the President can save face? How many Iraqis must die to convince the President that the occupation is bringing disaster to hundreds of thousands of Iraqis? How much of our tax dollars should we spend so the President can avoid admitting that his policy failed? We are now spending \$12 billion a month in Iraq. For the price of 1 month in Iraq, we could be paying for 1.5 million children to go to Head Start for a year. For the price of 1 month in Iraq, we could have hired 200,000 new school teachers for a year. For the price of 1 month in Iraq, we could have insured 7 million of the 8.7 million children living in this country without medical insurance for a year. Mr. Speaker, that is just the cost of 30 days in Iraq, and the President thinks we should be staying yet another 10 years. That is far too high a price to pay for him to save face.

All the talk about military progress in Iraq is a distraction. It is a smoke screen that only serves to obscure the basic fundamental fact that there is no military solution to the situation in Iraq. Our brave troops are trapped in a

civil war and an occupation. Our continued presence there is not only challenging our military; it is undermining our national security and our efforts to fight international terrorism. That is why every member of the Congressional Black Caucus really cosponsored a resolution which we sponsored banning military bases and control, at least U.S. control, of the Iraqi oil.

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This resolution passed this body on a very large bipartisan vote, and, in fact, it sent a strong message that we do not intend to occupy Iraq, at least this House doesn't intend to have that as our policy.

Despite this administration's, though, efforts to frame this as an issue of victory and defeat, the fact remains that redeployment of United States troops from Iraq is really a precondition; it's a precondition to restoring our national security and our efforts to fight terrorism and putting us on a path toward a foreign policy that provides real solutions for global peace and security. Redeployment is a precondition, a precondition for engaging Iraq's neighbors and the international community in a regional stability plan.

We have a moral obligation to help build Iraq. We bombed the country and we, for the most part, destroyed it. But neither Iraq's neighbors nor the international community will truly engage in a regional stability plan as long as they believe that the United States intends to maintain an indefinite occupation. Redeployment is a precondition for any successful effort to combat global terrorism.

The United States' occupation of Iraq has become a rallying point for terrorist recruitment, training and fundraising, a factor that actively undermines our antiterrorism efforts.

Congress has the power to end the Bush administration's failed policy in Iraq. But it means, it really means that Members of Congress are going to have to make a choice. Are we going to stand with the President for an open-ended occupation that sacrifices our troops' lives so he can save face, or are we going to act to bring this disastrous policy to a conclusion? The choice is simple.

Congress should not provide another dime, not another dime for the President's failed policy. We should provide the money necessary to fully fund the safe, timely and responsible redeployment of troops and contractors from Iraq. And let me tell you, the American people support this.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me remind you that members of the Congressional Black Caucus saw this disaster coming and tried to stop it. If you recall, we had an amendment when the authorization to use force came before this body, it was my amendment, that would have allowed the United Nations inspectors to complete their inspection process for weapons of mass destruction. Congress then, however, voted to

go to war. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus voted for that resolution. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus continue to oppose the occupation and work day and night to bring our young men and women home. And we will continue to be that voice that reminds our country that we truly, we really, we honestly, we do support and love our troops, and the best way that we can demonstrate that, the only way that we can demonstrate that, is by bringing them home and making sure that they have their economic security, their health care, and their mental health care and the resources they need to take their lives back.

Thank you, Congresswoman KILPATRICK, for your leadership and for calling us together tonight. Thank you, Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, for pulling us together and making sure we all stay on time and for your leadership on so many issues.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Thank you, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE.

Quick statistics. Of the young men and women who have been killed in Iraq, total 3,734, 885 were less than 22; 1,013 were between 22 and 24; 1,007 between the age of 25 and 30; 445 between the age of 31 and 35; and older than 35, 445.

It gives me great pleasure at this time to yield to my good friend and colleague from the great State of California, the Chair of the Out of Iraq Caucus, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS for such time as she may consume.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES for the leadership that she's providing this evening, having taken out the time on the floor to have the members of the Congressional Black Caucus engage this body on this issue of the war in Iraq. I thank you for your leadership, and I'm proud to work with you to help bring our Congress to the conclusion that we must get out of Iraq.

Last week, President Bush and his White House propaganda machine made another attempt at misleading the Nation. Yet again, unsubstantiated anecdotal claims of progress were used to support a continued occupation of Iraq.

However, the President's claims of progress ran contrary to multiple independent reports recently published, including, from the Government Accountability Office, General Jones, and the National Intelligence Estimate. These reports painted a bleak picture of Iraq: continued high levels of violence, a dysfunctional Iraqi government, and sectarian influence that continue to plague the Iraqi security forces.

President Bush's vision of an enduring relationship with Iraq amounts to an endless and unlimited military occupation. Instead of a significant change of policy, the President has reaffirmed his commitment to a dangerous continuation of a failed policy in Iraq.

Deepening sectarian divisions in Iraq make the American military presence increasingly obsolete. In fact, our presence may actually be making the situation worse as Iraqi political leaders hide behind our troops and refuse to make the necessary compromises.

Meanwhile, we continue to train and equip Iraqi security forces and so-called volunteer Sunni sectarian militias across Iraq. Experts suggest that we're merely training different sides of a violent civil war, and losing track of over 190,000 weapons meant for the security forces is surely only adding fuel to the fires raging in Iraq. That is why my colleagues and I recently introduced H.R. 3134, the Responsible Security in Iraq Act. This legislation will halt the dangerous practice of training and equipping of Iraqi security forces, at least until the Iraqi Government matures.

At the cost of precious American lives, the President seeks only to disguise the fact that he has no exit strategy for Iraq. It becomes increasingly clear that George Bush seeks only to protect his own legacy and saddle the next President with the mess he's created in the Middle East.

Let us not forget that, in addition to almost 3,800 troops who have died, 800 of those troops who have died in Iraq have died since the surge was announced in January, including 16 troops since General Petraeus came to Congress to testify just last week.

I know that the media, many in the media have blamed the wonderful, wonderful support group of the Democratic Caucus and people who want to get us out of Iraq for attacking General Petraeus. But I join with them, not in an attack on General Petraeus, but in telling the truth about what has been happening.

Moveon.org need not be ashamed of its advocacy. They need not be a shame of its ads. They are telling the truth, and we need to speak truth to power on this issue.

President Bush sought to appease those who oppose the war by announcing that 5,700 troops will be coming home this year, and another few brigades will possibly return by summer of next year. But these reductions were scheduled to occur with or without Bush's consent. Deployment limits are being reached, and the military has no trained and ready troops to replace the ones leaving.

As the New York Times stated, it's like George Bush dropping an object and then taking credit for gravity.

Regardless, these planned reductions would merely lower our troop levels to 130,000 by summer of 2008. It is absolutely unacceptable that our military presence in Iraq by next summer will still be the same as pre-surge levels.

I'm delighted for the families of the troops who will be leaving Iraq. Many of these troops will be returning from a second, third or even fourth deployment. However, without a significant change in strategy, the President is

signaling that these troops should not get too comfortable at home. President Bush will surely have them deployed back to Iraq as soon as possible.

As Chair of the Out of Iraq Caucus, I, along with my colleagues, have been advocating for a different direction for years now. In stark contrast to the direction of the President, we understand that the only acceptable option for Iraq is a fully funded withdrawal of all of our troops and military contracts.

The other day, my friend, Congressman JOHN MURTHA said, and I quote, "Yes, many Iraqis consider us the occupiers. But it is also true that Iraq is really occupying us." We couldn't be more right. He couldn't be more right.

Let's bring our troops home to their families as soon as possible and refocus this country's resources on the issues that matter the most to the American people. It is time to end this war in Iraq.

And to those who are getting a little bit disgusted with the fact that we don't seem to be making as much progress as we should here in the Congress of the United States, I would like to encourage them not to give up.

I know that it appears that Petraeus and the President organized a presentation and tried to win over the hearts of Americans by putting a general out there, just as he put Colin Powell out when Colin Powell went up to the U.N. and pointed to the buildings where weapons of mass destruction were being manufactured. Colin Powell has said since that time, it was perhaps the worst thing that he could have done in his career. And of course, people respect generals, and they respect Petraeus because he has a long history of having made sacrifice and having been a good warrior.

But ladies and gentlemen, he's wrong on this one. We don't have to back up. We don't have to shy away from this fight. We don't have to give in and think somehow we're going to be thought of as unpatriotic. Patriotism is to stand up for what is right, what is right for the security of this Nation.

We're at greater risk now than we were before we went in to invade Iraq. As a matter of fact, this President and this war has unsettled the entire Middle East. We know that since we've been there, not only have we created a civil war and all of the sectarian violence, we also know that we have pulled in to this war Iran, and we also know that we are on the verge of pulling in Syria to this war. We also know that this entire Middle East is unsettled because of our occupation.

Despite the fact that the President of the United States said we would be welcomed with open arms, they want us out of Iraq. They want to end the occupation.

Yes, we have some responsibilities there. Yes, we should help to rebuild Iraq, but first, we must bring our soldiers home. We must stop the carnage. We must stop the killings. We must bring our soldiers home.

And I join with BARBARA LEE and LYNN WOOLSEY and members of the Congressional Black Caucus who support the idea that we will vote for funding to bring the troops home safely and securely. We will not vote for funding to continue this war.

We know that the President of the United States has made another request in a supplemental. I will not be voting for any funding to continue the war. And for those of us who really, really believe in what we're saying, for those of us who are committed to the proposition that we can end this war, we will not give him another dime to continue the war.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I'd like to thank Congresswoman WATERS for her statement.

For the RECORD, I have a statement from Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON to be submitted for the RECORD.

Listen to these statistics. Of the percentage of persons serving in the military, 60 percent are white, 23 percent are African American, 10 percent are Hispanic, 3 Asian American Pacific. Of those serving in the Navy, 62 percent are Caucasian, 19 percent are African American. Those serving in the Air Force, 72 percent are Caucasian, 15 percent are African American, in the Marine Corps, 66 percent are Caucasian, 12 are African American.

Let's look at the statistics with regard to deaths as a result of this Iraq war. Of the 3,734 who have been killed in this war, 40 are American Indian or Alaska Native, 69 Asian, 350 African Americans, 405 Hispanic, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 440.

□ 2045

Totally in 2007, Caucasian, a total of 3,734.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure at this point to yield to my colleague and good friend from the great State of Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the distinguished chairwoman of the Ethics Committee, but also our leader on the Special Order hour tonight.

What a timely hour that you have allowed us to participate in. I add my appreciation as well to the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus and as well the leaders of the Out of Iraq Caucus and the Progressive Caucus, of which I am a member.

And so I raise the question tonight, where do we go from here? And I have standing in alongside of me the growing numbers of those fallen in battle from the 18th Congressional District and surrounding areas. Those faces represent families. They are husbands, wives, sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers. They have left grandmothers and grandfathers. They have left family and friends. And it is interesting, as I look at a headline in the Houston Chronicle, it says: "America Has No Exit Strategy But Our Presi-

dent Does." And the gist of the article is that the exit strategy for President Bush is his retirement. For it is evident from his remarks last week that this administration has no exit strategy other than to say, I will not have the exiting of our troops. I will not cease the loss of lives until I leave the White House. I will not have the legacy of the book being written to say that I worked with the United States Congress, the American people, listened to their voices, understood that this was a political solution and not a military solution, but I will not sit down and reconcile with my Congress, with the American people, and bring our troops home as heroes. No, I am going to stay to the end and leave this to the next President.

