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No. 19

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BAIRD).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 6, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN BAIRD to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Dr. Stephen L. Swisher, Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, in this moment may we encounter a fresh experience with You.

Give us peace in the uncertainty of this election season and renewed strength as we remember those who sent us here. We know in our hearts that without Your guidance we can do nothing, but with You we can do all things.

Let us not be afraid of the problems that challenge us but instead be grateful that You have called us to make a difference at this time in history.

I pray Your blessings of health, happiness, and protection upon each Member of the United States House of Representatives, their families, and staff members as well.

In times of frustration, may we know that You are with us and ready to help, if we will ask.

May we be emboldened by the thought that as individuals we represent various cities, counties, and States, but together we stand for the greatest Nation ever created.

In Jesus' 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 Florida (Mr. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MILLER of Florida 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.

CITY OF SHAME: BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Berkeley, California, has fallen off the deep end, and it wasn't caused by an earthquake either.

The city council passed a resolution telling the local United States Marine Corps recruiting station that it was "not welcome in the city, and if recruiters choose to stay, they do so as uninvited and unwelcome intruders."

Mayor Tom Bates said, "The Marines don't belong here, they shouldn't have come here, and they should leave."

Shame on Mayor Bates. He has flippanantly and pompously denounced those noble few—the proud—the chosen—the Marines that represent everything that is good and right about America. These defenders of democracy deserve better than Berkeley's arrogant disapproval.

These deplorable anti-Marine city council members must still have a sixties peacenik, hippie mentality that

world peace can occur by sitting around smoking dope and banging on the tambourine.

Berkeley should lose all Federal funding for their smug denouncement of the Marine Corps. Patriotic Americans should not subsidize cities that tell the Marines to "get out of town."

And as for the Marines, we'll take them all in Texas. We'll have a parade, fly the flag, and sing the Marine Hymn. So Semper Fi.

And that's just the way it is.

MEDICARE ENTITLEMENT REFORM

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, during this election season, political candidates will address every issue in the room except for the 800-pound gorilla. Medicare is rapidly growing in our Federal budget.

Just last week, Medicare trustees again reminded Congress that Medicare is projected to draw more than 45 percent of its funding from the general government revenue, as opposed to the Medicare trust fund.

If Congress doesn't start to make some changes, the program will face over \$34 trillion in unfunded obligations over the next 75 years, which is nearly seven times the size of outstanding public debt today. This rapid growth in Medicare expenditures is fiscally unsustainable.

Mr. Speaker, both liberal and conservative policy analysts, along with the GAO, have been warning Congress of the much-needed entitlement reform. Who else must weigh in on the issue before Congress will start addressing comprehensive Medicare reform?

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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H561

CAPITAL GAINS

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, unless Congress acts, in 3 short years capital gains taxes will jump from 15 percent to 20 percent. Tax increases, as Democrats would allow, send the wrong messages to businesses facing economic uncertainty.

But what does this mean for working Americans? Simply put, fewer jobs as employers make tough decisions about hiring and retention. Some say tax relief costs too much, but history since 2002 shows otherwise. Lower rates have unlocked billions in gains, boosting Federal revenues far beyond Congress' projections which were made based on higher tax rates.

Lower taxes, higher revenues, and greater growth for our economy and for the American workers, Congress should keep the capital gains rates constant.

HONORING FORMER OREGONIAN
KEVIN BOSS

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

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the New York Giants on their upset of the New England Patriots to win Super Bowl XLII.

With hometown pride in representing Monmouth and Philomath, I want to congratulate the Giants' starting tight end in the Super Bowl, Kevin Boss, a graduate of Philomath High and Western Oregon University.

Kevin was drafted as a backup to the Giants' four-time Pro Bowl tight end Jeremy Shockey, but was thrust into the spotlight late in the season when Shockey broke his leg.

It is apt that friends gathered at Rookies' in Monmouth to cheer their local son to victory. The Boss, as he is known, may be a rookie, but no one would have realized it from watching Sunday night's game.

His biggest mark in the Super Bowl came when he caught a 45-yard pass, setting up the Giants' first touchdown of the game to take a 10-7 lead in the fourth quarter.

Despite being about as far away from New York as one can be in the United States, the towns of Philomath and Monmouth couldn't be more proud.

BERKELEY'S ACTIONS OFFENSIVE

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, you all know the Marine Corps Hymn. It starts, "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli, we fight our country's battles in the air, on land, and sea."

Sadly, now the Marines have a new fight in the City of Berkeley. Recently, the city council voted to declare that a Marine recruiting station is "not welcome in the city."

To rub salt in the wound, the council then granted carte blanche to the radical protest group Code Pink. The disappointing and despicable actions of the Berkeley council are sad, shameful, and sickening. Some would call it treasonous.

Marines volunteer to serve their country and spill their blood for this Nation. Berkeley ought to show more respect for our Armed Forces.

The Marines' motto, "Semper Fidelis," is "Always Faithful." Although Berkeley may not be faithful to the Marines, I can guarantee you that the City of Berkeley wouldn't exist in a free country without the United States Marines.

The council needs to reverse this absurd decision. Their actions are offensive and obnoxious.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER), the whole number of the House is 430.

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:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2008.

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, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 30, 2008, at 9:15 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5104.

That the Senate passed S. 2571.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bills were signed by the Speaker on Wednesday, January 30, 2008:

H.R. 5104, to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 15 days

S. 2110, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office".

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:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 5, 2008.

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, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 5, 2008, at 10:24 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res 25. That the Senate passed S. 550.

Appointments: Washington's Farewell Address

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

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:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
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, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 4, 2008, at 10:08 a.m.:

That the Senate concurs in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 4253.

Appointments: United States-Japan Interparliamentary Group conference

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO
COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of the Civil Rights Commission Amendments Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 1975 note), the order of the House of January 4, 2007, and upon the recommendation of the minority leader, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Commission on Civil Rights to fill the existing vacancy thereon and, effective February 12, 2008, the Speaker's reappointment of the same member to a 6-year term expiring February 11, 2014: Mr. Todd Gaziano, Falls Church, Virginia

COMMUNICATION FROM CONGRESS-
SIONAL AIDE, HON. WILLIAM J.
JEFFERSON, MEMBER OF CON-
GRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Ericka Edwards-Jones,

Congressional Aide, the Honorable WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2008.

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 received a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

ERICKA EDWARDS-JONES,
Congressional Aide.

COMMUNICATION FROM LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR, HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Angelle B. Kwemo, Legislative Director, the Honorable WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 29, 2008.

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 received a subpoena for testimony issued by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

After consultation with counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

ANGELLE B. KWEMO,
Legislative Director.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-84)

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 Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

At www.budget.gov, Americans will find the budget of the Federal Government for Fiscal Year 2009. Two key principles guided the development of my Budget—keeping America safe and ensuring our continued prosperity.

As we enter this New Year, our economy retains a solid foundation despite some challenges, revenues have reached record levels, and we have reduced the Federal deficit by \$250 billion since 2004. Thanks to the hard work of the American people and spending discipline in Washington, we are now on a

path to balance the budget by 2012. Our formula for achieving a balanced budget is simple: create the conditions for economic growth, keep taxes low, and spend taxpayer dollars wisely or not at all.

As Commander in Chief, my highest priority is the security of the American people. So my Budget invests substantial resources to protect the United States from those who would do us harm. Continuing our Nation's efforts to combat terrorism around the globe, my Budget provides our men and women in uniform the tools they need to succeed in Afghanistan and Iraq, and it furnishes the resources needed for our civilians to help those nations achieve economic and political stabilization. My Budget also strengthens our overseas diplomatic capabilities and development efforts, advances our political and economic interests abroad, and improves the lives of people around the world.

Here at home, we are blessed to live in a country that rewards hard work and innovation. In our flexible and dynamic economy, people can pursue their dreams, turn ideas into enterprises, and provide for their families.

As we look back over the past 7 years, we see the economy has successfully responded to substantial challenges, including a recession terrorist attacks, corporate scandals, wars, and devastating natural disasters. It is a measure of our economy's resilience and the effectiveness of pro-growth policies that our economy has absorbed these shocks, grown for 6 straight years, and had the longest period of uninterrupted job growth on record. Yet mixed indicators confirm that economic growth cannot be taken for granted. To insure against the risk of an economic downturn, I will work with the Congress to pass a growth plan that will provide immediate, meaningful, and temporary help to our economy.

Americans have real concerns about their ability to afford healthcare coverage, pay rising energy bills, and meet monthly mortgage payments. They expect their elected leaders in Washington to address these pressures on our economy. So my Budget puts forth proposals to make health care more affordable and accessible, reduce our dependence on oil, and help Americans struggling to keep their homes.

Above all, my Budget continues the pro-growth policies that have helped promote innovation and entrepreneurship. I will not jeopardize our country's continued prosperity with a tax increase. Higher taxes would only lead to more wasteful spending in Washington—putting at risk both economic growth and a balanced budget.

As we work to keep taxes low, we must do more to restrain spending. My Budget proposes to keep non-security discretionary spending growth below 1 percent for 2009 and then hold it at that level for the next 4 years. It also cuts spending on projects that are not

achieving results—because good intentions alone do not justify a program that is not working.

One of the best ways to reduce waste and increase accountability is to make Federal spending more transparent. To help Americans see where their money is being spent, we have launched a website called www.USAspending.gov, and to help Americans see the kind of results they are getting for their money, we launched www.ExpectMore.gov. I invite all Americans to log on and find out for themselves how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent.

Billions of those tax dollars go to something called earmarks. Earmarks are special-interest items that are slipped into big spending bills or committee reports, often at the last hour, without discussion or debate. Last January, I asked the Congress to reform earmarks, and lawmakers took some modest steps in that direction. But they failed to end the practice of concealing earmarks in report language—and they continued to fund thousands of them. So I will take steps to advance earmark reform. I also call on the Congress to adopt the legislative line-item veto, which gives the legislative and executive branches a tool to help eliminate wasteful spending. Common-sense reform will help prevent billions of taxpayers' dollars from being spent on unnecessary and unjustified projects.

As we take these steps to address discretionary spending, we also need to confront the biggest challenge to the Federal budget: the unsustainable growth in entitlement spending. Many Americans depend on programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and we have an obligation to make sure they are sound for our children and grandchildren. If we do not address this challenge, we will leave our children three bad options: huge tax increases, huge deficits, or huge cuts in benefits. The longer we put off the problem, the more difficult, unfair, and expensive a solution becomes.

My Budget works to slow the rate of growth of these programs in the short term, which will save \$208 billion over 5 years. This step alone would reduce Medicare's 75-year unfunded obligation by nearly one-third. My Administration cannot solve this problem alone, though. We need a commitment from the Congress to reform and improve these vital programs so they can serve future generations of Americans.

In my 2009 Budget, I have set clear priorities that will help us meet our Nation's most pressing needs while addressing the long-term challenges ahead. With pro-growth policies and spending discipline, we will balance the budget in 2012, keep the tax burden low, and provide for our national security. And that will help make our country safer and more prosperous.

GEORGE W. BUSH,
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 4, 2008.

□ 1415

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.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF RECORDING ARTS AND SCIENCES

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 273) recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 273

Whereas, in 1957, a group of visionary leaders gathered at the famed Brown Derby in Los Angeles to form The National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences;

Whereas The Recording Academy soon created the GRAMMY Award which is the world's most visible and prestigious award for music;

Whereas the GRAMMY was created as a peer award, given by music makers, for music makers, to honor the highest quality recording music of the year without regard to sales or chart position;

Whereas The Recording Academy expanded its mission beyond recognition of musical excellence to include groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education, and human services programs;

Whereas through its 12 chapters across America, The Recording Academy serves more than 18,000 musicians, singers, songwriters, producers, engineers, and other music professionals;

Whereas, in 1989, The Recording Academy created the GRAMMY Foundation to cultivate the understanding, appreciation, and advancement of the contribution of recorded music to American culture, from the artistic and technical legends of the past to the still unimagined musical breakthroughs of future generations of music professionals;

Whereas that same year, The Recording Academy created MusiCares, to provide a safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need;

Whereas the GRAMMYs on the Hill Initiative, based in Washington, DC, works to advance the rights of the music community through advocacy, education, and dialogue; and

Whereas through this initiative, The Recording Academy has become a leading advocate for music makers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress congratulates The Recording Academy during its 50th GRAMMY celebration for its important work in improving the environment for music and music makers.

