

were disappointed that more of our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle didn't vote to override the veto. However, we will give them the opportunity soon and often to change that vote, stand with America's children, and reject the President's veto.

DEMAND THAT HOUSE APPOINT CONFEREES ON VA APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, more than 4 months ago the House passed an appropriations bill designed to provide benefits for our soldiers and veterans. H.R. 2642 passed the House by an overwhelming 409-2 vote. A similar bill went through the Senate 92-1. But since then, nothing has happened.

It has been 131 days since we passed the legislation, and still nothing has been sent to the President's desk for him to sign. The Senate appointed conferees to hammer out a compromise between the two bills 6 weeks ago. But the House leadership? Nothing has been done.

The question is why. Why would the new majority play politics with the health care of our brave men and women in uniform? There is no reason, a month into this fiscal year, that the bill is unresolved.

I ask all my colleagues, all 408 of them who voted for this bill, to demand that the House appoint conferees. Stop doing nothing. Do what needs to be done to meet the needs of our men and women in uniform.

CONGRATULATING THE UNITED NATIONS ON UNITED NATIONS DAY

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a happy note. It is a happy birthday today, the birthday of the United Nations. It was 62 years ago when 50 countries gathered in the great City of San Francisco, California, to make the cause of international peace and security a global mantra and launched the United Nations. It was a good idea then, and 62 years later, it is still a good idea.

In a world that is tense with war, the U.N. fights for peace every day. Where hunger plagues the poor, the U.N. provides food aid to more than 80 million people every day, every year. In 166 nations that suffer devastating poverty, the U.N. offers proactive programs to buttress economic development. And, most important of all, the U.N. deploys 100,000 peacekeepers around the world on missions vital to stabilization of regions under threat of conflict.

The answer to global distress is found in solving the problems that are the root causes of poverty, the lack of health care, shelter and legislation.

The U.N. is the only organization worldwide dedicated to this grand mission.

I congratulate the United Nations for its hard work, and ask Members of this body to support and invigorate America's commitment to this vital international organization.

SUPPORT THE SCHIP REAUTHORIZATION

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Children's Health Insurance Program. President Bush, as you know, has callously denied health care for 10 million poor children due to his misplaced priorities.

More than 800,000 children in my home State of California depend on the Healthy Families Program. More than half of those children happen to be Hispanic. The health of millions of children will be endangered and millions more will continue to suffer if we do not reauthorize this program.

We in Congress have an incredible opportunity to do what is right for our children, especially those children who are disadvantaged and come from low-income families. All children, regardless of race, income or geography deserve a healthy start in life.

It is time to end this false allegation that undocumented immigrants are receiving this coverage. Ten million children are counting on us to do the right thing. We have a moral obligation to protect the health and well-being of all of our children.

IRAQI CONTRACTS WITH IRAN AND CHINA CONCERN UNITED STATES

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, a very disturbing report has come out that Iraq has agreed to award \$1.1 billion in contracts to Iranian and Chinese companies to build a pair of enormous power plants. That is what the Iraqi Minister of Electricity said on Tuesday. Word of the project prompted serious concerns among American military officials who fear that Iranian commercial investments can mask military activities at a time of our heightened tension with Iran.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when young Americans are dying in Iraq and when the U.S. is spending billions of dollars in Iraq, this makes absolutely no sense at all. The Iraqi Electricity Minister said that the Iranian project would be built in Sadr City, a Shiite enclave in Baghdad that is controlled by followers of the anti-American cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. He added that Iran had also agreed to provide cheap electricity from its own grid to southern Iraq and to build a large power plant, essentially free of charge, in an area between two Shiite holy cities.

The expansion of ties between Iraq and Iran comes as the U.S. and Iran clash on nuclear issues and about what American officials had repeatedly said was Iranian support for armed groups. This is an outrage and should not stand.

THE PRESIDENT'S MISPLACED PRIORITIES: WHAT WE COULD DO HERE WITH MONEY GOING TO IRAQ

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

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, President Bush proposed that our Nation spend another \$196 billion in Iraq next year. Today we will spend \$330 million fighting the war in Iraq. Imagine that. Every day, \$330 million in taxpayer dollars is going to Iraq.

Just imagine for one moment what we could do here in the United States with that money instead. We could hire an additional 1,700 Border Patrol agents to work our borders for an entire year. We could provide health care to 50,000 more veterans so they receive the essential health care treatment that they need. We could enroll 46,000 more children in Head Start for 1 year, so they can receive early childhood education. If we took 1 day of funding from the Iraq war, we could help nearly 800,000 families keep their heat on this winter through the LIHEAP program. We could provide 270,000 more children health care coverage through the CHIP program.

Mr. Speaker, while President Bush has no problem sending billions of dollars to Iraq, he is neglecting essential needs here in America. The Democratic majority in this Congress refuses to follow that lead.

BUSH NEGLECTS DOMESTIC PRIORITIES TO CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, when President Bush vetoed a bill earlier this month that would provide health care coverage to 10 million American children, he said the spending was excessive. The bipartisan bill invested \$35 billion more in children's health over a 5-year period. Three weeks later, President Bush announces that he needs \$196 billion to fight the war in Iraq over the next year. If \$35 billion for children's health is excessive, what exactly is his request for the war?

I know the President believes that Congress is his personal ATM machine, but article I of the Constitution says different, and we will not rubber-stamp his funding request for the war.

As we have in the past, Democrats will continue to exert pressure on the administration to change course in Iraq so that we can begin to bring the