A GI who died had criticized the war in Iraq. Seven soldiers signed a letter. Shortly thereafter, the soldier from Texas, Sergeant Omar Mora, died, one of his other fellow signers of the letter asking why are we here. Criticizing the war in Iraq. Soldiers on the battlefield. It is interesting that what is represented is that there is one mind in Iraq of these soldiers, but these soldiers are patriots who want to ask the question based upon their constitutional rights. Tragically, as the picture will show, this young man lost his life, and a fellow soldier who signed the letter likewise lost his life.

Another headline: "Texas City Sergeant Dies in Iraq Accident." Even in the last 24 hours, we are finding that those contractors, paid-for contractors, American contractors, one of our defense contractors, if you will, wound up killing 10-or-so Iraqis under the allegation that they were attacking a State Department envoy. We want those envoys to be protected, officials traveling around, but what they wind up doing is bringing Black Hawk helicopters. And these are private contractors making \$100,000 a year shooting up innocent Iraqis, creating then a greater target of our own military personnel. What is going on in Iraq?

So, Mr. Speaker and Madam Chairwoman, I rise today to suggest that it is time to declare a military success. This is not a question of agreeing with the "Mission Accomplished" of the President of the United States. This is to separate the political reconciliation that must be done by the Maliki government and surrounding Mid East states to resolve the conflict between Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds to the work of our soldiers. Our soldiers have done their job.

So H.R. 930, the Military Success Act of 2007, wants to declare a military success. Saddam Hussein is no longer there. We have had an election where we have elected a democratic government. And so all that our military has been asked to do, they have done it.

We have even gone further with the surge and collaborated with Sunnis and created a peaceful area in Anbar, but yet the sheik was assassinated. Why? Because you must have political reconciliation. And while we stand here on

the floor tonight, soldiers are dying. These faces are growing.

Mr. President, do you understand that the American people have spoken? And this is not cut and run, but this is recognizing that we are spending \$10 billion a month, which translates into \$329,670,330 per day, \$13,736,264 per hour, \$228,938 per minute, and \$3,816 per second.

I believe that we should move to the floor of the House, declare our soldiers victorious in the work they were assigned to do, and bring our troops home.

It is important to note that any false representation that bringing home troops in December is a reflection of the voices of the American people is not true. Having 130,000 troops in 2008, July, does nothing to bring our troops home. It is a reduction of the surge.

And so I am asking that our troops be brought home in a safe and secure manner so that our equipment can be brought out and that the announcement that the troops will begin to re-deploy begins.

This is not a situation of fight them there or fight them here. This is not typographing this to the enemy. The enemy is well aware of everything we do. The President knows that General Petraeus said that al Qaeda was not there when Saddam Hussein was there. They were not there when we entered Iraq. They got there in 2005. And, therefore, it is important for the Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds to join together to fight al Qaeda. Everyone knows that Iraq is a place that is a training ground for al Qaeda.

So I think it is important, as I close, to be able to again offer our hand of reconciliation to the President, sit down with the leadership of this Congress. As Speaker PELOSI said, don't let this be a 10-year war. It is already longer than World War II. Save the lives of these valiant soldiers, rebuild our military, and let the political process in Iraq work so that peace and reconciliation can be brought forward.

It is a tragedy, and I offer my greatest sympathy to those who have fallen in battle; those who have been injured, some thousands, 22,000, 25,000, and growing. We must bring our troops home. We must listen to the voices of the American people. These are our heroes. The heroes are still standing in Iraq. Bring them home with yellow ribbons. Bring them home with celebration. It is time to vote and pass H.R. 930, the Military Success Act of 2007. Our soldiers have been successful in duty.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, may I also thank my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) for gathering on the floor tonight to discuss this important topic. This Congress will not, as the previous Republican Congress did, continue to rubber stamp what we believe to be an ill-conceived war. As we continue to receive reports on the situation in Iraq, it is important that we continue to look forward, to the future of Iraq beyond a U.S. military occupation.

Despite the multitude of mistakes perpetrated by President Bush and former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, our troops have achieved a military success in ousting Saddam Hussein and assisting the Iraqis in administering a democratic election and electing a democratic government. However, only the Iraqi government can secure a lasting peace. Time and time again, the Iraqi government has demonstrated an inability to deliver on the political benchmarks that they themselves agreed were essential to achieving national reconciliation. Continuing to put the lives of our soldiers and our national treasury in the hands of what by most informed accounts, even by members of the Bush Administration, is an ineffective central Iraqi government is irresponsible and contrary to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Our nation has already paid a heavy price in Iraq. Over 3770 American soldiers have died. In addition, more than 27,660 have been wounded in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003. June, July, and August have marked the bloodiest months yet in the conflict, and U.S. casualties in Iraq are 62 percent higher this year than at this time in 2006. This misguided, mismanaged, and misrepresented war has claimed too many lives of our brave servicemen; its depth, breadth, and scope are without precedent in American history. In addition, the U.S. is spending an estimated \$10 billion per month in Iraq. This \$10 billion a month translates into \$329,670,330 per day, \$13,736,264 per hour, \$228,938 per minute, and \$3,816 per second.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today because the Congress has listened to the American people, and demanded accountability, oversight, and competence. We saw fit to demand benchmark reports because the American people lost confidence in the Rubber Stamp Republican Congress and the Bush-Cheney team. The American people want a new strategy for success in Iraq.

The Foreign Affairs Committee, of which I am proud to be a member, has recently heard a string of reports from military and civilian officials about the political, military, social, and economic situation in Iraq. Two weeks ago, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) informed the Congress that the Iraqi government has met only three of the eighteen legislative, economic, and security benchmarks. Despite the surge, despite increasing U.S. military involvement, the Iraqi government has not made substantial progress toward stabilizing their country.

President Bush rationalized his surge, over opposition by myself and other House Democrats, by arguing it would give the Iraqi government "the breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas," bringing about reconciliation between warring factions, Sunni and Shia. However, non-partisan assessments, such as last week's GAO report, have illustrated that escalating U.S. military involvement in Iraq is instead hindering that nation's ability to move beyond the devastation of war and death, to build a successful new government, and to create a stable and secure environment. In the seven months since the surge began, increased American military presence has not been able to end the relentless cycles of sectarian violence that continue to plague Iraq. Nor have larger numbers of U.S. troops been successful in unifying and strengthening the Iraqi government.

Instead, the security situation continues to deteriorate. Sectarian violence remains high, and even the Bush Administration has noted the unsatisfactory progress toward political reconciliation. The Sunni-led insurgency continues, with insurgents conducting increasingly complex and well-coordinated attacks. The August 2007 National Intelligence Estimate cited ongoing violence, stating, "the level of overall violence, including attacks on and casualties among civilians, remain high; Iraq's sectarian groups remain unreconciled." The report went on to note that al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) "retains the ability to conduct high-profile attacks," and "Iraqi political leaders remain unable to govern effectively."

The ever-increasing sectarian violence is causing immense daily challenges for Iraqis. Millions have been displaced, and an Iraqi Red Crescent Organization has reported an increase of nearly 630,000 internally displaced persons from February 2007 to July 2007. The same organization predicts an additional 80,000 to 100,000 persons are displaced each month. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that 1.8 million Iraqis are now refugees, with an additional 40,000 to 50,000 fleeing to neighboring countries each month. Iraq has become a humanitarian disaster, and one that continues to get worse every day.

We are not here today to debate whether there has been some decrease in violence in Baghdad. The United States military is a skilled and highly proficient organization, and where there are large numbers of U.S. troops, it is unsurprising that we see fewer incidents of violence. However, it is our responsibility to take a longer-term view. The United States will not and should not permanently prop up the Iraqi government and military. U.S. military involvement in Iraq will come to an end, and, when U.S. forces leave, the responsibility for securing their nation will fall to Iraqis themselves. And so far, we have not seen a demonstrated commitment by the Iraqi government.

In addition, evidence suggests that not only is increased U.S. military presence in Iraq not making that nation more secure, it may also be threatening our national security by damaging our ability to respond to real threats to our own homeland. The recently released video by Osama bin Laden serves to illustrate that President Bush has not caught this international outlaw, nor brought him to justice. Instead, he has diverted us from the real war on terror to the war of his choice in Iraq.

The former chairman and vice chairman of the 9/11 commission, Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, share this view. In a recent op-ed, Kean and Hamilton note that our own actions have contributed to a rise of radicalization and rage in the Muslim world. Kean and Hamilton write that "no conflict drains more time, attention, blood, treasure, and support from our worldwide counterterrorism efforts than the war in Iraq. It has become a powerful recruiting and training tool for al-Qaeda."

Mr. Speaker, our troops in Iraq did everything we asked them to do. We sent them overseas to fight an army; they are now caught in the midst of an insurgent civil war and political upheaval. I have, for some time now, advocated for Congressional legislation declaring a military victory in Iraq, and recognizing the success of our military. Our brave

troops have completed the task we set for them; it is time now to bring them home. Our next steps should not be a continuing escalation of military involvement, but instead a diplomatic surge.

This is why I introduced H.R. 930, the "Military Success in Iraq and Diplomatic Surge for National and Political Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2007." This legislation would make diplomacy and statecraft tools of the first, rather than the last, resort. We must seek constructive engagement with Iraq, its neighbors, and the rest of the international community, as we work to bring resolution to this calamitous conflict that has already gone on far too long.

Democrats in Congress will not continue to rubber stamp the President's ill-conceived war effort. Last November, the American people spoke loudly and clearly, demanding a new direction to U.S. foreign policy, and we here in Congress are committed to seeing that change be brought about. We are working to see the extensive funds currently being spent to sustain the war in Iraq go to important domestic programs and to securing our homeland against real and imminent threats.

President Bush and Vice-President CHENEY have been given numerous chances and ample time by the American people and the Congress to straighten out the mess in Iraq. They have failed. It is pure fantasy to imagine that President Bush's military surge has created the necessary safety and security to meet economic, legislative, and security benchmarks. It is time for a new strategy, a new plan that will encourage Iraqis to take charge of their own destiny, seek constructive and sustained regional engagement, and substitute the ill-advised military surge for a thoughtful diplomatic one. It is time to be realistic and pragmatic, to recognize that our troops achieved what they were initially sent in for and that continued U.S. military engagement is not bringing about the desired results.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Thank you, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

Did you know that there are proportionately more African American and proportionately fewer white servicemen in the military than in the comparable civilian workforce? In other words, there are greater numbers of African Americans serving in the military than in the workforce of the United States of America. That presents a problem.

I will go on with other statistics as the hour goes along, but it gives me great pleasure to yield to my colleague and friend from the great State of Georgia, the gentleman, DAVID SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much. It is indeed a pleasure to be on the floor with you, gentlelady and good friend from Ohio. You are doing a wonderful job in leading this hour.

To the Congressional Black Caucus and the leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus, America must take its collective hats off to the Congressional Black Caucus for from the very beginning it has been the Congressional Black Caucus that has provided the leadership in speaking out on this war in Iraq and in speaking out from a standpoint of what is wrong with it. And I am proud to be on the floor with you this evening.

I thought that I might come at this from the perspective of where I sit in the Congress. I was not here when the actual vote took place 6 years ago to commit our forces to Iraq. I was a part 5 years ago coming into Congress with that first class that came in after 9/11, and it was an extraordinary time. But I think it's very good for us, as we look at this situation in Iraq, to be able to reflect from it. My father always would tell me, Son, the best way for you to get out of a problem is to remember how you got into it in the first place. And it might be good for us to do that.