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

New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I'm pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 273, which acknowledges the 50th anniversary of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences.

House Concurrent Resolution 273 was introduced by Representative MARY BONO MACK of California on December 19, 2007, and was considered by and reported from the Oversight Committee on January 29, 2008, by voice vote.

The measure has the support of over 60 Members of Congress, and provides our body a collective opportunity to both recognize and congratulate the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences on its 50th anniversary Grammy Awards celebration.

Established in 1957, the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, also known as the Recording Academy, serves as the premier organization of musicians, producers, recording engineers and other recording professionals dedicated to improving the quality of life and cultural conditions of others through music and the arts. As a producer of recordings myself, I am especially aware of the academy's fine and important work.

The Recording Academy is best known for its presentation of the Grammy Awards, which is the only peer-presented award ceremony to honor artistic achievement, technical proficiency and overall excellence in the recording industry without regard to album sales or chart position.

In addition to the Grammys, the Recording Academy is also known for its philanthropic efforts to cultivate the understanding, appreciation and advancement of the recording industry's contributions to American culture through music and education programs offered by the Grammy Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we all agree that the Recording Academy has made a significant contribution to the landscape of our country. For its service in improving the environment for music, music makers and music lovers over the past 50 years, the Recording Academy is undoubtedly deserving of recognition. Therefore, I urge swift passage of House Concurrent Resolution 273.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 273, which recognizes the 50th anniversary of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences.

Mr. Speaker, while the music industry has changed and continues to change over the years, its importance to the lives of Americans has not. Songs provide inspiration, evoke fond memories, and even comfort us during times of need.

In addition to entertaining us, we should also be mindful of the music industry's role in our Nation's economy, accounting for some \$11.5 billion annually. Moreover, this sector of our economy provides jobs to thousands of singers, songwriters, musicians, producers and other recording professionals.

In 1957, the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences was formed to honor the most talented music makers by creating the world's most prestigious music award, known as the Grammy Award.

This unique award is not based on sales, popularity or consumer taste but is given as a peer award by artists for artists. The award also continues to be the only peer-presented award to honor the achievement, technical proficiency and overall excellence in the recording industry.

The Recording Academy's responsibility for the Grammys is only the tip of the iceberg. The academy has also expanded its scope beyond recognizing the best in music to include groundbreaking professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education and human services programs. In time, the Grammy Foundation was created to recognize the significant contributions music has made to American culture and its impact on all of our citizens in the past, present and future.

Another aspect of the academy's outreach is MusiCares. Through the efforts of this program, a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies for many struggling artists in the Nation's music community are covered. MusiCares also provides educational programs that are found throughout the country that focus on the preservation of our musical heritage.

Through its 12 chapters across the United States, the Recording Academy impacts the music community at large by working diligently to protect the music creators through strong intellectual property rights, addressing the legality of downloading and purchase of music on the Internet, as well as music preservation and music education.

I urge my colleagues to support this concurrent resolution congratulating the Recording Academy during its 50th Grammy celebration, and recognizing its important contribution to the success and vitality of music makers.

Mrs. BONO MACK. Mr. Speaker, this weekend millions of Americans will view the Grammy Awards Gala and I rise today to recognize a most important milestone for the organization responsible for this program.

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank the Majority Leader and his staff for working together with my office on this concurrent resolution. Additionally, I would like to thank him for his steadfast commitment to the Recording Arts and Sciences Caucus of which we both serve as co-chairs.

Today I am joined by over 60 of my colleagues—on both sides of the aisle—as I put forth this concurrent resolution which recognizes the contributions the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has made to our country over the last half century.

It is indeed an honor to celebrate this anniversary as we acknowledge that is has been 50 years since the Recording Academy was formed. Throughout that time the Recording Academy has expanded its mission beyond a peer music award to include professional development, cultural enrichment, advocacy, education, and human services programs.

These programs are helping develop and nurture the music industry and most importantly the musicians who make up that industry. The impact this has had on music and the arts in the United States cannot be overstated.

At its core, the Recording Academy's support for the individual recording professional has been and is essential to the creative life of our Nation. The Recording Academy's constant push for the advancement of the rights of musicians, songwriters, singers, producers, and other recording professionals is essential to the future health and sustainability of the music community. Thankfully, the Recording Academy is there everyday, championing these worthy causes and educating all of us about their importance.

As such, I am proud to have authored House Concurrent Resolution 273 which recognizes the 50th Anniversary of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask for the support of Members from both sides of the aisle for H. Con. Res. 273, legislation I'm proud to have authored.

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

Mr. HODES. 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 New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 273.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE HOUSTON DYNAMO SOCCER TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2007 MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER CUP

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 867) commending the Houston Dynamo soccer team for winning the 2007 Major League Soccer Cup.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 867

Whereas the Houston Dynamo soccer team won the 2007 Major League Soccer Cup, de-

feating the New England Revolution by a score of 2-1 at RFK Stadium on November 18, 2007;

Whereas as the Houston Dynamo came back from a 1-0 halftime deficit to defeat the Revolution;

Whereas as Dwayne De Rosario, assisted on the tying goal to Joseph Ngwenya, scored the winning goal and was named the game's MVP;

Whereas as the Houston Dynamo were playing without Brian Ching, the MVP of last year's MLS Cup due to injury;

Whereas as the Houston Dynamo has won the Major League Soccer Cup for the second consecutive year;

Whereas as the Houston Dynamo is the first team to win back-to-back MLS Cups in 10 years;

Whereas as the Houston Dynamo have won the MLS Cup in their first 2 years of existence in Houston;

Whereas Houston Dynamo Coach Dominic Kinnear has guided the team to 26 wins, 20 draws, and 16 losses in his first 2 seasons in Houston; and

Whereas Houston Dynamo defender Eddie Robinson and midfielder Dwayne De Rosario were named to the 2007 MLS Best XI all-star team: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the Houston Dynamo soccer team for winning the 2007 MLS Cup; and

(2) congratulates the team for back-to-back MLS Cup wins in their first 2 seasons in Houston.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time to myself as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I'm pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of House Resolution 867, which provides for the recognition of the Dynamo soccer team, out of Houston, Texas, for their recent 2007 MLS championship win.

House Resolution 867 was introduced by Representative GENE GREEN of Texas on December 11, 2007, and was considered by and reported from the House Committee on Oversight on January 29, 2008, by voice vote.

□ 1430

The measure has the support and co-sponsorship of nearly 55 Members of Congress, and its consideration today on the House floor allows our entire body the chance to commend the Dynamo on winning the coveted MLS Cup. As is the case in most professional sporting or athletic leagues, ultimate success or winning of a championship

title requires hard work, sacrifice, and innate desire to win.

The Houston Dynamo, led by 2005 MLS Coach of the Year Dominic Kinnear, have clearly demonstrated their commitment to these ideals as they not only hold the 2007 MLS Championship Cup but are also the proud winners of the 2006 MLS Championship Cup as well.

The Dynamo's recent wins mark the first time in 10 years that a team has won back-to-back MLS Cups. For this accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, we stand to commend the Dynamo, their players, coaches and supportive fans on a job well done.

I urge the passage of this measure.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of H. Res. 867 which congratulates the Houston Dynamo for winning its second straight Major League Soccer championship.

Early in the season, the Dynamo team members weren't so much worried about defending their title as merely maintaining respectability. They brought a 2-4-1 record into Washington's RFK stadium, less than two miles from where we stand right now, on May 26.

Though they lost by the score of 2-1 that night, to a man, they agreed that was the game when things turned around.

The Dynamo did not lose again until July 10, a period that covered 12 games. After that, they went six more games without a loss. By then, they were back where they belonged, atop the MLS standings.

The key for this team, from all accounts, was its defense. The Dynamo scored 43 goals in 30 games. Not outstanding for a league champion, but it allowed just 23 goals as opponents wore defenders from all three lines of the Dynamo attack like a cheap suit for most of the season.

Brian Ching, Stuart Holden, Eddie Robinson, Ricardo Clark, Brad Davis, and Patrick Ianni formed the backbone of those three lines. Pat Onstead, who help the team set a league record for best goal-against average, 0.73 per game, provided other-worldly goal-keeping.

The season was not without its drama. After recovering from the slow start, the Dynamo again flirted with elimination when it lost to FC Dallas, 1-0, in its first playoff game and trailed 1-0 and faced elimination in its second. But the Dynamo then buried Dallas in a four-goals-in-30-minutes barrage and never looked back. It beat New England in the finals 3-0. Does this sound familiar?

The Dynamo showed what can happen when the team recognizes its weaknesses and buys into a plan to fix them.

Congratulations to Coach Dominic Kinnear and his players for showing what can happen when we pull together and rise above.

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

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) so much time as he may consume.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and both the Government Reform Committee and Rules Committee for allowing this resolution to be considered today. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

The Dynamo soccer team arrived in Houston just 2 years ago, and in the team's first two seasons, they won back-to-back MLS Cups. The Dynamo are the first team to do so in over a decade and have immediately drawn a huge fan base in Houston for their success.

Dynamo coach Dominic Kinnear has guided the team to 26 wins, 20 draws, and 16 losses in its first two seasons in Houston. The Cup win this season came over the New England Revolution, the same team the Dynamo defeated in 2006 to win their first MLS Cup and the 2007 match to an attendance of merely 40,000. The 2007 Cup win was a come-from-behind victory in which Dwayne De Rosario assisted on the tying goal to Joseph Ngwenya, and scored the winning goal to take home the most valuable player honors from the match.

The Dynamo managed to accomplish this without the most valuable player from their 2006 Cup win, Brian Ching, who was sidelined with an injury.

Texas and Houston have a long history of being a football State and town, but I first learned about soccer when I was in college playing goalie just during college sports. My two children grew up playing soccer in the 1980s when they were young in Houston. Over the years, I watched soccer grow not only in the suburbs but also in the very inner city, and you can hardly have a flat field, flat surface, without having soccer goals put up.

Today in our district and throughout the Houston area, countless numbers of children have played and become soccer fans, and the Dynamos' success since arriving in Houston greatly increased the interest in the game.

Four of the Dynamo stars, Brad Davis, Eddie Robinson, Ricardo Clark, and Stuart Holden, have been selected for the U.S. Men's National Team roster that will face Team Mexico at Reliant Stadium tonight in Houston. This is the most players of any club represented on our national team, and it includes the Houston native, Stuart Holden, who played his high school soccer in Houston.

The U.S.-Mexico soccer rivalry is one of the biggest matches the team plays and always draws enormous crowds and a large television following.

We wish the players luck tonight in their match and congratulate the Dynamos on their past success and look forward to their continued success in 2008.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this

resolution congratulating the Houston Dynamos on their 2007 Major League Soccer Cup victory.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 867 commending the Houston Dynamo for winning the 2007 Major League Soccer Cup. I would first like to commend our distinguished colleague GENE GREEN of the 29th Congressional District of Texas for introducing this important resolution. The Houston Dynamo has consistently strived for excellence and dominated the MLS playoffs for 2 consecutive years and I am happy to commend them for their efforts.

The Dynamo played their first game on April 2, 2006, in front of a crowd of 25,462 in Robertson Stadium. The Dynamo finished their first season in Houston with an 11–8–13 record, earning them second place in the Western Conference. On November 12, 2006, at Pizza Hut Park in Frisco, Texas, the Houston Dynamo defeated the New England Revolution in an exciting match decided by the first shootout in MLS history, 4–3 on penalty kicks after a 1–1 tie to win the 2006 MLS Cup.

