

about what could be in this massive bill that we're going to be voting on in just a matter of hours. With the likelihood of thousands and thousands of earmarks in the bill, our constituents deserve a process that, at the very least, Members have an opportunity to read the bill before we vote on it.

Now, the majority argues that such tactics are no more egregious than those that Republicans employed during our years in the majority. That may be true, but I would remind my colleagues that that's one of the reasons we find ourselves in the minority today. This institution deserves far better.

SUBPRIME MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE CRISIS

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express concern about the ongoing subprime mortgage foreclosure crisis and the administration's "plan" to address the crisis.

The administration proposed a 5-year interest rate freeze, something that should have angered the investor community. I should know; before I came to Congress, I was an investment advisor. But the investor community was not upset. We ask, why? Well, the reason why is that the voluntary rate freeze will only apply to a small number of the subprime loans that are in danger of default and foreclosure. The Center for Responsible Lending estimates that the administration's plan will affect 7 percent of subprime borrowers.

This plan is based on the unrealistic belief that the subprime market failure will cure itself. Real leadership is needed to help homeowners and the United States economy. The President needs to show support for the House-passed legislation that provides additional options for borrowers in distress and strengthens the regulation of the mortgage lending practices.

MURDER IN THE NAME OF RELIGION—CANADA

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, freedom of expression is under attack in our neighbors to the north, Canada. Yesterday, a 16-year-old girl was strangled to death by her father in Toronto, Canada. The reason for the homicide? The girl refused to wear the traditional Muslim head scarf, the hijab.

Her school friends said that she wanted to be more "western," but her devout Muslim father wouldn't have it. But she would remove her scarf at school and change into western clothes. School officials said that she was an energetic and popular student,

but she lived in fear of her father. Her father has been charged now with murder, and her older brother has been charged with accessory to the crime.

This is yet another example of religion gone wrong. In a society that values freedom and tolerance, this kind of behavior in the name of religion is unacceptable. Her father needs to be prosecuted and sent to prison. His actions are not acceptable in our culture. No one has the natural right to murder their children in the name of religion.

And that's just the way it is.

NATURALIZATION APPLICATION BACKLOG

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

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to discuss the naturalization application backlog at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Agency, known as USCIS.

In July 2007, the Bush administration raised the naturalization fee application by 66 percent, from \$400 to \$675. The fee increase was meant to improve the process of these applications. Yet, recent reports state that the USCIS is months behind in scheduling, so they aren't even beginning to process these applications.

The Department of Homeland Security estimates it will take 16 to 18 months to process these applications that have been filed by June 1, 2007. These delays are going to hinder hundreds of thousands of people from exercising their vote to be a part of history, the Presidential elections that are coming up in November. How abysmal this is for us to give that information to so many people who are playing by the rules, who are waiting in line to become U.S. citizens. These are people from across the world waiting in line. We have to do something. I urge my colleagues to step up to the plate.

ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX IS A LUMP OF COAL

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

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, 'tis the season to be jolly for Americans, unless, of course, you happen to be a tax planner or a taxpayer wondering if your finances are going to throw you into a sea of confusion when you file your tax return in April of 2008. Under the current tax filing mess, because the majority has failed to repeal the alternative minimum tax, the average tax increase for tens of millions of Americans will increase by over \$2,000.

Children hope for candy or presents in their stocking and not a lump of coal. But since 1969, the alternative minimum tax has represented a lump of coal for millions of Americans. We

should do right by the American people, Madam Speaker, and put an end to the alternative minimum tax once and for all. That's a Christmas present every American can use.

LET'S DO GOD'S WORK ON EARTH

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, last night I voted with a great majority in this House and every one but one Republican on a resolution to recognize the benefits and honor of Christmas and the Christian religion. I read that resolution and agree that Christianity is a great religion, a lot to be learned from it, and the teachings of Jesus are wonderful.

I would ask my colleagues on the Republican side who voted for this, the Members of the Senate, and the President to remember those teachings and do God's work here on Earth: "There but for the grace of God go I," and "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

The President is supposed to be vetoing the CHIP bill today which would give health care to children. That's not in the spirit of St. Nick or, I believe, in the tradition of the Christian religion or the Judeo-Christian religions. Nor is it in that same spirit that we would take away from people that need help with college education, with health care, and with research for diseases, and for responsible fiscal policies and for taking care of God's Earth.

I would ask that we not just pass resolutions in name, but in spirit, and we honor the great religions and do God's work on Earth.

MILITARY FAMILIES ARE TURNING AGAINST THE PRESIDENT'S WAR—IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, over the last 6 years, more than 1.6 million American troops have been deployed to either Iraq or Afghanistan to implement the Bush administration's military strategy. These troops and their families have really sacrificed, and now the majority of these families believe that the war in Iraq was not worth fighting.

The President won't listen to the generals. Perhaps he will listen to the military families. According to a new poll from the LA Times, nearly six out of 10 military families disapprove of the way the President is running the war in Iraq; 58 percent of military families, in general, think we should withdraw within a year, and 69 percent of those who have been in Iraq, their families would like to begin withdrawal within the year.

These findings come just days after the Pentagon announced a temporary tour of duty extension for all active