I happen to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I am the vice chairman of our Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and International Trade. I also am a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and I am the co-chairman of our Democratic group on National Security. I mentioned those positions that I work with here in the Congress so that you can understand the perspective from which I come to this very important issue of Iraq. And let me just state at the very beginning, as I said, it's good to know how you got into a situation.

There is one profound fact that happened on 9/11. On the very day of 9/11 after a conference in the White House between our Vice President CHENEY, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz, collectively they said these words: Iraq must pay for this. That's very profound. On the day of the 9/11 attack, the basic architects of this policy said, without one iota of evidence, without one iota of anything, Iraq must pay for this. Not even knowing it was al Qaeda, but automatically.

Now, I mention that simply because, as I said, we have got to know how we got into a situation to know how we get out of it. That's very profound. The reason I mention that is that from the very beginning there has been a line of direct effort by some, the major architects of this most misguided foreign policy, to equate Iraq with the war on terror. A colossal mistake and the history books will reflect that. We then prepared to go in and attack a country that did not attack us.

I am on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and last week I sat with great admiration and I truly believe I have great admiration for General David Petraeus. He's a general, he's a soldier's soldier, and he is doing and has done a remarkable job, as have all of our military. But as I sat there and I watched him, this general, my mind went back to another general at the beginning of this by the name of Colin Powell. Here was the same situation. After 9/11 we sat there and a general was put in front of us to sell us on going to war with Iraq, with information and intelligence that many in the administration knew was not true. The books that are pouring out now by the bushel tell us that everybody, from the CIA to the Defense Department to so

many who were saying this, in other words, that the intelligence books were cooked. Not a single person from Iraq came over to us and asked us, Come over to our country and turn us into a democracy.

No, this was a war of choice based upon lies and deceit, and that is why this will go down in history as the biggest foreign policy blunder in the history of these United States. Make no mistake about it.

So the question has to be now, why? Here we are in Iraq on lies and misinformation that are out now by the book loads; so we can't deny it.

□ 2100

And the American people know it. And they are expecting this Congress of the United States to stand up to this White House and say, "No more."

Let me tell you something, folks; I've been over there to Iraq, three times I've been over there. I have met with our soldiers, I have eaten with them. But the most important part of my trips over there was not to Camp Victory or to the Green Zone or to Baghdad. Even my meetings with General Casey, General Abizaid, all of them, which I cherish and I have pictures and all of that, and even the meeting I had with one soldier from Georgia who came up to me and hugged me with tears streaming down his eyes, tears streaming down my eyes, and he said to me, Congressman SCOTT, when I'm hugging you, it's like I'm hugging a piece of home. I can't tell you how I felt.

But ladies and gentlemen, let me just tell you the most significant parts of these trips was on the way back. Each stop that I went over to go to Ramstein Air Base, Landstuhl, that's the hospital, that's the medical center. That's where they come, the injured come when they are injured in down country, as they call it, in Afghanistan and Iraq. That's where they are. You want to know about this war, you want to know why this war needs to be ended, that's the story, to look into these 18- and 19- and 20- and 21-year-old kids' eyes, half their heads blown off, arms missing, blind, and they ask the question, why? Why? Why are we here?

I'm telling you, somebody's going to have to answer that question. On the bleached bones of many past great civilizations and nations are written those pathetic words, "Too late." They moved too late to correct a great wrong. I beg and I hope that this Congress has the resolve in it to not move too late now. The whole world is depending on us.

One of the things that President Bush did, and we've got to understand it, what he did in sending General Petraeus up is the same he did in sending Colin Powell up. And history is going to write it, not DAVID SCOTT, not Mrs. TUBBS JONES, not this Congress, history is going to write that this President will go down in history as being a President that highly used and

misused our military. That is one of the greatest shames coming out of this Iraq situation.

And now, here we are in Iraq. I don't think the American people know that over one-half of our entire combat capacity is involved in Iraq. If I'm China, if I'm Russia, if I'm Iran, which they are, they're sitting back fat and happy, anxious to see us continue to run our military in the ground in this fruitless effort in Iraq. Soldiers, many of them on their third and fourth tours of duty. Fifteen months they've extended it to, not even giving an equal amount of time for rest because they know that the military is at the breaking point. No way we can continue this war. It will run our military into the ground.

And now let me just say one word about the President's move here. What this is is the President is saying to us, I'm not going to end this. It's not going to be on my watch. Even out of his own mouth he says we will hand this enduring relationship in Iraq over, as he says it, to my successor. That's what he said, to his successor.

So the American people have nixed that. The President is out of the picture, but we here in Congress are in the picture. It's up to us to not move too late. We must correct the direction we're headed, and the first order of business is to end this war in Iraq.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I would like to thank my colleague from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) for his statement.

GENERAL LEAVE

For the RECORD, 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 the subject of my Special Order today.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I want to thank my colleague, the newest Member of the Congressional Black Caucus, who has joined us in the House, Congresswoman LAURA RICHARDSON, from the great State of California, who has joined us on the floor this evening, for her support. I also want to thank my staffer, Aaron Wasserman, for his work and research.

Let me close out this Special Order with a few more statistics and a couple of statements. Can you imagine this: The amount of money that we've spent on the Iraq war so far, 270,850,440 children could benefit from receiving health insurance for 1 year. In addition, a Census Bureau news release stated that 8.7 million uninsured children in 2006 could be insured for 31 years with the amount of money that has been used in the Iraq war. The number of 4-year scholarships that could be provided, 21,927,497 scholarships could be provided to the children of the United States nationwide if we used the money from Iraq.

And let's talk about, for a moment, the cost to the people of Iraq. A recent

article by the Washington Post has said that Iraq needs 10,000 megawatts of electricity per day, but they're only producing 4,110. In civilian casualties, since April of 2004, the average number of Iraqis killed per day has grown from just over 20 to over 100. The total number of Iraqi casualties is estimated to be between 70,264 and 150,000 people.

I am so pleased and honored to have an opportunity to be on the floor leading this Special Order on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus. I personally am opposed to any permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq, and no control by the U.S. of Iraqi oil. I am opposed to the surge. The benchmarks not being met are, the GAO says three of 18 were not met, and I am opposed to continued funding for the surge.

There is no military solution to this war, and only political and diplomatic solutions will actually work. We should not arm Iraqi security forces when the United States leaves, and we should not leave behind weapons that can be used to perpetuate violence. We have a moral obligation to help with Iraqi national reconciliation and reconstruction.

I've been a Member of Congress now for 9 years, and I never thought when I ran for Congress that I would have the responsibility or obligation of attending deployments or attending funerals of my constituents, but as a Member of Congress I see it as my obligation. I'm so happy that even though I oppose this war, that I have a chance to go and meet with many of the Army Reservists and National Guards who have been deployed from my congressional district, and go to them with their families and say to them that I pray for their safe return, that when they return from their mission over in Iraq and Afghanistan, that they all come back.

I remember one of the deployments I took a flag that I had flown over the Capitol and gave it to these young men. And I said, I pray that you will bring my flag back. I want you to fly it every day, but when you come back, bring it back, but bring every member of your group back with you. And you know what? They brought me my flag back, and every one of the members of that troop came back home. It was a wonderful thing. But I've witnessed the death of a 19-year-old, Officer Sloan. I've witnessed the death of a 38-year-old. I've witnessed the death of so many young men and women as a result of this particular war.

And I say to the American people who are listening to our Special Order this evening, the Congressional Black Caucus believes and argues to the American people that you need to step up your protests. If you believe that this war is not correct and that our troops need to come home, you need to tell somebody. You just can't sit in your chair and be an armchair quarterback. You can't sit back and not say anything. The people, the Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives and the

Senate needs to hear from you. The President needs to hear from you to let him know that we do not support his continued effort over in Iraq.

I am pleased, as I said, to be a part of this Special Order. I am pleased to represent the finest congressional district in the United States of America, the 11th Congressional District of Ohio. And I thank all of my constituents for writing, calling, e-mailing, faxing and saying to me, Congresswoman, it is your job to stand up and oppose this war. And ladies and gentlemen of Cleveland and northeast Ohio, that is what I'm doing.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of America who want a new way forward in Iraq and expect Congress to act accordingly.

My constituents in North Texas continue to grieve the loss of their sons and daughters in Iraq and voice their utmost concerns for our troops' safety. They deserve answers from me and from our government regarding the consequence of the monetary and casualty cost of the Iraq war.

Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom have affected the lives of countless Americans. There are over 3,000 troops from the great state of Texas that have been wounded during duty and many thousands more from across the United States.

Despite the struggles our soldiers face both on the field and the home front, they are thankful for the support they have been receiving from their fellow Americans. They share their concerns none of which are for themselves, but of their fellow comrades and families. If given a chance, they are willing to return to the field and fight for this nation. I stand here today, humbled by these men and women.

The current administration has recently submitted data reflecting that violence in Iraq has decreased, but this data has been skewed. The data does not reflect the truth. Violence in Iraq has increased.

It is our responsibility to care for the best interest of our soldiers. It is our responsibility to protect our troops from unnecessary harm. Our men and women in uniform are owed a debt of gratitude for their courageous efforts. A failure to bring about democracy in Iraq rests solely on the shoulders of the President and his Administration.

Mr. Speaker, a great American military cannot be a substitute for a weak Iraqi government. Americans want a new direction in Iraq. The best way to support our troops serving in Iraq is to bring them home.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, tonight members of the Congressional Black Caucus stand with the American people to tell the President once more: it is time to end the war in Iraq. As co-chairs of the Out of Iraq Caucus, two of my fellow CBC members, Representatives MAXINE WATERS and BARBARA LEE, are among the preeminent leaders in Congress in the fight to end this misbegotten war. I want to thank them for their leadership and for their tireless efforts to bring our troops home.

Last week's much-anticipated testimony, report and "new plan" were just more of the same. Once again refusing to heed the facts on the ground and the wishes of the American people, President Bush simply reiterated his

stubborn commitment to continue his failed policy in Iraq.

The “progress” reported by the Administration is arguable. But what is not subject to debate is this: there is no such thing as “winning” an occupation. We cannot have a military “victory” in Iraq. The only way out of this quagmire is a political solution. And after more than four years, there has been no political progress in Iraq. The President seems to believe that another 10 years of occupation, to the tune of trillions of dollars and thousands more American lives, is worth wagering on this disastrous conflict. The American people and the Congressional Black Caucus disagree.

The White House and its emissaries continue to urge the Congress and the American people to view the disastrous conflict in Iraq through rose-colored glasses. But we know better. No independent assessment of the situation in Iraq aligns with the picture presented by the White House. The Government Accountability Office reports that the Iraqi government has failed to meet 15 of the 18 benchmarks for success in Iraq as articulated by the President himself. The Jones Commission concludes that the Iraqi National Police force that we have spent millions of dollars training and equipping is ‘dysfunctional,’ riddled with sectarianism, corruption and inefficiency, and should be disbanded altogether. The consensus of the nation’s intelligence community, in the latest National Intelligence Estimate, is that the ‘level of overall violence, including attacks on and casualties among civilians remains high’ and ‘Iraq’s sectarian groups remain unreconciled.’

Furthermore, the Administration’s use of statistics to reinforce its claims of success is problematic. According to a report in the Washington Post, U.S. military leaders and the White House are ‘cherry-picking’ data to bolster their claims that the President’s failed war strategy is working. In order to support this claim, military and Administration calculations are based on a system of categorizing and excluding statistics that ‘selectively ignored negative trends’ and ‘puzzled’ senior intelligence officials and the nation’s chief auditor and head of the Government Accountability Office. For example, people who were killed by a shot to the back of the head are included as ‘sectarian’ casualties, but those killed by a shot to the front of the head are not counted because they are assumed to be dead from ‘criminal’ activity, according to an intelligence analyst quoted in the article.