After regrouping in 2007 and pulling off a win against rival FC Dallas, Houston began a winning streak of 11 games and a shutout streak of 726 minutes, a new MLS record. They finished in second place in the regular season in the Western Conference, advancing to the 2007 MLS Cup Playoffs, where they met State rivals FC Dallas in the first round. Just like in 2006, they faced the New England Revolution for the championship, and won it 2–1 on a game-winning goal by Dwayne De Rosario in the second half, thus winning their second MLS Cup in a row.

As a native Houstonian I am proud to honor the Houston Dynamo for their sheer dominance since the premiere of MLS soccer in the United States. I strongly urge the community to support the Houston Dynamo as they will need it to sustain the expectations they have already lived up to. I strongly support this resolution and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H. Res. 867, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HODES. 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 New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 867.

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. HODES. 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.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 942) recognizing the significance of Black History Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 942

Whereas the first Africans were brought involuntarily to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas these Africans in America and their descendants are now known as African-Americans;

Whereas African-Americans suffered involuntary servitude and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of basic, fundamental rights;

Whereas despite involuntary servitude, African-Americans have made significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, literary, religious, scientific, and technological advancement of the Americas;

Whereas in the face of injustices, United States citizens of good will and of all races distinguished themselves with their commitment to the noble ideals upon which the United States was founded and courageously fought for the rights and freedom of African-Americans;

Whereas Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived and died to make real these noble ideals;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of Dr. Carter G. Woodson's efforts to enhance knowledge of black history started through the Journal of Negro History, published by Woodson's Association for the Study of African-American Life and History; and

Whereas the month of February is officially celebrated as Black History Month, which dates back to 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period of time in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the significance of Black History Month as an important time to recognize the contributions of African-Americans in the Nation's history, and encourages the continued celebration of this month to provide an opportunity for all peoples of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation; and

(2) recognizes that the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States enriches and strengthens the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to

join my colleagues in the consideration of H. Res. 942 which calls for Congress to recognize the significance of February as Black History Month.

H. Res. 942 was introduced by Representative AL GREEN of Texas on January 28, 2008, and was considered by and reported from the Oversight Committee on January 29, 2008, by voice vote. The measure has the support and cosponsorship of 55 Members of Congress, yet gives us all an opportunity to pay tribute to the remarkable contributions African Americans have made to America's growth, development, and rich history.

As we are aware, February marks the beginning of Black History Month, which was first celebrated as Negro History Week in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, a noted African American author and scholar, but has since become a month-long commemorative celebration as a way of recognizing and highlighting the role black Americans have played in America since the existence of our country and the role they continue to play on a daily basis.

Across our great land, Black History Month is marked by the offering of educational and cultural programs, heightened media coverage and special celebrations and events, all designed to share with the world the strength, ingenuity, and accomplishments of our fellow American citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as we move to recognize Black History Month and this year's theme of "Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism in America," let's all recall the experiences and valuable contributions of African Americans to our fine country. Let us not forget that black history is truly American history.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge the swift passage of H. Res. 942.

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

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I'm honored to speak today in support of H. Res. 942, recognizing the significance of Black History Month, sponsored by my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated the life and accomplishments of one great man, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and today we pay tribute to the contributions all African Americans have made to this great country.

Each February we express our appreciation of the struggles, determination, and perseverance of the African American community of the past and present. Nothing serves as a better example of this than the civil rights movement itself.

Rev. King would tell you that it was not the sole efforts of one man but the collective work of many that achieved so much. Without the civil rights movement, our Nation would not have the strong diversity of which it is so proud.

Beyond this, February is also a time to recognize the contributions of Afri-

can Americans that have enriched our culture and our heritage. We must continue to learn the historical struggles of African American citizens in order to better understand the experiences that have shaped this Nation.

There have been great activists, politicians, artists, writers, poets, scientists, economists, athletes, entertainers, and musicians that have all bettered our way of life. The achievements of so many have encouraged today's youth to strive for a more equal and free country.

It is impossible to celebrate Black History Month without mentioning such noted leaders as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Thurgood Marshall, and, once again, Dr. King himself. Their historic efforts inspired a Nation and brought past injustices to light, bringing forth beginning to an end of racial inequality.

When Harvard scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson had the idea to create a week-long celebration of black history back in 1926, his goal was to "make the world see the Negro as a participant, rather than as a lay figure in history."

Over time, it has become the month-long commemoration that it is today, and it is with great pleasure that I speak today in support of H. Res. 942.

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

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) and, in doing so, commend him for his extraordinary leadership in introducing this resolution and his service to the United States.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his very kind words and compliment him on the outstanding job that he is doing in the United States Congress, and I'm always honored to have the opportunity to serve and work with the gentleman.

I also thank my colleague on the other side of the aisle who has graciously helped us with this resolution and helped us bring it to the floor.

This resolution has received bipartisan support. I can say with a great degree of sincerity that not one Member that I approached about signing on to this resolution had any reservation, hesitation, or consternation. Every Member saw this as a worthwhile resolution, and I want to thank all of the Members who are now supporting it and who will vote for it.

I also am honored to make this expression of appreciation on behalf of the millions of Africans who are in America and who are known as African Americans. They cherish this day. This day means something to persons in the African American community. So they, too, would express appreciation, and I do so as one of their representatives in the United States Congress.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution gives us an opportunity to tell a portion of the greatest story never told. One of the great stories in world history is the story of Africans in the Americas and,

more specifically, Africans in America today. This month allows us, and through this resolution we are allowed, to talk about some of the great accomplishments of African Americans, and Mr. FEENEY has been so generous with his compliments and the persons that he has named. My colleague has been very generous with his compliments as well.

□ 1445

But I want to name just a few more, because at a time like this, on occasions like this, we want to make sure that we say as much as we can, understanding that we cannot say enough.

So on occasions such as this, we'd like to at least mention the prolific poetry of Phyllis Wheatley. We want to say that there was the scientific genius of Benjamin Banneker, who, by the way, was self-educated, a self-educated scientist, astronomer and inventor. We'd like to mention the legal brilliance of Macon B. Allen, who became the first African American admitted to the bar in the United States in 1845.

We should mention the colossal courage of Harriet Tubman, who, with her Underground Railroad, took persons from slavery to freedom. And we have to mention that she didn't do it alone. African Americans are not free because they were able to extricate themselves from slavery; they are free because they had help along the way from persons of good will of all ethnicities and races, all genders. People of good will have been of service in this fight for freedom for African Americans, and we should never have this kind of celebration and not mention the fact that we are here because there were many others who made it possible for us to have the opportunities we have. Many lived and died, and they were not all African Americans.

On occasions such as this, we mention the political prowess of P.B.S. Pinchback, who was the first African American elected Governor to become Governor of a State; he became Governor of the State of Louisiana in 1872.

These are some of the notables that we mention. But we should also mention that African Americans answered the clarion call to serve the Nation in times of war. They were there at the Boston Massacre. You will recall that Crispus Attucks was the first person killed, an African American. They were there at the Revolutionary War. Five thousand slaves and freedmen fought in the Revolutionary War, with the Continental Army, with the Navy, and with the militia in the Revolutionary War.

They were there in World War I; 350,000 African Americans were there in World War I to serve our country. In World War II, 2.5 million registered, and approximately 1 million served. And, of course, we can never forget the Tuskegee Airmen. They were not only there but they were so outstanding that the President of the United States came to these Halls and presented them a Congressional Gold Medal.

America is not a perfect Nation, but it does provide the means by which we can strive for perfection. And I am so honored that by passing this resolution, we continue to reach for the ultimate perfection in the United States of America.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am proud to yield 7 minutes to my distinguished colleague, Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, who has represented the City of Washington, DC for many years and is known universally as a passionate advocate for truth and justice.

Ms. NORTON. I thank the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) for that generous introduction. And I thank my good friend, Mr. FEENEY from Florida, for also coming forward and robustly leading this bill forward today. We all owe thanks to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), from whom we've just heard, who is the sponsor of this particular resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to make, perhaps, an unusual point. During Black History Month, we should remember that black history is still being made. The best evidence, of course, is that an African American is close to, perhaps, getting the Democratic nomination for President. This breakthrough is not surprising when you consider that we are still living in a period for black history-making because the shackles of segregation and of nationwide discrimination were removed only about 40 years ago. So you will hear many firsts, many record-breakers continue to come forward for years to come.

We don't really have to go to the history books in the 19th century, and earlier, to find history makers who should be revered this month. We are literally still surrounded by living black history on which history has spoken. Now, mind you I say "on which history has spoken," I mean you don't have the verdict of history until you can stand back from it. And, therefore, I want to make a few remarks about living history from the Congress of the United States.

It is probably the case that most Americans do not recognize that the first African American elected by popular vote to the United States Senate was Senator Edward Brooke, who served from 1967 to 1979. This is real living history, my friends. Now a robust 87, Senator Brooke broke more records than anybody I know. He became a Senator, '67 to '79, at a time when breakthroughs hadn't begun to occur. And he became a Senator from an overwhelmingly white State that was also overwhelmingly Democratic, and he was a Republican, a life-long Republican. Before that, he had become the State's first black attorney general.

I know Senator Brooke for reasons that are close to home. If you grew up in Washington, you will know him because, in studying black history, we studied this living history in our

midst. He is a native Washingtonian. He graduated from Dunbar High School, the same high school I attended; served in World War II in the segregated 366th; went to Howard University and Howard law school, lived a segregated life his whole life. Then when he got out of the Army and got out of law school, he went to seek his fortune, not in his hometown, but in Massachusetts, where he practiced law and then had the audacity to run for office in a State where his party was pitifully outnumbered and in a State where he had to risk race when few had done so.

He tells the fascinating story of his life in his own autobiography called "Bridging the Divide." It was published in 2006. And that's exactly what Senator Brooke did. He bridged the divide, brought Democrats and Republicans together, brought blacks and whites together, and became a history maker of the first order and one who served in the Congress of the United States.

I must say that the President has already understood his significance in American history because a few years ago, President Bush awarded Senator Brooke the highest national honor, the Presidential Medal of Honor. And, once more, the Senate has the jump on us. Of course, Edward Brooke was a Member of the Senate, but the Senate has unanimously voted that Senator Brooke should receive the highest congressional honor, the Congressional Gold Medal. These are the highest honors that each branch of government can offer.

I can think of no better way for the Congress to celebrate Black History Month, not in talking about black history that was made long ago, but looking inside our own ranks and finding a true historic figure, one that Democrats can be proud of, that Republicans are surely proud of, one who epitomizes exactly what everybody says our country needs today to bring us together, and one who served in our own ranks.

Many in the Congress on both sides of the aisle have already signed on to H.R. 1000, which is the bill necessary to award the Congressional Medal. That requires two-thirds of the House to sign on. Many have, once this was brought to their attention, signed on. We're going to send it again, of course, to Members, as we try to do something that I think will be history-making this very month, and that is to have the Congress of the United States, this month, this Black History Month, vote to give the Congressional Gold Medal to one of our own former colleagues, a former Member of the Senate, Senator Edward Brooke, the first African American to serve by popular vote in that body.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. FEENEY. I have no further speakers, Mr. Speaker, and I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons to celebrate Black History Month, and one is that it would take more than a

month for even the best student of history to appreciate all of the great things that African Americans have contributed to America. I would note that later this afternoon the House will be considering House Resolution 943, which is the 22nd anniversary of the Challenger disaster. And among the American heroes that perished that day was astronaut Ronald McNair, who, in fact, was an African American.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 942, a resolution recognizing the significance of Black History Month.

It is a time to reflect on and honor the important contributions African-Americans have made to our Nation. We should especially take note of the extraordinary people who continue to help build our great Nation.

Of the thousands of African-Americans in my District, I have the privilege of representing two individuals and an outstanding group: Marguerita Washington and Rudy Smith, both of Omaha, and the Alfonza W. Davis chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, based in Omaha.

Dr. Marguerita Washington is the editor of the Omaha Star newspaper in Omaha. The paper has been in existence for more than 69 years and is Nebraska's largest African-American newspaper. The policy of the Omaha Star has been to print only positive news and to be a vigilant champion for African-American progress. The paper is located in the heart of Omaha's African-American community.

The Omaha Star was founded by the late Mildred D. Brown in 1938. She is believed to be the first female, certainly the first African-American woman, to have founded a newspaper in the Nation's history. When Mrs. Brown expired unexpectedly in 1989, the paper was then placed in the very capable hands of Dr. Marguerita Washington, her niece, who now heads the newspaper.

Dr. Washington and the Omaha Star work for equal rights for all; the paper was on the forefront, leading the charge to open public accommodations to African-Americans, including hotels, restaurants, theaters and taverns. The paper was instrumental in working with Omaha Public Schools to ensure that black teachers had equal participation. Dr. Washington also worked hard to get the Omaha Star landmark status in the city of Omaha and the State of Nebraska.

Rudy Smith has lived in Omaha since age 6 and has been an Omaha World Herald photographer and editor for more than 40 years. He is in the process of completing a book of his photographs, many of which have been exhibited at black colleges, universities and museums around the country. As a journalist and photographer he has captured images of some of America's greatest heroes.

Rudy was more than just a photographer; he was able to chronicle historic moments in Omaha. Every picture he takes is a moment; each special moment holds a lifetime of memories that lives on after the moment has passed. Each of his photographs is a window to a memory and has the ability to deeply connect you to the beauty of life itself. His talent is endless.

Omaha native Alphonza Davis graduated from Omaha Tech High School and later Omaha University. He finished first in his class at Tuskegee and was chosen squadron leader. He was killed in combat in 1944 while over in Germany. The local Tuskegee Airmen chapter in Omaha is named after him.

The chapter is one of 45 nationwide, and its membership includes four original Tuskegee Airmen. They are LTC (Ret) Paul Adams, LTC (Ret) Charles A. Lane, Jr., LTC (Ret) Harrison A. Tull, and Mr. Robert D. Holts. These members continue their service to our community by mentoring and working with youth through the local Civil Air Patrol.

The Tuskegee Airmen and their record of success during the war are unmatched. Not a single American bomber protected by the Red Tails was ever shot down by enemy aircraft. By war's end, the Tuskegee Airmen had flown over 15,000 sorties, completed over 1,500 missions and destroyed more than 260 enemy aircraft.

I join my colleagues in recognizing these and the millions of African-Americans in our country for their numerous achievements throughout history, today and the future. This designation is only a small token of the thanks they deserve for all of their contributions to our society. I urge the adoption of H. Res. 942.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to address the House for one minute.

I rise today to voice my strong support for H. Res. 942. This bipartisan resolution recognizes the significance of Black History Month.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, Representative AL GREEN, for introducing this resolution.

February is Black History Month, a time for all Americans to learn about and recognize the heritage and achievements of African Americans.

African Americans have made historic contributions to this Nation in all walks of life—from economics, to education, to politics and the arts.

Sadly, African Americans have been victims of too much discrimination, segregation, and hatred in their history in the United States.

That is why it is so fitting we stand here together today, one body in unity, to recognize the amazing accomplishments of our Nation's African Americans.

We also stand here to recognize that the ethnic and racial diversity within the United States is a wonderful thing, which only serves to strengthen our great Nation.

I urge my colleagues to embrace this diversity, to support Black History Month, and to cast a vote in favor of H. Res. 942.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 942, Recognizing the Significance of Black History Month, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Texas, Representative GREEN. This important legislation recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans in this Nation.

The celebration of Black History Month began with Negro History Week in 1926, the vision of Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Dr. Woodson, a noted African-American author and scholar recognized then, as we do today, that the achievements and contributions of African-Americans deserve not only to be acknowledged, but also to be celebrated by all Americans.

Over the course of 50 years, Negro History gained momentum, culminating in its transcendence to Black History Month. Now each February we express our appreciation of the struggles, determination and perseverance of the African-American community of the past and present. February is a month to recognize

the contributions of African-Americans who have enriched our culture and our heritage.

There have been great African-American activists, scientists, artists, poets, athletes, politicians, writers, economists, musicians, engineers, and entertainers who have all bettered our way of life. From Harriet Tubman to Barbara Jordan, Althea Gibson to Venus Williams, Marian Anderson to Ella Fitzgerald, Frederick Douglass to Martin Luther King, Jr., so many African-Americans have enriched this Nation that there are far too many to name them all.

Unfortunately, the struggle for African-Americans to gain recognition and celebration in this Nation continues beyond Black History Month. While we can be proud of the many achievements of our past, events such as Hurricane Katrina and Jena 6, demonstrate that we still have much to achieve in the way of equal rights and justice for all.

One of the great challenges facing the African-American community is the disproportionate rate at which our people are incarcerated.

According to the Department of Justice more than 2.3 million people are incarcerated in this Nation's State and Federal prisons. As of December 2006, African-Americans made up 40.2 percent of Federal prison inmates, most of those being African-American men.

When you compare these statistics with the fact that African-Americans only make up approximately 12 percent of the total population, the disparity becomes more apparent. The human toll—the wasted lives, shattered families, and disturbed youth—are incalculable, as are the adverse social, economic and political consequences of weakened communities, diminished opportunities for economic mobility, and widespread disenfranchisement.

In Jena, Louisiana, two African-American high school students sat under what some White students called the “white” tree on their campus. The White students responded by hanging nooses from the tree. When African-American students protested the light punishment for the students who hung the nooses, the District Attorney came to the school and told the students he could “take their lives away with a stroke of his pen.” Racial tensions continued to mount in Jena, and the District Attorney did nothing in response to several egregious cases of violence and threats against African-American students.

But when a White student—who had been a vocal supporter of the students who hung the nooses—taunted African-American students, allegedly called several African-American students “nigger”, and was beaten up by African-American students, the punishment was drastically different. Six African-American students were charged with second-degree attempted murder. Mychal Bell was one of the students tried and convicted. He faced up to 22 years in prison for essentially a school fight.

The African-American community came to the aid of these young men, as they have done in years past for other young men. While we take this month to celebrate the past and present African-American achievements and contributions, we must face the future with an understanding that there is more to be done and more to be achieved.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, a Representative of the people of the United States, and an African-American woman, I am proud to cosponsor this legislation and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my full support for H. Res. 942, a resolution that recognizes Black History Month as a time to acknowledge the many contributions that African Americans have made in our Nation's history and as a time for all Americans to fully understand the events and struggles that shaped our great Nation.

When Aristotle said, “If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and its development,” he suggested that we cannot fully know what something is if we do not know its past. This certainly holds true for our country. Knowing our Nation's history does more than tell us who we were; it tells us who we are. And if we look honestly at our past successes and mistakes, it tells us what we can become.

Unfortunately, the long practice of omitting, abbreviating, and misrepresenting African Americans in American history has resulted in an incomplete and skewed story of our country's history. Fortunately, the social change of the civil rights movement inspired a change in the way that America told and understood its history. It became clear that American history—like America's schools and lunch counters—needed to be integrated.

Over the years, Black History Month has become a chance to realize our rich diversity by studying the artistic, scientific, and political contributions that African Americans have made to the United States and the rest of the world. Realize Black history is American history, and February should not be the only time that we acknowledge the contributions of African American men, women, and children in U.S. history. African Americans have played a key role in just about every single moment in American history, and it is high time that our history books reflect that.

Driven by my commitment to the human and civil rights of all, I have worked hard to ensure that all people—regardless of their nationality, sexual orientation, gender, or race—have access to their most basic rights. My experiences in and before I came to this body have taught me that all people have influenced our country's greatness. It is critically important that these contributions are acknowledged and retold.

Mr. Speaker, as we observe and celebrate the contributions of African Americans in America we must not forget that we are making history as we speak. We are living in an historical era in which extraordinary people from all walks of life are seeking opportunities that were previously not available to them. Outstanding Americans such as Barrington Irving, the youngest and first person of African descent to fly around the world, teach us that we can achieve great things in this land of opportunity as long as we have the will and drive. As we all know, for the first time in history, the two contending candidates for the Democratic nominee for President are a black man and a woman.

As we reflect on the numerous contributions and experiences of African Americans in this country, we must be cognizant of how we as a modern multi-ethnic and multicultural nation deal with the issues of our time. How we do this will determine how future generations will view us in the history books. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this important resolution.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I stand before you offering my generous support for the commemoration of H. Res. 942, recognizing the significance of Black History Month. This is a month to honor the tremendous strides and achievements made by numerous African-American leaders and activists, and to signify our continued celebration of diversity in the United States. I urge all Americans to use this month as an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments made by past African-American leaders while continuing to work for the advancement of racial equality.

The enormous contributions made by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois and other notable leaders in the African-American community have championed improved race relations and equality. We must also highlight the achievements made by a host of prominent African-Americans in other fields such as the arts, athletics, politics, and academia.

This year's theme, "Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism," honors the founder of Black History Month and applauds his commitment to the preservation of African-American history. Woodson was instrumental in popularizing the role the African-American community has played in enriching the history of the United States. His mission and legacy is one our country must uphold while continuing to inspire future generations to embrace diversity and equality.

Again, I would like to express my support for the significance of February 2008 as Black History Month. Let the following month serve as a reminder of our indebtedness to those leaders possessing the courage to combat injustice. They have completed the ultimate service not only for the African-American community in the United States but for all citizens.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of this most important month of February, deemed as Black History Month. Let us join with the rest of the Nation in highlighting the significant contributions that African Americans have made to our great Nation, while celebrating this year's theme of "Carter G. Woodson and the Origin of Multiculturalism."

Throughout this noteworthy month, we all should take a moment to reflect on the fact that February was designated to make a national appeal to Americans to make note of the tremendous role that African Americans have played in the development and advancement of our country's rich history. February embraces the birthdays of two distinguished Americans—Frederick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln—whose contributions to our society are immeasurable. Let us remember that not only are we honoring Black history; we are celebrating all of our history, American history.

This month we should remember the legacy of the illustrious Harlem Renaissance and the contributions this period had in shaping America's cultural heritage. African American writers Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, and Toni Morrison have now become major voices in American Literature. Military achievements, not only by the Tuskegee Airmen, the 54th Regiment from Massachusetts, and the 29th Regiment from Connecticut, but by other courageous Black soldiers, have helped to create the gallant Armed Forces of this country. In this month, let us all work together to ensure a positive future for the 40.2 million African Americans who contribute to this Nation on a daily basis.

In my home State of Connecticut, we make note of Hartford's Black governors who oversaw the region from 1755 to 1800; fearless Connecticut abolitionists James Mars and J.W.C. Pennington who petitioned Connecticut's legislature regarding voting and social rights for blacks in the 1840s and 50s; and of course the survivors of the Amistad slave ship, who spent days seated in a Hartford courtroom awaiting their fate by a U.S. circuit court judge. Through relics such as the Old State House, Mark Twain House, Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the Connecticut freedom trails, and the Amistad Center for Arts and Culture, we are paying homage to the extraordinary African Americans who have resided in our State.

Mr. Speaker, this year during Black History Month, I urge my colleagues and this Nation to remember all of the African Americans who have helped to weave the historical tapestry of America. I urge us all to realize the service, dedication and courage that have emerged throughout the decades. This year, let us truly celebrate Black History as a part of us all. Like our motto says, E Pluribus Unum, Out of many we are one. We are a great Nation formed by the contribution of many, and this month we celebrate one of those outstanding groups.

Mr. FEENEY. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HODES. 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 New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 942.

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. HODES. 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.