In fact, the death toll in Iraq is rising. The Associated Press reports that while the President’s escalation has succeeded in bringing violence in Baghdad down from peak levels, the death toll from sectarian attacks around the country is running nearly double the pace from a year ago. The AP counted 1,809 civilian deaths in August, making it the highest monthly total this year. Though the administration continually cites a reduction in violence in Anbar province as evidence of the surge’s success, in fact, the Marines had already established ties to local Sunni leaders long before the ‘surge’ strategy was even announced. June, July and August 2007 marked the bloodiest summer so far for U.S. troops in Iraq, with 264 soldiers killed.

This grim picture is further reflected in Iraqi public opinion. A BBC/ABC News poll conducted in August concludes that Iraqi opinion is at its gloomiest since the polls began in

February 2004. According to this latest poll, between 67 and 70 percent of Iraqis say the escalation has made things worse in the key areas of security, the conditions for political dialogue, reconstruction and economic development. A majority (57 percent) of Iraqis believe that attacks on coalition forces are acceptable, including 93 percent of Sunnis and 50 percent of Shia.

The token drawdown of troops proposed by General Petraeus and endorsed by the President, in which nearly a year would pass before troop strength returns to pre-escalation levels, is neither a political compromise nor a “new plan.” In fact, this drawdown has been scheduled to take place since the beginning of the “surge,” because to do otherwise would stretch our military beyond the breaking point. So, in effect, the President is offering nothing at all in response to the demand of the American people and the Congress to bring our troops home—except another 10 years of war and occupation.

The President continues to ask our troops to referee a civil war whose outcome depends entirely on the actions of politicians in Baghdad. As General Petraeus himself has pointed out, the conflict in Iraq cannot be solved militarily; only a political settlement by Iraq’s leaders can bring this conflict to an end. Yet, despite the fact that Iraqi politicians have made virtually no progress toward this goal in four years, the President insists on a continuing American military involvement, with no end in sight. The American people understand that this policy has failed, and this Congress will continue to fight to bring an end to this disaster and to bring our troops home.

EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to come to the floor this evening to speak on a topic that I, quite honestly, am quite passionate about, and that is the education of our children, of my children, of the children in our communities and the children of all the parents across this great country. It’s an issue that I have been involved with for some time, first and foremost as a father with my own children at home, obviously from the very beginning days as educating them as a parent before they went off to school, and then later as they are in school now, both at home and off in college as well. Obviously, as a parent, we are all intimately involved with those issues. But in another sense as well, in a public official capacity. Before coming to Congress, I had the opportunity to work with the issues of education and public education, serving for 12 years, as I did, in the State government and serving on the Education Committee there.

I come to the floor now tonight to talk about an issue, education, and specifically some legislation that will be coming before this House, and eventually the Senate as well, and perhaps to

the President’s desk, and that is something called NCLB, No Child Left Behind. Now, as I say, there are numerous issues, and we just heard the other side of the aisle talk about the issue of war, which is often making the press and making the media and is talked about on talk radio quite continuously, as it should be. And the issue of education, public education is perhaps down there on some of the polls and down there as far as talk radio and the media as well. And I have noticed that the issue of the reauthorization of NCLB, No Child Left Behind, also has not been out there in the forefront of people’s debate. But rest assured, it shall be in the days and weeks ahead, as first the full committee in this House will consider legislation and has already drafted legislation, which I will talk about shortly, as the committee begins to consider that and hopefully have a number of public hearings on that and eventually come before this entire House for discussion.

So I think it’s important that we get out in front of it, if you will, to talk about NCLB, and maybe a little bit about the history of where we are on public education in this country, how did we get to the point we are right now; NCLB, and what it has wrought to this country over the last half a dozen years that it has been the law of this land, and what could occur if it does get reauthorized.

And finally, at the end, of course, I would like to talk a little bit about what I see as the solution to the problems of public education and their impact upon NCLB. And I will just give you a tad bit of a look at that right now, and that is, I have dropped in some legislation, H.R. 3177, and what H.R. 3177 is is a bill. I call it the LEARN Act, “Local Education Authority Returns Now.” And what that acronym simply means is that we really should take a look at education, see where we came from, and realize that in the earliest days of education in this country the idea was that having the parents involved first and foremost, having the teachers, the local principals involved first and foremost, and then the school board or community boards that run education is really the best way to ensure that our young kids will have the best education in their community, that the standards will be the highest possible and obtainable for all the children in their school, that the teachers will be the best and the brightest, that the methodology that we will use in those schools will be the best, and the school books and the programs and what have you will all be as best that we can in our local communities.

□ 2115

That has been the history of public education. That has been the history of private education, as well, and that is really what is at the heart of my piece of legislation, H.R. 3177, to say, can’t we return, or can’t we move forward, if

you will, to that, once again, to put the control, to put the decision-making, to put the accountability and to put the promise of better education right at home with the parents, the teachers, the principals and the like. That is what H.R. 3177 really does.

But I get ahead of myself here when I talk about what the solution to the problem is before we even spend a little bit of time about looking at what the problem was. Now, NCLB was signed into law, as I said, just a little less than a half a dozen years ago. It is up for reauthorization right now. When the President signed the law into effect, he hailed it as "an historic new law that will change the culture of American schools."

Now, at the heart of this change were mandatory new testing, reporting, and accountability requirements. You see, the theory went that schools would raise their standards and strive to make improvements, and then this eventually you might say trickle down and assist the underperforming students that needed the help the most.

But as we now reconsider the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, I submit that many of the changes brought about by this law were certainly unintended, maybe not unforeseen if they had merely taken the time to try to consider what some of the consequences would be, but they were truly burdensome and unintended consequences that were brought about by it. You see, instead of giving the local school districts the flexibility that they really need to develop their own curriculum to the very best limits that they can, they are instead hampered by NCLB's testing requirements, and they must basically now tailor their classrooms around this standardization to, what is in a way, a schizophrenic standardization, if you will.

I will explain that. On the one hand, the advocates of NCLB and those who you will hear who advocate its reauthorization will say, well, look, NCLB actually gives flexibility to the classroom and to the States inasmuch as they have the ability to set their standards and they have the ability to set their proficiency. Now, that is the one argument that the proponents of NCLB will make. Flip it around, though, and the same proponents will say, well, wait a minute, at the same time we are doing that, we are going to be requiring accountability at that level and a standardization across the board to an extent on this, as well. Obviously, that is a schizophrenic talking out of both sides of your mouth on a point, because, of course, you can't have both.

To the first point of essentially allowing the States the opportunity to set their own standards, well, there is a nod, if you will, to federalism, which is the appropriate way to handle education, that is, at the local level; but think about what has actually occurred. This is it: if you are going to tell the States that you are able to set

your own standards, but then, at the same time, tell the States that we are going to tie your funding to your meeting those standards, or exceeding those standards, what is going to be the result? Well, I can tell you what the result has been, and that is the proverbial race to the bottom.

It makes logical sense. If a State were to set the standards to where the parents would like them, perhaps the community would like them, perhaps the business interests and the community interest and everyone else in the State would like them, at a high level in the State, what is potentially going to occur in that State? Well, potentially, what is going to occur is they are not going to achieve what the law requires, which is 100 percent proficiency.

Think about that last term just for a moment. One hundred percent proficiency is being demanded by the Federal Government. I would like to hear from the Department of Education about any of their programs that are being run 100 percent proficiently. For that matter, I would like to hear from any agency of the Federal Government that their agency is being run 100 percent proficiently. Yet, even though the Federal Government can't achieve it, they are going to say that the States have to achieve that 100 percent proficiency level, because that is the requirement of NCLB.

The result is that those bureaucrats in the State who realize that their dollars are going to be tied to whether or not they meet the bar that they themselves have set, they are going to race to the bottom, lowering the standards.

This is just not a hypothetical that I am suggesting. This has been the actual result. This has been the actual result of State after State as they realized during the course of the implementation of NCLB that they have not been able to meet the proficiency standards that they had previously, and so they have lowered them. I believe I have examples of that. One example, of course, was in Michigan where prior to the law they had various standards within their schools as far as math and reading and what have you. Those standards were fairly high. You and I might agree they are appropriate levels for the schools. But they realized that they were not going to be able to meet those standards on a 100 percent proficiency level. So what did they do? They did really the logical thing for the best interests, I guess, for the people who run the schools, the bureaucrats and what have you in the State, but certainly not necessarily in the best interests of the students. They lowered the standards.

Now, by lowering the standards, suddenly, magically, if you will, they have now met their new lowered standards and they are in compliance with NCLB. There are obviously, not obviously, but there are clearly additional examples of this. I can give you some additional examples.

But I see I have been joined by several of my colleagues here on the floor, and I will turn the floor over now to Ms. FOXX who is quite equally interested, and I would say concerned, and dare I say equally passionate about the issue of education for our children and making sure that the standards are as high as completely possible and that the area of control remains appropriately where it should be, and that is with the parents and the local school community.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate Representative GARRETT putting together this Special Order tonight.

While I missed the very beginning of it, I know we often share Special Orders when we are dealing with the Constitution, and I think it a bit ironic that we are here on Constitution Day dealing with this issue which we often talk about in terms of the Constitution and the role of the Constitution and the Federal Government in dealing with education.

Let me say, first of all, you have been here a bit longer than I have and have worked on some of these issues longer than I have, and you have excellent credentials. But I want to say, to sort of establish my credentials a bit, that I come from a background of education serving on the school board of Watauga County for 12 years. I was an administrator at Appalachian State University, I was an instructor, and I was a community college president. My doctorate degree is in curriculum and teaching in higher education, so this is an issue I am very passionate about and have been all of my life.

I understand the importance of education. I understand the importance of an excellent education for helping people break the cycle of poverty and for unleashing talents and skills. I know that No Child Left Behind is not the answer to what we need to be doing in this country in terms of unleashing the tremendous potential that exists with young people in this country.

I want to thank you for introducing H.R. 3177, the Local Education Authority Returns Now, the LEARN Act, which would allow States to opt out of the costly and burdensome No Child Left Behind law and return the control to the locals where it belongs. I am proud to be one of the 33 cosponsors of this bill. Again, let me go back to the fact that we are here on Constitution Day and remind people, which I think we need to do on a fairly regular basis, of what the Constitution says about the role of the Federal Government in education.

Amendment 10 of the Constitution says: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or the people." Now, I read the Constitution fairly regularly, and I find no mention of education being a responsibility of the Federal Government.

I have established my credentials a little bit, and I will establish somewhat

my historical credentials. I was on the school board of Watauga County not too long after the ESEA bill was passed. This was part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. There has been a great deal of debate about that bill since then. Of course, most people have lost sight of the fact that No Child Left Behind was, I believe, the eighth reauthorization of that bill. So No Child Left Behind has its origins in the War on Poverty, good intentions, trying to increase spending at the local school level, help children in poverty to do better. But the record of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has been very spotty at best. And No Child Left Behind has also been very spotty at best.

What we need to do, again, is go back to the basics, in my opinion, where the role of the Federal Government is reduced in education and the role of the local school board, the local teachers, the local parents is increased. We need to make sure that we are not tying the hands of teachers and principals at the local level. That is what we have been doing with No Child Left Behind. We have been trying to mandate from Washington the way to handle education.