DESIGNATING "RACE DAY IN AMERICA"

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 931) expressing support for designation of February 17, 2008, as "Race Day in America" and highlighting the 50th running of the Daytona 500.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 931

Whereas the Daytona 500 is the most prestigious stock car race in the United States;

Whereas the Daytona 500 annually kicks off the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing ("NASCAR") Sprint Cup Series, NASCAR's top racing series;

Whereas millions of racing fans have spent the third Sunday of each February since 1959 watching, listening to, or attending the Daytona 500;

Whereas the purse for the Daytona 500 is typically the largest in motor sports;

Whereas winning the prestigious Harley J. Earl Trophy is stock car racing's greatest prize and privilege;

Whereas nearly 1,000,000 men and women in the Armed Forces in nearly 180 countries worldwide listen to the race on the radio via the American Forces Network;

Whereas Daytona International Speedway is the home of "The Great American Race", the Daytona 500;

Whereas fans from all 50 States and many foreign nations converge at the "World Center of Racing" each year to see the motor sports spectacle;

Whereas Daytona International Speedway becomes one of the largest cities in the State of Florida by population on race day, with more than 200,000 fans in attendance;

Whereas well-known politicians, celebrities, and athletes take part in the festivities surrounding the Daytona 500; and

Whereas February 17, 2008, would be an appropriate day to designate as "Race Day in America" because the Daytona 500 celebrates its historic 50th running on this day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 50th running of the Daytona 500, "The Great American Race"; and

(2) supports designation of a "Race Day in America" in honor of the Daytona 500.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to myself so much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of House Resolution 931, which expresses our support for naming a "race day" in America and recognizes the 50th running of the Daytona 500, which will occur on the 17th at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona, Florida.

House Resolution 931 was introduced by my distinguished colleague, Representative TOM FEENEY of Florida, on January 17, 2008, and was considered by and reported from the House Oversight Committee on January 29, 2008, by voice vote.

The measure, which has the support and cosponsorship of 68 Members of Congress, couldn't have been considered at a more fitting time as fans across this great country prepare for what is being called the most anticipated event in automobile racing history, the 50th running of the Daytona 500 on Saturday, February 17, 2008.

With a history dating back to February 22, 1959, the Daytona 500 at the Daytona International Speedway is a

500-mile motor sport international sweepstakes that draws the attention of millions of American racing fans and racing fans around the world every February.

Often referred to as "The Great American Race," the Daytona 500 is NASCAR's biggest, richest and most prestigious race and has been won by stock car racing greats such as Dale Earnhardt and Jeff Gordon.

Mr. Speaker, given the monumental occasion of the 50th running of the Daytona 500, I think it is only appropriate that we express our support of NASCAR and "The Great American Race" by passing this measure.

I urge passage of this bill.

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

□ 1500

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for this resolution designating February 17, 2008, as "Race Day in America."

Next Sunday over 200,000 people from all 50 States and around the world will convene at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida, for the 50th running of "The Great American Race," the Daytona 500.

The most prestigious stock car race in the United States, the Daytona 500 is a 200-lap, 500-mile grand opening to the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. Boasting the largest purse and stock car racing's most coveted trophy, the Harley J. Earl Trophy, the Daytona 500 has become the "Super Bowl of Stock Car Racing."

Each year millions of fans, both at home as well as those serving overseas, tune in to the race by television and radio. Since 1995, the television ratings for the Daytona 500 have been higher than any auto race, and in 2006 the race drew the sixth largest television audience of any sporting event that year.

For 50 years, the popularity of Daytona, and car racing in general, has grown throughout American society. I believe it is fitting that we celebrate this rising American tradition by passing this resolution in honor of the golden anniversary of its most prestigious event. I invite anybody who's free this Sunday to come to Daytona Beach and enjoy this great tradition with us.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HODES. 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 New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 931.

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.

REMEMBERING THE SPACE SHUTTLE "CHALLENGER" DISASTER AND HONORING ITS CREW MEMBERS

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 943) remembering the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 943

Whereas January 28, 2008, marks the 22-year anniversary of the tragic accident of the space shuttle *Challenger*, Mission 51-L, and the loss of seven of America's bravest and most dedicated citizens;

Whereas the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster occurred off the coast of central Florida, at 11:39 a.m. on January 28, 1986;

Whereas the space shuttle *Challenger* disintegrated 73 seconds into its flight after an O-ring seal in its right solid rocket booster failed at lift-off;

Whereas the seven-person crew on the shuttle included Commander Francis R. Scobee, Pilot Michael J. Smith, Mission Specialist Judith A. Resnik, Mission Specialist Ellison S. Onizuka, Mission Specialist Ronald E. McNair, Payload Specialist Gregory B. Jarvis, and Payload Specialist Sharon Christa McAuliffe;

Whereas Christa McAuliffe, a schoolteacher from Concord, New Hampshire, was on board as the first member in the Teacher in Space Project;

Whereas the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) selected Christa McAuliffe from a field of 11,000 applicants to be a part of the *Challenger* crew and teach lessons to schoolchildren from space;

Whereas the Committee on Science and Technology of the House of Representatives conducted oversight hearings on the *Challenger* disaster and released a report on October 29, 1986, on the causes of the accident; and

Whereas the House of Representatives continues to support NASA and its ongoing efforts to explore and educate the American public about space: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors the 22nd anniversary of the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster;

(2) celebrates the courage and bravery of the crew of the *Challenger*, and Christa McAuliffe and her passion for encouraging America's children to pursue careers in science and mathematics;

(3) commits itself and the Nation to using the lessons learned in inquiries into the space shuttle *Challenger* accident to ensure that the space agency always operates on a strong and stable foundation; and

(4) recognizes the continued dedication of the United States to the goal of space exploration for the benefit of all mankind.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

clude extraneous material on House Resolution 943, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to support House Resolution 943, a resolution honoring the astronauts of the space shuttle *Challenger* and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986. And I congratulate Mr. HODES for preparing this resolution.

The tragic loss of the *Challenger* and her crew of seven serves as a continuing reminder that space flight is anything but routine. As we continue to explore outer space, we here on the ground must do our part to ensure that we have learned the lessons of the *Challenger* accident and work tirelessly to make space travel as safe as possible for future generations of explorers.

In addition, I believe we can best honor the sacrifices of the crew of the *Challenger* made by our commitment to renewing America's space program, continuing the Nation's journey into space, a goal to which they dedicated their lives.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we pause today to honor the memory of the *Challenger* crew, and I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

I want to thank my colleague Mr. MELANCON for shepherding this memorial to the floor today. With this resolution, the House of Representatives joins with all Americans to solemnly remember the loss of the space shuttle *Challenger* 22 years ago on January 28, 1986.

Many Americans remember where they were on that cold January morning when the shuttle *Challenger* leapt from its launch pad. After receiving the call "*Challenger* go at throttle up," *Challenger* disintegrated in clear blue skies just 73 seconds into its flight.

We were stunned. One moment *Challenger* was flawlessly flying on a beautiful winter morning. Then, without warning, it was gone.

America turned to mourn its seven astronauts who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the advancement of exploration and discovery: Michael Smith; Dick Scobee; Judith Resnik; Ronald McNair; Ellison Onizuka; Gregory Jarvis; and Christa McAuliffe, a schoolteacher from Concord, New Hampshire, selected to be the first member of the teaching profession in a space project.

That evening, President Reagan spoke from the Oval Office to comfort a grieving Nation. Millions of children had watched the launch because Christa McAuliffe was to later teach science lessons from space. Instead, we were reminded of a deeper lesson. Reagan said:

"I want to say something to the schoolchildren of America who were watching the live coverage of the shuttle's takeoff. I know it is hard to understand, but sometimes painful things like this happen. It's all part of the process of exploration and discovery. It's all part of taking a chance and expanding man's horizons. The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted; it belongs to the brave. The *Challenger* crew was pulling us into the future, and we'll continue to follow them."

Reagan concluded his address by saying this:

"The crew of the space shuttle *Challenger* honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved good-bye and slipped the surly bonds of Earth to "touch the face of God."

Twenty-two years have passed. America has kept its word. We haven't forgotten the *Challenger* crew. Human space flight is mankind's most difficult endeavor. America has achieved so many successes, space flight seems routine; yet every generation unexpectedly bears witness to space flight's inherent dangers.

Before the *Challenger* disaster, the *Apollo I* crew was lost on Pad 34 on January 27, 1967, in an accident known simply as "The Fire." After *Challenger*, we waited on February 1, 2003, at the Kennedy Space Center's landing strip for the voyagers of *Columbia* who never returned home. January and February are NASA's cruellest months.

On each occasion the people of NASA grieved terribly, but they learned from adversity, and then they rededicated themselves to their mission. America landed on the Moon after The Fire. After *Challenger*, the shuttle flew again to pursue scientific discovery and begin constructing the international space station. After *Columbia*, we returned to flight, and we will complete and use the international space station. Then we will turn our dreams to exploring beyond Earth's orbit by establishing outposts on the Moon and then going further beyond.

Exploration, journey, and bravery define the American people. Each of us comes from a heritage where someone with great courage took a passage to a new beginning, many times with disastrous endings. But the living stubbornly persevered, pushed back vast frontiers, and built a great and glorious Nation. Adversity, including the loss of the *Challenger* crew, can never extinguish this American spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this resolution honoring the brave and dedicated crew of *Challenger*. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 943.

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

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES).

Mr. HODES. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 943.

January 28, 2008, marked the 22nd anniversary of the *Challenger* space shuttle disaster. On January 28, 1986, at 11:38 eastern standard time, the *Challenger* took off from the Kennedy Space Center and disintegrated just 73 seconds into its flight, killing all seven members of its brave crew. The accident occurred on what would have been the *Challenger's* 10th trip into space.

I introduced House Resolution 943 to honor the courage and bravery of all seven crew members who died as a result of this tragic accident. The crew of the *Challenger* embodied the goals of the United States space program and our highest ideals: a commitment to knowledge of our universe and inspiring a new generation of scientific pioneers.

The tragic accident that day was especially poignant for those of us in New Hampshire. New Hampshire is a small State, and we pride ourselves on our sense of community. And one of those crew members was Christa McAuliffe of Concord, New Hampshire, my hometown. She was a friend. She was someone who was woven deeply into the fabric of our community. She touched the lives of countless students. She was a mom. She was somebody who was loved and admired. And she was on board the *Challenger* as the first participant of the Teacher in Space program, the pride of New Hampshire and of Concord and of the Nation, for the first teacher in space was enormous and seemed to magnify the tragedy of the accident.

Christa dedicated her life to education. She taught at Rundlett Junior High School, Bow Memorial Middle School, and Concord High School between 1978 and 1985. On July 19, 1985, she was selected from a field of roughly 11,000 applicants as the primary candidate for the Teacher in Space Project. Her mission as a crew member was to teach schoolchildren lessons from space and to encourage students to pursue careers in science and mathematics.

Twenty-two years after the *Challenger* disaster, Christa McAuliffe's goal of promoting scholarship in the sciences is more important than ever as our Nation works to stay at the forefront of global innovation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the anniversary of the *Challenger* disaster and to support House Resolution 943.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 943, "Remembering the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986," introduced by my distinguished colleague from New Hampshire, Representative PAUL W. HODES. This important legislation will honor the lives, the work, and the memory of the seven men and women who lost their lives on the 1986 Space Shuttle *Challenger* mission. I

would like to thank Representative HODES for introducing this bill, of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor, as well as Chairman GORDON for his leadership in bringing this important and timely bill to the floor today.

On January 28, 1986, Ellison S. Onizuka, Sharon Christa McAuliffe, Greg Jarvis, Judy Resnik, Michael J. Smith, Dick Scobee, and Ron McNair commenced on a risky journey, which only a select few have had the opportunity to travel. Twenty-two years ago, these extraordinary men and women embarked on what they knew would be a perilous flight, in pursuit of knowledge and driven by the spirit of scientific discovery. As we stand here today, on the floor of the House of Representatives, and commemorate the 22nd anniversary of the *Challenger* tragedy, I believe we should take a moment to recall the purpose to which the crew was dedicated. Astronauts Onizuka, McAuliffe, Jarvis, Resnik, Smith, Scobee, and McNair represent the best in all of us, and it is in their memory that we should devote ourselves to continuing what they began.