I find almost no support for this program in my district. I have had forums with teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members. Many people complain bitterly about No Child Left Behind and the detrimental effect it has had on their system.

Now, we found out in talking with them that much of what they are concerned about is not really in No Child Left Behind, but it is in other legislation that the Federal Government has imposed. But, again, what we need to do is unleash the potential that is there for teachers to work with children at the local level.

I want to make a few comments, again, about my own experiences with this law and with other iterations of the ESEA Act of 1965 and throw out some things that we know about and have known about for a long time which make this emphasis on Federal funding so frustrating to those of us who pay attention to the research, pay attention to history and know what has been happening. There are thousands, literally thousands, of studies to show that there is absolutely no correlation between how much the government spends on schools and how much students learn.

□ 2130

So the more spending we have guarantees nothing in terms of learning. What we do know is that what makes an effective school and what makes good learning are excellent principals and involved parents, and No Child Left Behind actually mitigates against both of those things because of so much emphasis on testing and so much emphasis again on the cookie-cutter approach.

Let me say also that no research has ever established that the quality of in-

dividual schools is a cause of the gap in test scores among groups of students. What is important is the safety of the neighborhood, income, books in the home, whether there are a mother and a father in the home, how much TV the child watches and what is the level of the mother's education.

Education cannot control these factors. We cannot, through our educational systems, make those things different for children. We are going to see gaps in education as long as we see lots of children coming from single-parent homes where the mother doesn't have a good education. We are going to see lots of problems with groups of children when children don't live in safe neighborhoods or when they don't have a lot of books in their homes.

We know that schools and school quality contribute little to the emergence of test score gaps among children. Again, government-run schools simply are not going to be able to bridge the gap between what children need to know and what they are currently learning.

What we need to be doing, again, is to reduce the role of the Federal Government in the education process and help those teachers who are out there on the line every day dealing with a tremendous range of children in their classrooms, trying to teach the tests so they won't be considered failures.

One of the saddest things we have done, I think, with No Child Left Behind is label so many classrooms as failures, so many schools as failures, when people are working very hard doing a lot of good things. We are actually discouraging people from going into teaching and wanting to use their talents and skills on behalf of others.

So, I would say that we need very much to go back to local accountability in education, local control in education, and stop letting the 7 percent of the funding that goes into the public schools from the Federal Government be the tail that wags the dog, because so much more of the money is coming in at the local level. Those people know what their schools need, and we need to let the folks there hold their systems accountable.

Again, I want to compliment you on the LEARN Act and for bringing this up to folks, presenting the facts, so that people are not being misled by the propaganda that is put out about these things.

People would like to control our lives totally from the Federal level, but it is not possible to do. Our framers of the Constitution understood that. They were very wise in it. We need to go back to those principles which gave us fairly good educational systems in the past but are failing us right now in the attempt to control everything from the Federal level.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for your commitment to this issue, your commitment to our children and their education now and in the future, and

for your past work as far as you set out as far as your experience in the area of education.

I was listening closely to the points you made, and you made a number of good ones. You started off, of course, this being Constitution Day, talking about the Constitution. You are correct. We ignore the Constitution at our peril, and those who would be willing to give greater power over education to the Federal bureaucracy are, in essence, sowing the seeds of freedom's destruction here in this country.

Madison in the *Federalist Papers*, No. 47, said "the accumulation of power in a small number of hands," in this case by Federal bureaucrats, "the accumulation of power in a small number of hands is the very definition of tyranny."

That is really what we are leading to here when we take away the parents' rights to control their child's upbringing and education and we take away the local community's rights of dictating how their schools should be run.

One of your last points, it is interesting that you bring it up, you were citing the fact that there are other factors that go into the performance of children on tests and on schools and the like. I was sitting back in the cloakroom just before coming on here tonight and talking about education. I would commend you to take a look at this article in the *Weekly Standard*. The headline is "No Child Left Alone." By that, they mean the fact that the Federal Government is coming around, and the little poor child is looking at adults on either side of him.

In the article, it raises an element of the point you have, that we would like to think when we are elected officials that we are in control of the situation; that if there is a problem on the nightly news or the front page of the newspaper, just come to us, whether in State government or in the Federal Government, and we will drop a bill in and that will solve it.

When it comes to education we would like to think all we need to do is spend a little more money, which was the last plan I was going to get to that you raised, spend a little more money, tweak the system here or there, and we are going to increase the output, if you will, of the school, as if we are producing widgets in those schools, that there is no difference than the factory or what have you. But different from the factory, these are human beings. These are little lives that are coming from an environment that the schoolhouse has absolutely no control over.

These are the other factors I think you are alluding to; the fact that this youngster over here might come from the traditional nuclear family of a loving mom and dad, where only one of the parents works outside of the home and the other parent stays inside the home and takes care and is watching over the child all the time and educating, making sure that that child is doing their homework, following up on

activities, going out to museums and the like.

In another family, in another environment, you may have different demographics. You may have a single parent, or no parent whatsoever. You may have a crime-ridden area. You may have no one watching over that child after school. There may be no after-school activities whatsoever. There may be no museums or what have you for that child to go to. On and on the list goes. Those are all factors that the school, and things like NCLB and all that the Federal Government does with regard to education, are not going to be impacting upon directly. Yet we like to think that just by changing an education law, we are going to fix it.

Which brings me to one of your middle points which I think really needs to have the point reemphasized, and that is the spending issue. I brought a couple of charts to illustrate this.

Ms. FOXX. Before you go to that chart, I want to ask you if you would yield to a question.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Absolutely.

Ms. FOXX. I also had the opportunity to review that article tonight from *The Weekly Standard* and was very struck, particularly by the review of the book by Mr. LIEBERMAN. I hope that at some point you will call attention to that a little bit. I intended to do that in my comments. But I think it would be excellent if we were able to enter particularly the review of his book into the record, because he makes many of those same points that I was making about the educational structure. I think he has done a very good service. So I would hope that you would be able to do that at some point in the effort here tonight.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Sure. I appreciate that. Before I get to the gentleman from Georgia, let me just bring back to the point of spending in our schools and where it goes to.

When you are talking about spending in schools, there are two elements to it. There is instructional spending and noninstructional spending. Instructional spending is what you and I would normally think about as far as spending for schools. That is paying for the teachers' salary, that is for paying for the books, the papers and pencils that they may have in the classrooms and that sort of thing. The other is noninstructional. That would include the items such as the building itself, maybe the school bus and bussing the kids into there, and other things outside of the classroom.

The numbers that we have here, and, by the way, you have to give credit for being able to bring this tonight to Dr. Anthony Davies of the Donahue Graduate School of Business at Duquesne University, who collected a lot of this data.

What we see is on these two charts, sort of interesting, the little blue dots and the red dots. The blue dots on the top portion of the chart are eighth

graders. The red ones are the fourth graders. The first chart I will look at is instructional. The next chart makes a similar point with noninstructional spending per pupil.

Across the bottom of the chart is how much we are spending on these kids, and it goes from \$2,500 up to \$7,500. That is the x-axis. The y-axis, you have the NAEP scores. These are basically educational scores, actually started during the Reagan Administration, actually trying to come up with a uniform testing of all schools in the country. These are NAEP scores.

So let's take a look at eighth graders for instructional spending. You would think when you move from left to right, from the \$2,500 per child over to \$7,500 over on the far right, that you would see an increase of performance by the students.

What do we see? All of the little dots representing the students are in the same band here, from the 520 to 560 band all the way across. The same thing with the fourth graders. You would think intuitively, or at least by the propaganda of the education establishment, that the more money on instructional spending we would spend for the fourth graders on their NAEP scores, on the testing scores, would increase. But what do we see instead? They are all again right in the same bandwidth, meaning that as you spend more dollars, we are not seeing an improvement in test scores.

Let's take a look at the next chart. Very briefly, this confirms what we were talking about with noninstructional, things outside of the classroom. It is slightly different numbers because the dollars you spend on that is sometimes greater. From \$3,000 on the left to \$6,500 all the way to the right. Again, the blue is the eighth-grader kids and the red are the fourth grade children. Again this is the NAEP scores.

Again, what do we see? There are no increases, as you would intuitively think there should be, at least by the propaganda you would think there should be. For the eighth graders, it stays constant. On the fourth graders, it equally stays constant.

So, both charts make the point of Ms. FOXX that what we do on the Federal level with regard to saying we are going to provide funding for these specific programs or what have you, whether it is through NCLB or otherwise, really doesn't hit the point. The point really is to make sure that the curriculum and the teachers and the school and everything else is the best that they can possibly have, and making sure that the accountability for those are by those people who have the most interest in it, and that, of course, is the parents and the local community.

I am very pleased that I am joined here this evening by a good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Georgia, to speak on these topics as well.

Mr. PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New Jersey, Congressman GARRETT, for organizing this hour, and for your leadership on what truly is one of the most important issues, and that is the education of our children. It is a great privilege to be able to join you tonight and to commend you for the work that you have done in this area.

What could truly be more important, Mr. Speaker, other than the education of our children? I don't know that anything could be more important than the education of our children. What it gets to, when you get right down to the rub though, is who is going to make decisions? Who is going to decide where we are going in the area of education?

I was pleased to hear my friend from North Carolina earlier, Congresswoman Foxx, point out that No Child Left Behind is oftentimes thought of as a new endeavor. In fact, it was the reauthorization of the ESEA, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that began back in 1965. You have pointed out so well about the issue of the amount of money and the amount of performance or the quality of performance of children. But the No Child Left Behind Act, which was passed originally in 2002, is up for reauthorization.

I represent a district on the north side of Atlanta, the Sixth District of Georgia. I served on the Education Committee in the State legislature, in the State Senate, and also serve on the Education Committee here in the United States Congress. One of the concerns that I have heard about for the last decade or more that I have been involved in public service is from teachers, and their main concern is that they have remarkable constraints placed upon them in trying to get their children to whatever level it is in whatever subject.

When I was running for Congress initially, I used to tell folks that as a physician, one of the reasons that spurred me into public service, to get involved in elective office, was there were all sorts of folks at the local, State and Federal level that were making decisions about what I could do for and with my patients.

When I would share those stories with my local teachers, they would say, well, you haven't seen anything. You wouldn't believe what the State government is doing to encumber what we are trying to do for our children in our classroom. Then after 2002 with No Child Left Behind, they would say, you wouldn't believe the changes that have occurred that have made my job as a teacher more difficult in trying to educate the children that are entrusted to me.

□ 2145

So I think it is important as we look at the reauthorization as we move forward on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, now known as No Child Left Behind, what has happened over the last 5 years. The original bill provided for increasing money from the

Federal Government, a 26 percent increase in spending and new programs as it relates to No Child Left Behind.

The problem, as you know, is most folks across this Nation know what the Golden Rule is: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. But in Washington the Golden Rule is different. In Washington the Golden Rule is: He who has the gold makes the rules. Consequently, what we have seen in our education establishment is that money from the Federal Government, that 26 percent increase in spending from the Federal Government, with it comes strings and those strings are rules and regulations that require more of local folks in the area of education.

And now all of that might be wonderful if we were to have seen over the last 5 years, if not the last 40 years, an increase in the level of achievement of children in our local schools.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield on that point, we can break this down into two elements: first, what has happened since NCLB has been passed; and, secondly, over the longer haul. Before you came to the floor, I was giving a little brief history of where we came from on the whole area of education. As you know, this country started with the idea that education was first and foremost with the family, and after that the local schools and normal schools developed and what have you, and then the education bureaucracy developed on the State level, and a progressive education format began to grow with more rules and regulations. Finally, in the last century, and more specifically you cited it in the 1960s, with Lyndon Johnson with his growth of education.

Prior to that time, you really had very little education laws passed on the Federal level. For the first 176 years of this country, there were only 41 laws in total, total laws passed in the Federal Government for education. Since LBJ passed the legislation, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 40 years ago, 117 more laws have been added to the books just on the Federal level. So since LBJ came in, there was the idea that the Federal Government is going to have a role. As the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. Foxx) said, an unconstitutional role in education, but be that as it may. Since that time, the Federal Government has been doing two things: funding and setting down requirements and regulations.

So you would think that if this is a good Federal program or agency, we would have something to show for it as far as where our dollars go. I have a couple of charts. This first chart here is labeled Federal Education Spending and Reading Scores. Again, as I referenced before, these are NAEP scores and they are green, yellow and red. Green is the top, 17-year-olds, and the yellow is 13-year-olds, and red is the 9-year-olds. The middle one is how much money we are spending on the Federal level.

Watch what happens here. This starts in 1970. Going across here to 2005, Federal spending starts and flattens out and goes down in the 1980s. The Reagan administration, when they thought they were going to turn control over to the States, began to create block grants; but the Congress, even though it was a Republican Congress, had a different idea. Spending immediately went up dramatically. And this administration brags about the fact that they have seen a 40 percent increase in spending at the end of the chart here.

So what happened with that spending? Look at the lines. Perfectly flat. The scores here, these are the NAEP scores on both sides. Perfectly flat. From 1970 to 2005, the 17-year-old NAEP scores flat; 13- and 9-year-olds, the same thing. This is sort of documenting it.

This presents in a different graphic percentage change from baseline over here. The red this time is our Federal spending on education which starts over here in 1980 to 2004. Look at how it just takes off over here. You would think with all of these extra dollars, the scores on the bottom, these are math scores again for those same age groups, what do they do, perfectly flat all of the way across the bottom. No changes whatsoever as the dollars go up.

That makes the point graphically that throwing the money at it from the Federal level has had no result.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. You can look at that and realize that the hard-earned taxpayer dollars that we are entrusted with to spend responsibly, and it was the collective wisdom of Congress over that period of time, to spend significantly greater money. You have an increase of nearly 90 percent in spending over that period of time on that chart; and, in fact, little to no change in the achievement of the students in both the areas of math and reading.

That is not to say that kids can't improve. But I think it is to say that the amount of money, it is clearly documented, that the amount of money in and of itself as being a predictor of student achievement just doesn't exist. That is study after study after study.

But I want to spend just a few more moments, because when you think back to your school days, you always were a little anxious about getting your report card. You weren't quite certain whether or not that teacher was going to recognize the wonderful work you had done that would boost you into that next level. But I thought it would be helpful to give a report card on No Child Left Behind, the last 5 years of the authorization.

So I searched around to find an objective report card, and I found the Heritage Foundation, which is a wonderful group of independent thinkers, objective thinkers, not necessarily Republican thinkers by any means, but objective thinkers; and they came up with kind of tracking in four or five dif-

ferent areas. I thought it might be helpful to share with my colleagues tonight a couple areas that they graded as it related to No Child Left Behind, or the reauthorization of the ESEA from 2002 to 2007.

One of the things that they looked at was one of the goals that was cited was to constrain this remarkable Federal spending. As we have discussed, of course, spending increased by \$23.5 billion over 2001 to 2007, a significant increase, an increase that is well documented on the graphs here. So they gave the constraint of Federal spending an F. That is failing on constraining Federal spending.

What about streamlining bureaucracy and decreasing red tape, one of the things that we always tout as the latest and the greatest for every Federal program; it is going to streamline the bureaucracy and decrease the red tape. Certainly that is one of the areas that teachers that I talk to back home have the greatest objection to, that it has increased their paperwork and increased their red tape.

In fact, another objective organization, the Office of Management and Budget, has determined that the annual paperwork burden on State and local communities has been 7 million hours, a cost of at least \$140 million to the local and State communities in the area of education. So streamlining bureaucracy and red tape, what is the grade? It is another F, a failure.

What about maintaining meaningful State testing? It is not that States haven't tried for decades to increase the performance of the children entrusted to them in the public education system. Many of the States have adopted all sorts of testing; and, in fact, what No Child Left Behind has done is either duplicated or usurped the ability of States to maintain their meaningful testing. So Heritage was relatively kind and gave us, the Federal Government, a C as it related to that.

Finally, the area that I hear the most about, restoring State and local control. All of us know that local teachers and local communities and local administrators and certainly parents know best the kinds of activities that will allow one child and another, all children, the opportunity to achieve and reach their greatest potential. And restoring State and local control, what happened with No Child Left Behind, that is another F. So we can all agree that we ought to increase student achievement. We all believe that ought to occur.

I would just implore my colleagues and respectfully request that we look at the history. Look at the charts. Look at the demonstration. Look at the history that has gone on in terms of Federal spending and student achievement.

I would ask my colleagues to look at the history over the last 5 years of what the increase in regulation and requirements from the Federal Government has been to the local communities. Have they increased student

achievement? I think an objective assessment of the situation would say that in fact they have not. I would ask my colleagues to look at whether or not removing State and local control over the issue of education has assisted in increasing student achievement, and I would suggest candidly it has not.

That is why I am so proud to stand with my colleague from New Jersey tonight who has penned the LEARN Act, the bill that would allow States to opt out of this insanity, opt out of this merry-go-round that apparently by evidence tonight demonstrates that the Federal Government and its role in elementary and secondary education has not been necessarily productive in increasing student achievement, and to allow the States and local communities to recognize and appreciate that they know best how to get our young people to a level of accountability.

All of us want them to achieve. I so strongly support my colleague from New Jersey in his efforts to make it so his State and my State and other States across this Nation, if they so desire, can opt out of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act so that those moneys can go back home to be utilized in the most efficient and effective manner to make it so our children can achieve.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for the points you make and for joining me on the floor this evening and joining with me and other Members of Congress who are supporters of the LEARN Act, and who in general believe that we must do all we possibly can to help elevate and raise up the standards and the quality of education in this country.

Sometimes the best way to do that is to allow those people closest to it and those people with the most interest in it, and that is the parents and local school and the teachers, to become involved with it.

The gentleman from Georgia raised a couple of interesting points, and I want to go back and highlight some of them. One is what has been the result so far since No Child Left Behind has been on the books. Now my charts over here have shown that ever since President Lyndon Johnson came into office and made it one of his major legacies, and that is what he said it was going to be, the authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which has now been on the books for 40 years, we have seen the result in test scores over the last some-40 years of Federal control and involvement in education, and those results are pretty dismal.

If this was something in business or anywhere else and you saw a flat, no increase with additional spending year after year and additional regulation and modification on the Federal level, you would say something is wrong here. Well, there is because the Federal Government has become involved and has taken away some of the accountability and authority that should rest back at home with the local community.

Since No Child Left Behind passed the first time, the first report came out I believe in the beginning of 2006 with regard to No Child Left Behind and the results from that. In essence, the proponents of NCLB jumped and said it is working. We are seeing a slight improvement, and they said that is all because of NCLB. Then you have to sit back and think: NCLB was passed in 2002 with an effective date of 2003. Portions as far as the implementations didn't begin until 2004 and 2005. Here this report was coming out in the beginning of 2006. So you realize at the end of the day that NCLB wasn't having any of those positive impacts. These were things that were just long in the books already, long in the course of things already that the States had already taken upon.

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For example, in certain reading areas, almost two or three dozen States had already instituted a reading program that NCLB later on would say this would be the reading program that they would encourage States to employ. Of course those States that are already doing it were ahead of the game and they skewed the numbers upwards.

So the reports that you read in some of the press reports coming back from NCLB, they say NCLB is working. You have to look—at was it NCLB or something the teachers and parents had already instituted by themselves?

Now, I can speak from personal experience on some of these topics because, as I indicated before, I used to be in State government before I came to Washington. I served on an education committee there. One of the things that we did in the great State of New Jersey was to come up with what we called the CCC, that is the “core curriculum content” standards.

So we had already in our State realized that we needed to address some deficiencies in public education in the State, and one of the ways you can do that is by coming up with an entire spectrum, if you will, of topics that we want our kids in our schools to learn, and learn at a good level. So that was the core curriculum content standard.

So we were going to say that all public schools would have this in the great State of New Jersey. They ran the gamut. They were not just math and reading, which is what NCLB is about, but other topics as well. History classes and social studies classes, literature and arts and art classes and technical classes as well. And on and on the list went. Foreign languages and the like. They were things that the people of the State of New Jersey said was important for our kids and our State in a way that we wanted them to be educated in it.

After NCLB came into place, our State had to do what a lot of other States had to do as well, and that is turn from what we said, what our parents, what our community said was im-

portant for our children, to what Washington was now saying was important. Washington said that math and reading are important, and they are. You will get no debate with me on that. But when you make just two items the premier and the only topics that you are going to be judged on, and if you only make two areas the only area that you are going to be potentially funded or defunded on, what is the natural inclination of administrators and the like? It is to shift local resources away from these other programs like physical education, health, arts, sciences, history, shift your dollars away from those things, things that the local community might feel are very important and shift them over to what now the bureaucrats in Washington say are the only things that are important.

When you think about it, there is another consequence to it as well. When you make that shift, you do a disservice to some of the children in your school or who are perhaps doing well or just getting by at certain levels as you focus exclusively on one area.

Let me give you a classic example of that. We had a school in our district which was an exceptional school. It has been considered that by the State of New Jersey for many years; it has been considered that by the parents of the children who go to that school. It is a school that all the kids do well on their SATs. I think it has like nearly a 100 percent graduation rate, just about an equal percentage of children going from high school on to college. By anyone's classification, almost anyone's classification, an exceptional school.

NCLB comes along, and because of some difficulties in just a very small area with just a very small select group of children in that school, it rated as not performing as NCLB wanted them to perform. That, therefore, made a problem for the administrators in the school, that they would have to now shift their focus and shift their attention and shift their resources from what had been a successful school in the past to address some of these concerns on the Federal level.

So now what do you do? You leave behind the whole idea of NCLB, No Child Left Behind, and now you are leaving behind the vast majority of children in that school.

Let me just take a moment then first to finish on a point I raised earlier, the problem of the race to the bottom that NCLB is causing and then what some of the solutions are. I think I mentioned earlier one example, which was Michigan. Michigan, like New Jersey, had prior to NCLB raised its standards because that is what the parents and the community and teachers all said was appropriate and what they wanted for their children in their school.

Then NCLB came along with their new rubric of how things are going to run. What happened? By the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year, Michigan found itself with more failing schools than any other State. Obviously, if you

have the bar of your standards way up here and all the other States are down here in the middle someplace, you are not going to have 100 percent efficiency up here. So they had more failing schools than any other State.

So NCLB in essence was making Michigan look worse than any other State that had set the bar lower. How did Michigan respond to this embarrassment? By lowering the passing rate on its high school English test from 75 percent to 42 percent, which helped reduce its reported number of failing school from 1,500 schools to 216.

So instead of getting the 75 that is usually like a C average in a school, instead of saying you needed a C in order to be passing in English, they say all you need is a 42 percent. When did you ever go to school and say a 42, which would be a D or E or something like that in school, was passing. That is what Michigan did in response to NCLB.