Mr. Speaker, as we mourn the tragic loss of these extraordinary men and women, I would also like to praise those individuals who continue to accept the challenges posed by the exploration of space and the dedication of all connected with the manned space program. However, while space exploration continues to be a part of our national destiny, it is vital that safety is made our first priority, in order to protect future astronauts and ensure the tragedy of 22 years ago never happens again.

From the beginning, our Nation has recognized the importance of the exploration of space and has always taken a leading role in its development and exploration. The expansion of our horizons has been essential for reasons beyond the technological advances it may provide. Moreover, it represents mankind's capability to turn distant dreams into a practical reality.

However, safety must remain our first priority. In June of last year, we watched as the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* and the International Space Station both experienced serious safety scares. The shuttle's mission had to be extended following the discovery of a rip in the shuttle's thermal blanket. The space station experienced the failure of a Russian-operated computer system controlling a crucial portion of the station's navigational system. These recent incidents clearly indicate the need for improved safety standards and oversight. Space exploration must be coupled with satisfactory safety assurances.

Because of my ongoing commitment to the safe exploration of space, I was proud to introduce an amendment to H.R. 3093, the Departments of Commerce and Justice and Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 2008, reaffirming our strong commitment to ensuring adequate safety standards for the International Space Station. My amendment emphasizes the importance of safety standards by ensuring that none of the funds made available in this Act may be used to limit the safety provisions enumerated in the recent NASA Authorization Act. If the recently delivered recommendations of the congressionally mandated International Space Station Independent Safety Task Force are to be successful in identifying and mitigating future risks to the International Space Station, Congress, together with the administration, must firmly reaffirm its commitment to pursuing safety as a

top priority. My amendment was overwhelmingly approved, by a vote of 422 to 3, and accepted into the bill.

At a time where our televisions, newspapers, radios and other forms of media are dominated with discussions of presidential nominations, housing foreclosures, economic stimulus packages, Middle Eastern conflicts and the war in Iraq, it would be all too easy to disregard our commitment to the enterprise of space exploration and its value to the United States and abroad. Let us look to the sky to honor the memory of these fallen heroes who gave their lives for the cause of pushing the limit of human exploration for the enrichment of all of mankind.

Mr. Speaker, words cannot convey adequately repay the debt that is owed. We cannot sufficiently articulate the feelings of sorrow that are universally felt; however, we can pay those seven souls no greater tribute than to carry on the work they believed in and paid the ultimate sacrifice for. The contributions to space exploration and service these great astronauts provided are priceless and will never go unrecognized.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and in so doing, giving the men and women of our space program the respect and recognition they deserve.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 943, a resolution that remembers the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honors its crew members on the 22nd anniversary of their tragic flight.

On January 28, 1986, the space shuttle disintegrated shortly after takeoff, killing seven crew members. One of those astronauts, Ellison Onizuka, was born and raised in my State of Hawaii and served as Hawaii's first astronaut.

Mr. Onizuka was very enthusiastic about our space program and never hesitated to share his knowledge and experience with the people of Hawaii. He recognized the importance of education and encouraged students to pursue an interest in space and science-related fields. Four major space programs and centers in Hawaii carry on the legacy of this inspiring explorer: the Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka Space Center, Astronaut Ellison Onizuka Science Day, the Hawaii Space Grant Consortium, and Challenger Center Hawaii.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 943, which honors Mr. Onizuka's contributions and celebrates the courage and bravery of the *Challenger* crew.

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

Mr. MELANCON. 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 Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 943.

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. MELANCON. 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.

□ 1515

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EXPLORER I SATELLITE

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 287) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United States Explorer I satellite, the world's first scientific spacecraft, and the birth of the United States space exploration program.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 287

Whereas January 31, 2008, is the 50th anniversary of the launch of Explorer I, the first United States satellite to be successfully lofted into space and the world's first scientific satellite;

Whereas the launch of Explorer I marks the birth of the era of United States space exploration, a half-century of advances in both robotic and human exploration of space, including the first footsteps by humanity on another world;

Whereas, since the launch of Explorer I, the United States has launched spacecraft—

(1) to explore each of the solar system's planets and the Earth's Moon;

(2) to observe the Earth and the interactions of its atmospheric, oceanic, and land systems;

(3) to conduct studies of the Sun and its interactions with Earth;

(4) to investigate asteroids and comets;

(5) to peer deeper into space to understand the origin of the universe and the formation of the stars, galaxies, and planets; and

(6) to extend human presence into space;

Whereas Explorer I and the impetus for scientific satellites occurred as part of the International Geophysical Year, a major scientific initiative of 67 nations to collect coordinated measurements of the Earth, whose spirit continues to be embodied in the international partnerships that enhance space endeavors;

Whereas Explorer I carried a scientific instrument designed and built by Dr. James A. Van Allen of the University of Iowa to detect cosmic rays;

Whereas the cosmic ray measurements from Explorer I led to the discovery of regions of energetic charged particles trapped in the Earth's magnetic field, later named the Van Allen radiation belts;

Whereas the combined efforts of Dr. James A. Van Allen and his science team, individuals at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and individuals at the Army Ballistic Missile Agency made possible the successful development and launch of Explorer I and ushered in a new age of United States scientific and human exploration of space;

Whereas the next 50 years of United States accomplishments in outer space will rely on individuals possessing strong mathematics, science, and engineering skills and the educators who will train such individuals;

Whereas the United States space program enables the development of advanced technologies, skills, and capabilities that support United States competitiveness and economic growth;

Whereas Dr. Van Allen, commenting on the future of space science a decade ago, said

“there is no shortage of great ideas on what we'd like to do. . . . There is virtually no limit to what can be investigated in interplanetary science and astronomy.”; and

Whereas over the next 50 years the United States will attain additional exciting and significant achievements in robotic and human space exploration: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) celebrates the achievement of the late Dr. James A. Van Allen and his science team and all of the individuals at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Army Ballistic Missile Agency who, through the successful launch of Explorer I, brought the United States into the space age and science into the realm of space;

(2) supports science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education programs, which are critical for preparing the next generation to lead future United States space endeavors;

(3) recognizes the role of the United States space program in strengthening the scientific and engineering foundation that contributes to United States innovation and economic growth; and

(4) looks forward to the next 50 years of United States achievements in the robotic and human exploration of space.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MELANCON. 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 House Concurrent Resolution 287, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 287. This resolution celebrates the 50th anniversary of *Explorer I*, the first successful launch of a U.S. satellite into space, which took place on January 31, 1958, a date that also marks the 50th birthday of our U.S. space program.

With the launch of *Explorer I*, the United States was the first to send a scientific instrument into Earth's orbit. The measurements from that instrument led to the significant discovery of the Van Allen radiation belts.

We owe our profound appreciation and gratitude to the late Dr. James Van Allen and science team and those individuals from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Army Ballistic Missile Agency who made possible the success of *Explorer I*.

Their pioneering efforts launched the beginning of America's journey beyond Earth, a journey that continues to generate remarkable accomplishments in

pushing back the frontiers of scientific knowledge and human space exploration.

Since the launch of *Explorer I* 50 years ago, the United States has led the world in space exploration, with American astronauts taking humanity's first steps on the Moon, and American scientists working with their international colleagues to launch scientific probes to each of the planets in our solar system, to the Moon, asteroids and comets, and to study the Sun and its interactions with Earth and the solar system.

Our astronomical observatories peer deeper and deeper into the universe and our Earth observing spacecraft deliver data that improves our quality of life and helps us preserve the health of our planet. Through these and many other exciting accomplishments, our space program has truly become one of our Nation's crown jewels.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the anniversary of *Explorer I* and past achievements, it is important that we also look to space as a story about America's future.

The U.S. space program is a catalyst for the advanced technologies and innovation that contribute to America's economic competitiveness, and it also serves as a training ground for the scientists and engineers who are so critical to keeping America strong.

In closing, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Concurrent Resolution 287 and America's space program.

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

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

I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 287, offered by my friend and Space Subcommittee chairman, MARK UDALL, as well as Mr. MELANCON, RALPH HALL and myself, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the launch of *Explorer I*, America's first satellite. With this launch, America became a spacefaring Nation.

Unlike the Soviets, who 4 months earlier had launched *Sputnik I* in secrecy, America's space program was carried on in full public view. Our first attempt to launch a satellite, *Vanguard I*, ended in failure. As a consequence, some suggested that our preeminence as a world power was jeopardized.

Explorer I proved otherwise. The successful launch came through a collaboration of brilliant and dedicated scientists and engineers led by Wernher von Braun, who designed the launch vehicle known as the *Jupiter C*; Dr. Charles Pickering, director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, who designed the satellite; and Dr. James Van Allen, who designed the main instrument carried aboard *Explorer I*.

On the night of January 31, 1958, *Explorer I* lifted off from Pad 26A at Cape Canaveral, Florida. Almost 2 hours passed before a ground station in California confirmed the satellite's suc-

cessful orbit. America was now on a path to achieve space preeminence.

Unlike *Sputnik I*, *Explorer I* did more than demonstrate the ability to place an object into orbit. It had a valuable scientific purpose. *Explorer I* consisted of a Geiger counter that detected cosmic rays, temperature sensors, and a micrometeorite impact microphone. These instruments discovered radiation belts, now named after Dr. James Van Allen, that encircle the Earth.

Explorer I stopped transmitting data on May 23, 1958 when its batteries died. But it stayed in orbit until March 31, 1970 and completed about 58,000 orbits around the Earth.

Explorer I's legacy was far greater than anticipated. Few imagined how satellites could maintain our Nation's security and economy and extend man's reach to the far corners of the solar system.

Government and private enterprise, scientists and engineers, worked together to exploit and expand the capacities of space. Today, a vibrant and critical commercial industry builds and launches sophisticated satellites.

In Earth orbit, satellites forecast weather and measure surface winds and other climate variables. They monitor land-use patterns and remote sensing. They help farmers gauge the health of their crops; transmit data, radio and television signals into our homes and to businesses around the world; and they provide the infrastructure for the global positioning system, enabling the capability to accurately navigate to virtually any point on Earth.

Beyond Earth orbit, satellites have visited every planet in the solar system except for Pluto, although a mission is under way to visit this far-away planet in 2015. Satellites have carried rovers to the surface of Mars, they have captured samples of interstellar dust and returned them to Earth, photographed the heavens with exceptional clarity, measured background temperatures and radiation to high precision, and landed on a moon of Saturn.

Explorer I also led to our human spaceflight program under which America learned to orbit the Earth, explore the Moon, and live for extended periods aboard the international space station.

H. Con. Res. 287 commemorates the achievements of the *Explorer I* team, and acknowledges its role as the impetus for what has become a critical part of America's greatness. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this bill, along with my good friend and ranking Republican member of the Science and Technology Committee, RALPH HALL, and I urge all Members to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any further speakers, and I would reserve my time.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, earlier I shamelessly invited people to come and experience the Daytona 500. While they are there, they may want to come visit a museum not far from the Daytona

500. Launch Complex 26, where *Explorer I* was launched, now houses the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Museum.

If you visit, you can tour the blockhouse from which the *Explorer I* was launched, see launch control equipment from that era and walk on the launch pad. Just a few hundred yards away is Launch Pad 5 where America's first astronaut, Alan Shepherd, was launched into space. Emily Perry serves as the museum's curator. Sixty volunteers, led by Gary Harris, guide these tours. Most of these volunteers are veterans of America's space program, including some from the *Explorer I* era. Their stories provide a window into this fascinating past. Tours begin from the Kennedy Space Center's Visitors Complex and operate 7 days a week.

We have talked about how *Explorer I* began America's journey as a spacefaring people. If you visit the Space and Missile Museum, you can see and touch where that journey began.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today we consider H. Con. Res. 287, Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the U.S. *Explorer I* Satellite and the Birth of the United States' Space Exploration Program, which I introduced last week.