What did other schools do? They lowered their bars as well. One of them did it in a more clever way. They changed what they call the "confidence intervals." That is when you take a poll. They have a confidence factor or margin of error of 3 or 4 percent. If you raise that percentage point all the way up to the point so the confidence factor is very small, then you can say in essence that you are changing the facts by statistics.

That is what a number of schools did. Kentucky did that. By choosing 99.5 percent confidence, they made it a very narrow range as far as what was within the failing range, and, therefore, all of a sudden their grades as far as NCLB was concerned went up. On the list goes.

How about average yearly progress? I will talk about where that came from in a moment. Some of the schools have decided in order to do average yearly progress, they will treat it like balloon mortgages, something that we know about in the press right now. What that means is instead of saying we will do so much each year, we will only do a little tiny bit the first several years and really do a whole lot at the end. Of course you never get to the end.

So some of those are just some of the classic examples of what are some of the problems with NCLB and the race to the bottom, basically saying that we are not doing what everybody wants. Everyone's high standards, whether you want to call it a national standard, world-class standards in the schools, everybody wants what is the best for their child. But when you have a system in place where the Federal Government is going to be sending out the money in relationship to their standards and allowing the flexibility for the States to have it set those standards, you are, as I said at the very beginning, speaking out of both sides of your mouth with regard to this, and you are going to have a failing system. That is what we have with the Federal Government's involvement here

So what is the solution? Well, one of the solutions is simply this: do whatever you will with NCLB, and you will see a host, probably a hundred bills, right now in Congress to try to tweak it here or tweak it there, increase spending even more, as this chart shows, or take away the accountability here. On and on the list goes. You will see all that come down.

I suggest, however, in addition to whatever Congress throws out on the table as far as their solution to the problem, I suggest this as well: allow the States, if they want to, voluntarily, so that means they are not forced to, to opt out of No Child Left Behind. So if your State says thank you very much, Washington, thank you very much, bureaucrats in Washington and the Department of Education, bureaucrats who have never seen my school building, never saw my child, never saw my county or town, or what have you, we do not need your assistance on how to hire our teachers, buy our books, develop our curriculum, teach our kids. We can do it ourselves. We have the competence as parent, teachers, administrators in the community to do it.

We would have the ability then, if that State so desired, to opt out of No Child Left Behind and keep our own money here in our own State and not send it to Washington any more.

That last point is an important one. Right now, if a State wanted to, it could opt out of No Child Left Behind, as I just described it, and say that we don't need your rules and regulations, thank you very much, Washington. But all the money would still go to Washington and that State would never get any money back.

That is obviously inherently unfair to that State. Why should the taxpayers be sending money to Washington and see absolutely zero benefit from it? It makes no sense.

So what the LEARN Act does, 3177 that I spoke to at the very beginning, simply says this: not only would a State, if it so desired, opt out of NCLB and all the vast red tape and rigamarole that comes with it and all the burdens that comes on the teachers and administrators and the burdens that it places on the kids who are no longer going to have high standards to live up to, not only would be able to opt out, but those taxpayers in that State would be able to in essence keep their money in their own pocket and not send it to Washington any more; keep the money in that State, in the taxpayers' pocket where it belongs so they can decide how that dollar should be spent on the public education in their own respective State.

Now, mind you, some, maybe the vast majority of the States would not want to opt out of No Child Left Behind. Maybe you all live in one of those States that feels that you need Washington and the bureaucrats down in Washington to assist or to tell you how your local schools should be run.

Maybe there are States, maybe there are Congress people who represent districts and those districts feel that they are just not able to decide how to run their schools, they are not able to decide what a quality teacher is, they are not able to decide what a violent school is.

Maybe there is some school districts or some congressional district that just can't make a determination of how to set up a curriculum or set testing standards or set levels of accountability. For those congressional districts, they would be able to stay in the system and not opt out. That is the inherent benefit of a voluntary system.

Again, I appreciate my colleagues from the various States who have already signed onto this and my colleagues who joined me on the floor this evening for discussion of NCLB and its reauthorization.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CONYERS (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of personal business.

Mr. ENGEL (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business.

Ms. HOOLEY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. LYNCH (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. WYNN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. YARMUTH (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mr. GERLACH (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. POE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of official business.

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 Ms. SOLIS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HARE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CONAWAY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, September 18, 19, 20, 21, and 24.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, September 18, 19, 20, 21, and 24.

Mr. CONAWAY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and September 18, 19, and 20.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. CLEAVER and to include extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$1,924.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, September 18, 2007, at 9 a.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3285. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Carriage Vessel Overhaul, Repair, and Maintenance [DFARS Case 2007-D001] (RIN: 0750-AF75) received September 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3286. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Labor Reimbursement on DoD Non-Commercial Time-and-Materials and Labor-Hour Contracts [DFARS Case 2006-D030] (RIN: 0750-AF44) received September 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3287. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Berry Amendment Restrictions — Clothing Materials and Components Covered [DFARS Case 2006-D031] (RIN: 0750-AF54) received August 14, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3288. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Mgmt. Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting

the Department's final rule — Food Additives Permitted for Direct Addition to Food for Human Consumption; Glycerol Ester of Tall Oil Rosin [Docket No. 2006F-0225] received September 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3289. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Mgmt. Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Labeling: Safe Handling Statements: Labeling of Shell Eggs [Docket No. 2004N-0382] (RIN: 0910-ZA23) received September 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3290. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No. 070809455-7478-01] (RIN: 0694-AE12) received September 6, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3291. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cuban Assets Control Regulations, Burmese Sanctions Regulations, Sudanese Sanctions Regulations, and Iranian Transactions Regulations — received August 24, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3292. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3293. A letter from the Secretary, Department of State, transmitting the Department's joint Strategic Plan along with the U.S. Agency for International Development for FY 2007 to FY 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3294. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting a report on the Annual Inventory of Commercial and Inherently Governmental Activities for 2007, in accordance with Section 2 of the Federal Activities Inventory Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3295. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3296. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3297. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3298. A letter from the Under Secretary and Director, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes to Practice for Continued Examination Filings, Patent Applications Containing Patentably Indistinct Claims, and Examination of Claims in Patent Applications [Docket Nos.: PTO-P-2005-0022; PTO-P-2005-0023] (RIN: 0651-AB93; 0651-AB94) received August 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3299. A letter from the Under Secretary and Director, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Patent Fees for Fiscal Year 2007 [Docket No. PTO-C-2006-0015] (RIN: 0651-AB81) received August 14, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3300. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Touhy Regulations [Docket ID FEMA-2007-0006] (RIN: 1660-AA54) received August 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3301. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 26 CFR 601.105: Examination of returns and claims for refund, credit, or abatement; determination of correct tax liability (Also: Part 1, Sections 704(c); 1.704-3(e)(3).) (Rev. Proc. 2007-59) received September 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3302. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 26 CFR 601.602: Tax forms and instructions. (Also: Part 1, 179) (Rev. Proc. 2007-60) received September 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3303. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 6332. — Summer of Property Subject to Levy (Rev. Rul. 2006-42) received September 7, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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:

Mr. FRANK: Committee on Financial Services. Supplemental report on H.R. 1852. A bill to modernize and update the National Housing Act and enable the Federal Housing Administration to use risk-based pricing to more effectively reach underserved borrowers, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-217 Pt. 2). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. GORDON: Committee on Science and Technology. H.R. 2698. A bill to authorize appropriations for the civil aviation research and development projects and activities of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110-329). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Ms. MATSUI: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 650. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1852) to modernize and update the National Housing Act and enable the Federal Housing Administration to use risk-based pricing to more effectively reach underserved borrowers, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-330). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. OBERSTAR: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 2881. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2008 through 2011, to improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110-331). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union. Ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 3539. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend financing for the

Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. RANGEL:

H.R. 3540. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. DOYLE (for himself, Mr. PICKERING, and Mr. BOUCHER):

H.R. 3541. A bill to amend the "Do-not-call" Implementation Act to eliminate the automatic removal of telephone numbers registered on the Federal "do-not-call" registry; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. HOOLEY:

H.R. 3542. A bill to declare water hoses containing lead to be banned hazardous substances; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MALONEY of New York (for

herself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. HARE, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. WEINER, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. WYNN):

H.R. 3543. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to extend and improve protections and services to individuals directly impacted by the terrorist attack in New York City on September 11, 2001, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. SPACE (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 3544. A bill to catalyze change in the care and treatment of diabetes in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POMEROY (for himself and Mr. KUHL of New York):

H.R. 3545. A bill to amend the small rural school achievement program and the rural and low-income school program under part B of title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs.

BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. FARR, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. WU, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. COHEN, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RAHALL, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. SHULER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. SUTTON, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 3546. A bill to authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mrs. BONO, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. CHANDLER, and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 3547. A bill to increase and enhance law enforcement resources committed to investigation and prosecution of violent gangs, to deter and punish violent gang crime, to protect law-abiding citizens and communities from violent criminals, to revise and enhance criminal penalties for violent crimes, to expand and improve gang prevention programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa (for himself, Mr. AKIN, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas):

H.R. 3548. A bill to enhance citizen access to Government information and services by establishing plain language as the standard style for Government documents issued to the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BURTON of Indiana:

H.R. 3549. A bill to withdraw Federal funds from States and political subdivisions of States that interfere with enforcement of Federal immigration law; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on 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. CONAWAY (for himself, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. AKIN, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 3550. A bill to require every Senator and Representative in, and Delegate and Resident Commissioner to, the Congress to obtain copies of the Constitution of the United States of America and distribute them to their staff and require that they all read such document; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3551. A bill to reauthorize the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Office of Special Counsel, to modify the procedures of the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Office of Special Counsel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FOSSELLA:

H.R. 3552. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to include within the definition of "refugee" spouses of persons who have been forced to abort a pregnancy or undergo involuntary sterilization; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN (for herself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

H.R. 3553. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend and improve certain authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GOODE, Ms. FOXX, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CARTER, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. AKIN, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER):

H.R. 3554. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that wages paid to unauthorized aliens may not be deducted from gross income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PALLONE (for himself, Ms. SOLIS, and Mrs. CAPPS):

H.R. 3555. A bill to prohibit the implementation of policies to prohibit States from providing quality health coverage to children in need under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RODRIGUEZ:

H.R. 3556. A bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act to provide an additional 12 weeks of leave for a family member to care for a member of the Armed Forces who is seriously injured in combat; to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. WEXLER:

H.R. 3557. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the establishment of, and the deduction of contributions to, homeownership plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H. Con. Res. 210. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H. Con. Res. 211. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Diabetes Day; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H. Con. Res. 212. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Romare Howard Bearden should be recognized as one of the preeminent artists of the 20th century for his artistic genius and visual creativity in the depiction of the complexity and richness of African American life in the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. BURTON of Indiana):

H. Res. 651. A resolution recognizing the warm friendship and expanding strategic relationship between the United States and Brazil, commending Brazil on successfully reducing its dependence on oil by finding alternative ways to satisfy its energy needs, and recognizing the importance of the March 9, 2007, United States-Brazil Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on biofuels cooperation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. ARCURI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. POE, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TOWNS,

Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Ms. WATSON, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. FILNER, Mr. CARTER, Mr. BERRY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CARDOZA, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 652. A resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the importance of protecting American cruise ship passengers against crimes on the high seas and ensuring that the perpetrators of such crimes are brought to justice; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. MCDERMOTT (for himself and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H. Res. 653. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the concept of nonviolence and the teachings of Gandhi remain relevant and instructive in today's world and the United States should take an active role in disseminating the message of nonviolence through education and public awareness; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PASTOR:

H. Res. 654. A resolution congratulating the Phoenix Mercury for winning the 2007 Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) Championship; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H. Res. 655. A resolution honoring the life and accomplishments of Katherine Dunham; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. WALSH of New York:

H. Res. 656. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the Congress should take immediate action to implement the recommendations of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, and other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WALZ of Minnesota (for himself, Mr. KIND, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. WELLER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. HARE, Mr. JORDAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. PETRI, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. LAHOOD):

H. Res. 657. A resolution expressing heartfelt sympathy for the victims of the devastating thunderstorms that caused severe flooding during August 2007 in the States of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

196. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Nebraska, relative to Legislative Resolution No. 37 supporting an immediate review of the current federal ISTEA restrictions imposed on Nebraska; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 25: Ms. FALLIN.
 H.R. 74: Mr. STARK.
 H.R. 98: Mr. GALLEGLY.
 H.R. 138: Mr. KINGSTON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
 H.R. 139: Mr. REICHERT.
 H.R. 171: Mr. OBERSTAR.
 H.R. 223: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. PITTS.
 H.R. 284: Mr. LATHAM.
 H.R. 368: Mr. WEINER and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
 H.R. 369: Mr. LEVIN.
 H.R. 462: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota and Mr. WALBERG.
 H.R. 468: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 542: Mr. BERMAN.
 H.R. 583: Mr. ALLEN.
 H.R. 676: Mr. BACA.
 H.R. 690: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 743: Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. WELLER, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. REICHERT, and Mr. REYNOLDS.
 H.R. 760: Ms. LEE, Mr. CROWLEY, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 768: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. JINDAL.
 H.R. 819: Mr. GONZALEZ and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 840: Mr. WEINER.
 H.R. 891: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
 H.R. 897: Ms. SUTTON, Mr. FILNER, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 962: Mr. WEXLER, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
 H.R. 1029: Mr. GORDON, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. COOPER, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. POE.
 H.R. 1043: Mr. COURTNEY.
 H.R. 1046: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
 H.R. 1076: Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee and Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 1091: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
 H.R. 1110: Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 1125: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. REGULA, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. LEE, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. GIFFORDS, and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 1142: Mr. COURTNEY.
 H.R. 1154: Mr. FILNER, Mr. CARNAHAN, and Mr. LEVIN.
 H.R. 1228: Mr. ROSS.
 H.R. 1236: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SPRATT, Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. CROWLEY.
 H.R. 1275: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 1279: Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. TOWNS.
 H.R. 1280: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, and Mr. KIRK.
 H.R. 1293: Mr. KAGEN.
 H.R. 1303: Mr. KLEIN of Florida.
 H.R. 1306: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida and Mr. MAHONEY of Florida.
 H.R. 1357: Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SALLI, Mr. HAYES, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. MEEK of Florida.
 H.R. 1376: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 1386: Mr. COHEN, Mr. POMEROY, and Ms. SOLIS.
 H.R. 1471: Mrs. DRAKE.
 H.R. 1481: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 1497: Mr. BAIRD and Mr. BACA.
 H.R. 1498: Ms. SUTTON.
 H.R. 1514: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 1518: Mr. SPACE.
 H.R. 1537: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 1567: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 1576: Mr. CARNEY and Mr. HALL of New York.

H.R. 1647: Mr. HARE.
 H.R. 1655: Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 1657: Ms. BORDALLO.
 H.R. 1665: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H.R. 1687: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
 H.R. 1713: Mr. WU.
 H.R. 1738: Mr. FILNER, Mr. HONDA, Mr. WAMP, and Ms. SOLIS.
 H.R. 1746: Mr. FALCOMAVAEGA, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. WEINER, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. BERKLEY, and Ms. SHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 1756: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. CULBERSON.
 H.R. 1772: Ms. SUTTON and Mr. WU.
 H.R. 1820: Mr. WAXMAN.
 H.R. 1843: Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 1881: Mr. HONDA and Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 1942: Mr. FOSSELLA.
 H.R. 1968: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 2014: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 2061: Ms. DELAURO.
 H.R. 2064: Mr. FARR, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. FILNER, and Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 2074: Mr. MARKEY and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2169: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
 H.R. 2188: Ms. GIFFORDS and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.
 H.R. 2198: Ms. BORDALLO.
 H.R. 2234: Mr. ISRAEL and Mr. SAXTON.
 H.R. 2265: Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 2287: Ms. CARSON.
 H.R. 2303: Mr. KELLER.
 H.R. 2329: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. ALLEN and Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS.
 H.R. 2332: Mr. FALCOMAVAEGA, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. SALLI, Mr. HAYES, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. SESTAK.
 H.R. 2343: Mr. ALLEN and Ms. SHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 2405: Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 2443: Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.
 H.R. 2452: Mr. BAIRD.
 H.R. 2464: Mr. HILL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. MELANCON.
 H.R. 2470: Ms. CARSON.
 H.R. 2477: Ms. KILPATRICK and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 2478: Ms. WOOLSEY.
 H.R. 2537: Mr. FILNER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. WEINER, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. DELAHUNT.
 H.R. 2567: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 2583: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 2596: Mr. CARNAHAN.
 H.R. 2604: Mr. STARK.
 H.R. 2606: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. EMANUEL, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
 H.R. 2610: Mr. MACK.
 H.R. 2702: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MICHAUD, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. RALLI, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
 H.R. 2744: Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SPACE, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. STARK, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 2746: Ms. SHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 2757: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 2762: Ms. SHAKOWSKY, Mr. TERRY, Mr. WOLF, Mr. FERGUSON, and Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
 H.R. 2779: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. HILL, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Ms. BEAN, and Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
 H.R. 2802: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 2821: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H.R. 2827: Mr. BARROW.
 H.R. 2833: Ms. CLARKE and Mrs. CAPPS.
 H.R. 2842: Ms. CARSON and Mr. CARNAHAN.
 H.R. 2896: Mr. SHAYS.
 H.R. 2915: Mr. BARROW.
 H.R. 2922: Mr. SHAYS.
 H.R. 2925: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
 H.R. 2926: Mr. DICKS and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 2930: Ms. WATERS.
 H.R. 2933: Mr. WICKER.
 H.R. 2976: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GERLACH, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. WEXLER.
 H.R. 3014: Mr. FALOMAVAEGA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WEINER, and Mr. STARK.
 H.R. 3026: Mr. SHULER, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mr. FILNER.
 H.R. 3033: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
 H.R. 3046: Ms. FOX and Mr. REYES.
 H.R. 3059: Mr. ADERHOLT.
 H.R. 3099: Mr. GONZALEZ and Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 3114: Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3140: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. REYES, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. BARROW.
 H.R. 3147: Ms. GRANGER.
 H.R. 3158: Mr. CARNAHAN.
 H.R. 3187: Mr. BOSWELL and Mr. CARNAHAN.
 H.R. 3189: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 3195: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HILL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. ARCURI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. WILSON of Ohio.
 H.R. 3204: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 3213: Mr. REHBERG.
 H.R. 3219: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Mr. DELAHUNT.
 H.R. 3257: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 3260: Mr. STARK and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
 H.R. 3317: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 3320: Mr. WEINER.
 H.R. 3326: Mr. PASTOR.
 H.R. 3329: Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. ORTIZ.
 H.R. 3337: Mr. TOWNS.
 H.R. 3360: Mr. RUSH, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. CARSON, and Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 3372: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CLAY, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. FILNER, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. WEINER, and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
 H.R. 3378: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SPACE, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 3381: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 3386: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 3411: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 3432: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HONDA, Ms. WATSON, Mr. TOWNS, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
 H.R. 3438: Ms. LEE.
 H.R. 3439: Mr. FILNER.
 H.R. 3440: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 3448: Mr. HODES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MARKEY, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 3452: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. MICA.
 H.R. 3457: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. BOUSTANY, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MCHENRY, Ms. WATSON, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 3480: Mr. LAMPSON and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3481: Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. DELAHUNT.
 H.R. 3494: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. DREIER, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. RENZI, Mr. PITTS, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CARTER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mrs. BACHMANN, and Ms. FALLIN.
 H.R. 3495: Ms. NORTON, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 3502: Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 3506: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 3518: Mr. KLEIN of Florida and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
 H.R. 3531: Mr. FEENEY and Mr. SULLIVAN.
 H.J. Res. 6: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
 H. Con. Res. 28: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
 H. Con. Res. 32: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H. Con. Res. 83: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee.
 H. Con. Res. 111: Mr. GRJALVA.
 H. Con. Res. 122: Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. SHULER, Ms. WATSON, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. ROSS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. GILCREST.
 H. Con. Res. 193: Mr. GORDON.
 H. Con. Res. 200: Ms. WATSON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. OLVER.
 H. Con. Res. 203: Mr. CANTOR, Mr. HARE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. RENZI, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. BERKLEY.
 H. Con. Res. 205: Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. ORTIZ.
 H. Res. 207: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. DICKS.
 H. Res. 71: Mr. CLEAVER.
 H. Res. 111: Mr. PASCARELL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PITTS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. OLVER, and Mr. ELLSWORTH.
 H. Res. 185: Mrs. MALONEY of New York.
 H. Res. 194: Mr. GONZALEZ and Mr. SARBANES.
 H. Res. 232: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina.
 H. Res. 282: Mr. EDWARDS.
 H. Res. 530: Mr. STARK.
 H. Res. 557: Mr. WEINER.
 H. Res. 573: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
 H. Res. 576: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
 H. Res. 588: Mr. BAIRD, Mr. HALL of New York, Ms. LEE, and Mr. ENGEL.
 H. Res. 590: Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. ENGEL.
 H. Res. 604: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SAXTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. TURNER, Mrs. TAUSCHER, and Mr. SALI.
 H. Res. 605: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. TANNER, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. FILNER, Mr.

RANGEL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H. Res. 607: Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. WATSON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GORDON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. STEARNS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. FILNER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RUSH, Mr. HOLT, and Mr. MCNULTY.

H. Res. 618: Mr. CLAY.

H. Res. 634: Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. GILCREST, and Mr. SKELTON.

H. Res. 635: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. MCCOTTER.

H. Res. 639: Mr. WEXLER, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. POE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. ROHRBACHER.

H. Res. 641: Mr. REICHERT, Mr. CONAWAY, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Mr. MARCHANT.

H. Res. 642: Mr. FARR, and Mr. TOWNS.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

160. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, relative to Resolution No. 2006-44 urging support of H.R. 2003, the Ethiopia Democracy and Accountability Act of 2007; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

161. Also, a petition of the City of Key West, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 07-160 urging the President of the United States to sign the Kyoto protocol to the United Nations and calling for immediate local and national action to address global warming; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

162. Also, a petition of the City of Pompano Beach, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 2007-232 requesting the Congress of the United States to appropriate funds necessary to bring the Herbert Hoover Dike into compliance with current levee protection safety standards; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 1852

OFFERED BY: MR. TIBERI

AMENDMENT No. 2: Page 17, strike lines 3 through 16 and insert the following:

“(I) AT APPLICATION.—At the time of application for the loan involved in the mortgage, a list of counseling agencies, approved by the Secretary, in the area of the applicant.”.

Page 18, strike lines 20 through 22 and insert the following:

“(i) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall require that the mortgagor shall”.

Page 19, strike lines 4 through 5 and insert the following:

“(I) prior to closing for the loan involved in the mortgage;”.