My statement about its introduction highlighted the inspiring accomplishments of our early space pioneers who contributed to the successful development and launch of *Explorer I*—America's first space satellite—and the multiple achievements of our Nation's first 50 years in space.

Today, I want to focus on one of the major enablers of America's highly successful space program, namely our highly skilled science and engineering workforce.

As we celebrate 50 years of exciting accomplishments in space, we witness the return on our Nation's past investments in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education.

Those investments produced the cadre of highly skilled scientists and engineers who have led our Nation in pushing back the boundaries of scientific knowledge and making possible the human and robotic exploration of outer space.

Their contributions to our successes in space have also yielded critical benefits by promoting the innovation and advanced technology development that are central to America's competitiveness.

As was expressed so clearly in the National Academies' "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" report and in the America COMPETES Act that was signed into law last year, our nation's economic strength cannot be sustained without renewed investments in STEM education.

Space has always been an attraction for some of America's best and brightest. Our space program provides a unique means of encouraging the pursuit of STEM fields. I urge my colleagues in Congress to support the STEM programs and educators we need to prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers who will lead America's next 50 years of accomplishments in space and on Earth.

And I urge you also to maintain Congress's commitment to making the investments necessary to continue a robust and vital space program for the Nation.

I would like to thank my colleagues Ms. GIFFORDS and Mr. ROHRBACHER for their support of the bill, along with the original cosponsors. I urge adoption of my resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 287 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of *Explorer I* and the birth of an era of United States space exploration.

On January 31, 1958, the United States officially entered space as *Explorer I* successfully reached orbit. At a time when our Nation feared the worst from the Soviet Union, the successful launch of *Sputnik* supercharged anxiety. Our Nation responded, and responded quickly.

Explorer I, however, was more than just an emphatic response to *Sputnik*. It was achieved important scientific discoveries, as well. As mechanical engineer Carl Maggio noted, all involved "liked the difference between our satellite and *Sputnik*," because "ours flew science, the Van Allen experiment." Indeed, amongst the numerous discoveries made by *Explorer I*, one of the most important was the discovery of the Van Allen radiation belt, a discovery that would be considered as one of the most outstanding discoveries of the International Geophysical Year.

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to visit the home of *Explorer I*—Jet Propulsion Laboratories. Seeing this extraordinary accomplishment in person, I couldn't help but feel a swell of pride knowing that this satellite was the humble beginning of our Nation's esteemed space program. An old proverb holds that even the greatest of journeys begins with a single step. The launch of *Explorer I* was that first step, and it helped pave the way for a half-century of space exploration. Today, JPL missions have rovers on Mars, evaluating soil samples on a microscopic level.

To conclude, I would like to quote the NASA Chief historian Steven J. Dick, who observed that "Like the railroad and the airplane, spaceflight has impacted society in ways even the visionaries could not have foreseen, and that we cannot fully fathom even today." Indeed, through the space program, we continue to make important discoveries whose benefits amaze generations to come.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 287, recognizing the anniversary of the launch of *Explorer I*. The launch of *Sputnik I* by the Russians in October 1957 created alarm in the U.S. Many Americans were fearful of what a Russian space program meant for our country.

However, the United States quickly responded. In just 84 days scientists built the *Explorer I* satellite that would begin the next 50 years of space exploration. Scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory collaborated under the leadership of Dr. William Pickering to manufacture what would become *Explorer I*. On January 31, 1958, the United States launched its first satellite into space. Once in orbit, the satellite collected data on cosmic rays. The scientific data was important, but the beginning of our space program was also important for the assurance it provided Americans. *Explorer I* signaled we would not fall behind Russia in space.

Today we continue to rely on scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to solve the pressing problems of our day. These innovators continuously rise to the challenges we as a Nation face. *Explorer I* stands as a

milestone in space, and foreshadowed what we would achieve in just 50 years.

Today, the United States remains a leader in space: landing humans on the moon; exploring our solar system; and gaining a better understanding of our land, oceans, and atmosphere. We must continue to reach for new goals in space. By doing so, we continue our leadership of this world and lead humanity to a brighter destiny.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. FEENEY. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, not having any other speakers, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 287.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING THE X PRIZE FOUNDATION

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 907) congratulating the X PRIZE Foundation's leadership in inspiring a new generation of viable, super-efficient vehicles, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 907

Whereas the United States is heavily dependent on foreign sources of oil that are concentrated in tumultuous countries and regions;

Whereas the national security and economic prosperity of the United States demand that we move toward a sustainable energy future;

Whereas the ability of foreign governments to assert great control over oil production allows unfriendly regimes to use energy exports as leverage against the United States and our allies;

Whereas continued reliance on the use of greenhouse gas intensive fuels may impact global climate change;

Whereas the automotive sector is heavily dependent on oil, which makes Americans vulnerable to oil price fluctuation and is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions;

Whereas average fuel economy in the United States has increased slowly during the last 20 years;

Whereas many promising technologies exist that can lead to a breakthrough vehicle that will meet the need for sustainable transportation;

Whereas breakthroughs are often achieved by the free market fueling the entrepreneurial spirit of inventors and investors;

Whereas the Automotive X PRIZE is a private, independent, technology-neutral competition being developed by the X PRIZE Foundation to inspire a new generation of viable, super-efficient vehicles that help break our addiction to oil and stem the effects of climate change;

Whereas the Automotive X PRIZE will award a multimillion dollar reward to teams that can design, build, and demonstrate production-capable vehicles that achieve 100 MPG or its equivalent; and

Whereas such prize competitions generate involvement and innovation across a broad spectrum of known and untapped talent such as the \$25,000 Orteig Prize won by Charles Lindbergh which leveraged \$400,000 worth of additional research by teams trying to win the prize and spurred a \$250,000,000 aviation industry, and the \$10,000,000 Ansari X Prize which leveraged \$100,000,000 worth of additional research: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the X PRIZE Foundation's leadership for inspiring a new generation of viable, super-efficient vehicles that help break our addiction to oil through the Automotive X PRIZE competition;

(2) congratulates the X PRIZE Foundation on their innovation and vision to bring together some of the finest minds in the public and private sectors, including government, academia, and industry, to advise and participate in the Automotive X PRIZE competition; and

(3) applauds the X PRIZE Foundation's ongoing commitment to find solutions to some of humanity's greatest challenges as exemplified in the Automotive X PRIZE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MELANCON. 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 House Resolution 907, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on June 21, 2004, Space Ship One became the first privately funded craft to take a person into space. Space Ship One flew again on September 29, 2004, and on October 4, 2004, and upon successful completion of these flights, Mojave Aerospace Ventures, the developers of Space Ship One, captured the \$10 million Ansari X PRIZE. Just as important as Space Ship One's historic flights, the competition for the X PRIZE spurred the creation of a private spaceflight industry in this country.

It is with this past success in mind that I rise to speak in support of the new Automotive X PRIZE. This new prize will award a multimillion-dollar prize to teams that can design, build and demonstrate production-capable vehicles that achieve 100 miles per gallon or its equivalent. With the current price of oil hovering around \$100 per barrel, it is more important than ever that our country develops technologies that increase the efficiencies of our

automobiles. To this end, I was pleased to support H.R. 6, which significantly raised CAFE standards, and would do much to increase the efficiency of American automobiles.

However, the government does not hold a monopoly on innovation. Many of the great discoveries of our time were accomplished by private individuals and companies. From Thomas Edison's discovery of the light bulb to Henry Ford's perfection of the automobile, private innovators have changed the face of America. It is my hope that the Automotive X PRIZE will once again spur the creative and innovative spirit of American citizens to help us in our fight for energy independence and security.

I would like to thank Mr. LUNGREN for introducing this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H. Res. 907, as amended, which recognizes and congratulates the forward-thinking X PRIZE Foundation on one of its latest contest endeavors, the Automotive X PRIZE.

There is a rich history in this country of prizes sponsored by private entities leading to innovations in science and technology. Starting with the Ansari X PRIZE, the privately funded X PRIZE Foundation has successfully been able to build on the concept of the 1927 Orteig Prize, which awarded \$25,000 to the first person to be able to make a nonstop transatlantic flight. While the actual Orteig Prize name may not be well known, the recipient of this prize, Charles Lindbergh, certainly is. The benefits of the \$400,000 of investment teams made in an effort to win this prize certainly have been realized, and the \$250 billion aviation industry that took off shortly thereafter certainly continues to prosper. Likewise, the 2004 Ansari X PRIZE leveraged over \$100 million in research by teams vying for a \$10 million price for private spaceflight. Won by Mojave Aerospace Ventures, the Ansari X PRIZE changed the public's perception of personal spaceflight.

Now the Automotive X PRIZE is poised to produce similar results for the next generation of automobiles, viable, super-efficient vehicles. As the resolution states, our "national security and economic prosperity demand that we move toward a sustainable future." This prize certainly helps us move in that direction. It will be awarded to the team that can design, build and sell super-efficient cars that achieve 100 miles per gallon and are not concept cars, but cars that people will want to buy. If successful, the end result in and of itself will be impressive, but the overall benefits to the Nation will be too numerable to measure. This prize, like those before it, will generate millions of privately funded research dollars producing research that may

not in the end win the prize, but could spur additional technologies. Likewise, this prize will stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit of inventors and investors alike, both known entities and brilliant minds working in backyard garages.

I congratulate the X PRIZE Foundation's leadership in creating a private, independent competition designed to help move us closer to a sustainable energy future. I wish them much success, look forward to seeing the results it produces, and encourage my colleagues to support this resolution.

With that, I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, at this time I have no recognized Members, I think Mr. FEENEY does, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 1 minute to Dr. BARTLETT, my friend from Maryland.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, Shell Oil Company sent out a press release saying that by no later than 2015 the world would not be able to meet the demands of our economies for oil and natural gas. At just about the same time as that, a group came to my office to brief me on the Automotive X PRIZE. You may have noticed how much harder people will work for a prize than they will for money. Just note the Olympics and what these athletes will do for a prize. So I am very, very supportive of this fantastic idea. I bought the first Prius in Maryland, I bought the first Prius in Congress, and I want to buy the winning car from this competition.

I have here a note from Donald Foley, who is the executive director of the Automotive X PRIZE, and he has noted my desire to buy that winning car. So hopefully we will be driving that to the Congress in not too long.

Thank you very much for yielding.

□ 1530

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my colleague and friend from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, prizes have a history of encouraging innovation by promoting competition and expanding the talent pool to include a numerous and diverse array of groups and individuals. Those unable or unwilling to secure grants can participate in the race for the goal. With prizes, government funding is not used to pick technological winners and losers. The prize is only awarded if the goal is met. Prizes encourage the investment of private capital and research, even beyond the monetary value of the prize.

I applaud the X PRIZE Foundation for spurring competition and innovation in the race to a more efficient automobile. When the 100 mile-per-gallon vehicle is achieved, citizens of my home State of Nebraska will be able to drive across the State on Interstate 80 on only 4½ gallons of fuel. This tre-

mendous efficiency would dramatically reduce our Nation's dependence on foreign oil, it would stimulate our economy, and certainly improve our national security.

I am grateful for the vision and enterprise of men like Dr. Peter Diamandis who kindle the spark of innovation that leads to revolutionary technologies.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure that I check with Mr. SMITH whether that is stopping for red lights that takes 4½ hours to go across Nebraska.

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 Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 907, 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.

CALLING FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE CURRENT ELECTORAL CRISIS IN KENYA

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 283) calling for a peaceful resolution to the current electoral crisis in Kenya, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 283

Whereas on December 27, 2007, the citizens of Kenya went peacefully to the polls to elect a new parliament and a new President and signaled their commitment to democracy by turning out in large numbers and, in some instances, waiting in long lines to vote;

Whereas on December 29, 2007, the opposition presidential candidate, Raila Odinga, was reportedly over 300,000 votes ahead of the incumbent with 90 percent of the precincts reporting;

Whereas on December 30, 2007, the head of the Electoral Commission of Kenya ("ECK") declared that Mwai Kibaki won the presidential election by 197,000 votes;

Whereas Mr. Kibaki was sworn in as President within an hour of the announcement of the election results, despite serious concerns raised about the legitimacy of the election results by domestic and international observers;

Whereas the lack of transparency in vote tallying, serious irregularities reported by election observers, the implausibility of the margin of victory, and the swearing in of the Party of National Unity presidential candidate with undue haste, all serve to undermine the credibility of the presidential election results;

Whereas the Government of Kenya imposed a ban on live media that day, and shortly

after the election results were announced, in contravention of Kenyan law, the Government also announced a blanket ban on public assembly and gave police the authority to use lethal force;

Whereas on January 1, 2008, 4 commissioners on the ECK issued a statement which called into question the election results announced by the Commission and called for a judicial review;

Whereas the head of the European Union Election Observation Mission stated that "Lack of transparency as well as a number of verified irregularities . . . cast doubt on the accuracy of the results of the presidential election as announced by the ECK" and called for an international audit of the results;

Whereas observers from the East African Community have called for an investigation into irregularities during the tallying process and for those responsible for such irregularities to be held accountable;

Whereas in 1991 President Daniel Arap Moi agreed to move from one party rule to multi-party politics, and in 1992, Kenyans voted in record numbers in the country's first multi-party election in almost 26 years;

Whereas in 1997 Kenya held its second multi-party elections, despite extremely high levels of tension between the opposition and the ruling party;

Whereas in 2002 the opposition succeeded in forming and holding together a coalition that for the first time in history ousted the ruling party from power, demonstrating to Kenyans and Africans that incumbency and the entrenched clout of a ruling party can be defeated through the ballot box;

Whereas the violence and unrest in Kenya threatens to roll back the democratic gains made over the past 17 years;

Whereas more than 900 people have died and an estimated 250,000 people, 80,000 of whom are children, have been displaced as a result of the violence;

Whereas Kenya has been a valuable United States ally since independence, providing the United States with access to its military facilities and political support in the United Nations, and has been an important ally in the war against terrorism, especially since the United States embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998;

Whereas the political instability in Kenya is connected to a larger struggle for democracy and is not merely the result of tribal violence;

Whereas continued violence and unrest could have serious political, economic, and security implications for the entire region; and

Whereas the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs has stated that "serious flaws in the vote tallying process damaged the credibility of the process" and that the United States should not "conduct business as usual" in Kenya: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) commends the Kenyan people for their commitment to democracy and respect for the democratic process as evidenced by the high voter turnout and peaceful voting on election day;

(2) strongly condemns the ongoing violence in Kenya and urges all parties concerned to immediately end use of violence as a means to achieve their political objectives;

(3) calls for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the conflict in Kenya;

(4) calls on the 2 leading presidential candidates to continue to accept external and internal assistance to help find a solution to the current crisis which has the support of the people of Kenya;

(5) calls on Kenyan security forces to refrain from use of excessive force and respect the human rights of Kenyan citizens;

(6) calls for those who are found guilty of committing human rights violations to be held accountable for their actions;

(7) calls for an immediate end to the restrictions on the media, and on the rights of peaceful assembly and association;

(8) condemns threats to civil society groups, journalists, religious leaders, human rights activists, and all those who are making every effort to achieve a peaceful, just, and equitable political solution to the current electoral crisis;

(9) calls on the international community, United Nations aid organizations, and all neighboring countries to provide assistance to those affected by violence and encourages the use of all the diplomatic means at their disposal to persuade relevant political actors to commit to a peaceful resolution to the current crisis; and

(10) urges the President of the United States to—

(A) continue to support diplomatic efforts to facilitate a dialogue between leaders of the Party of National Unity, the Orange Democratic Movement, and other relevant actors that will lead to the establishment of an interim or coalition government in order to implement necessary constitutional reforms, establish a mechanism to investigate the election crisis, and address its root causes;

(B) consider the imposition of targeted sanctions, including a travel ban and asset freeze, on political leaders and other relevant actors who refuse to engage in mediation efforts to end the political crisis in the country; and

(C) conduct a review of current United States aid to Kenya for the purposes of restricting all non-essential assistance to Kenya unless the parties are able to establish a peaceful political resolution to the current crisis which is credible to the Kenyan people.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. 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 concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, "Kenya is at a crossroads." Those are the words spoken this morning by the chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Kenya in a hearing that I chaired on the current crisis today.

Kenya had been considered a linchpin on economic and political stability in the East Africa region for decades. We always were proud of the accomplishments and the achievements of them, and we often pointed to Kenya as a beacon of how other African countries

and countries throughout the developing world should move towards democracy. However, we have seen very sad occurrences during the past month or two. H. Con. Res. 283 seeks to address the unfortunate and still unfolding political crisis in Kenya.

I went to Kenya last month to assess the situation and to encourage political, religious, community, and civil society leaders to find a peaceful resolution to the current situation. I visited thousands of displaced children in Jamhuri showground and met with volunteers from diverse backgrounds. It was remarkable and encouraging to see Kenyans coming together to help their fellow citizens, donating food and material to those in need.

Indeed, witnessing the violence and meeting the young victims was deeply troubling. Yet, I am confident that Kenyans will come out of this crisis united. Kenyans must put Kenya first.

Kenyans of different religious, ethnic, and economic backgrounds live together peacefully in a region long marred by civil war and political chaos. Unfortunately, like the millions of Kenyans, the more than 170,000 refugees from the Ogaden and Somalia regions in Kenya will also be affected, because when the central government is affected, those other people, refugees and other groups in need, are also affected, as will be the lives of so many others in the countries surrounding Kenya. Many depend on Kenya for economic and industrial progress for their countries to survive.

On December 27, 2007, the citizens of Kenya went peacefully to the polls to elect a new parliament and a new president, despite the logistics challenges and long lines. More than 14 million Kenyans registered to vote. That is 82 percent of the eligible voters. An estimated 2,547 parliamentary candidates were qualified to run in the 210 constituencies, a clear indication of the desire and the determination of Kenyans to participate and to be a part of the political process in their country.

Incoming President Mwai Kibaki was hastily declared the winner by the Electoral Commission of Kenya, after a series of highly irregular events which cast significant doubt on his so-called victory. Let me be blunt: The election results announced by the ECK do not reflect the wishes of the Kenyan people. The people of Kenya voted for change. What they were given was more of the status quo.

In reaction to what occurred, Kenyans went to the streets to express their frustration and anger. The protests soon turned violent, and it is still unfolding as we speak. More than 1,000 people have been killed and over 300,000 displaced as a result of unrest, including an estimated 80,000 children under the age of 5, and these young lives are being traumatized as we speak. Millions more have been adversely affected. Two members of the parliament from the opposition ODM were killed in

January, reducing a five-member lead to three.

The instability in Kenya continues to threaten and affect the economies of neighboring countries, imposing serious threats to regional stability, a fragile region in the first place. But this is going to make it even more fragile. The Kenyan economy has been hit hard and recovery may take a long time.

H. Con. Res. 283 does several critical things. One, it strongly condemns the ongoing violence in Kenya and urges all parties concerned to immediately end the use of violence as a means to achieve their political objectives. It also calls for all parties to participate in good faith and dialogue mediated by former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, and asks President Bush to consider imposing asset freezes and travel bans on leaders in the Party of National Unity, the Orange Democratic Movement, and other relevant actors who refuse to engage in this dialogue to end the current crisis.

Additionally, the resolution calls for the international community to respond to the grave humanitarian needs of the people of Kenya and all neighboring countries to provide assistance to those affected by the violence.

□ 1545

At the same time, it calls for a review of our assistance to Kenya and restrict any nonhumanitarian assistance.

Before concluding, though, I would like to point out that U.S. diplomatic efforts in the wake of the election have not been stellar. Indeed, the response to the Kenyan election crisis proves beyond a doubt that some of the administration officials are too quick to embrace a government that engages in electoral abuses and overlook rather than condemn its electoral and human rights abuses.

We saw this happen in the 2005 elections in Ethiopia. We must proceed carefully and thoughtfully and work with our partners in the EU and AU to help resolve this crisis. I also want to emphasize a very critical point. Despite statements by some to the contrary, what is happening in Kenya is not an ethnic conflict. It is a political conflict with ethnic overtones.

We must look closely at the historical and political context to really understand and to avoid making additional mistakes on how we characterize what is happening today in Kenya. However, if political leaders in Kenya do not make a serious effort to stop the violence now and address the systemic problems that exist in their political structures, the violence we are seeing could certainly reach a point of no return.

Once that happens, it will be very difficult to stop. It is critical that a transitional coalition government is established with a clear mandate to implement necessary reforms such as a new constitution, a new electoral law, a new electoral commission, and address

the root causes of the crisis and prepare the country for transparent Presidential elections within 2 years. The people of Kenya deserve no less.

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 strong support of H. Con. Res. 283, addressing the current crisis in Kenya. I, like much of the world, was shocked by the violence that followed the December 27 elections in Kenya, a country that has proven to be a great friend and ally of the United States over the years.

My heart and my condolences, as well as that of every Member of this Chamber, go out to the victims of this violence and their families, some 1,000 people who have been killed since that fateful election day.

There have been shocking events that few of us expected to see in Kenya, protesters shot by police, gangs with machetes butchering innocents, a crowd of people, including women and children, burned alive in a church. Two opposition parliamentarians, as Mr. PAYNE just pointed out, have been gunned down since the violence began. Now some 300,000 people have fled their homes, have fled their neighbors, and remain displaced. They are virtual refugees within their own country. Aid workers tell us that about 80,000 of these internally displaced people are children under the age of 5.

The priority for everyone has to be to stop the violence and to end the killing. In addition, we must examine the context in which the violence erupted in the first place.

The broad strokes of what happened during and after the December 27 elections are now well known. Millions of Kenyans voted that day in the country's fourth multiparty elections and it is a testament to the Kenyan people that some 14.2 million people, 82 percent of all eligible voters, were registered to vote. I won't recite the polling numbers or give an autopsy of the election, but suffice it to say that at some point the system went terribly wrong.

The European Union said the elections were "marred by a lack of transparency which raised concerns about the accuracy and final results of this election." Election observers from the East African community also raised serious concerns about the elections, and eventually the United States, too, asserted that "serious flaws in the vote tallying damaged the credibility of the process."

I want to commend my friend and colleague, Chairman PAYNE, for his leadership on this issue. I joined him to cosponsor this resolution, which calls for an end to the violence and an end to restrictions on the media. It condemns threats to human rights activists and others who are working for a peaceful solution to this crisis. It calls on President Kibaki and the challenger, Mr.

Odinga, to work together for a mediated solution to this crisis.

The U.S. must do all that it can to encourage them to move in this direction. The resolution emphasizes our hope that this dialogue will lead to an establishment of an interim or coalition government that can enact constitutional reform and establish a mechanism to investigate this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support and backing for H. Con. Res. 283.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. I would like to begin by commending the gentleman from New Jersey, Chairman PAYNE, of the Africa Subcommittee. I want to thank him for introducing this resolution that addresses the troublesome violence that is occurring today in Kenya, and I would like to recognize the good work of the subcommittee's ranking member, Mr. SMITH, as well.

Mr. Speaker, the situation in Kenya has been described. Since the post-election violence erupted at the end of December, we know that now over 1,000 Kenyans have been killed. We know that a quarter million souls have been forced to flee from their homes. Many of these homes have been burned. Many individuals have been burned. As this resolution notes, international observers found the election to be seriously flawed, implicating the government. Today, as Kenya's politicians fight for power, its people suffer and some of those people are suffering terribly.

This resolution calls on President Mwai Kibaki and opposition candidate Raila Odinga to accept external assistance to find their way out of this. This has been occurring of late with the former U.N. Secretary General bringing about some progress. But without this, the factions seem incapable of moving ahead on their own.

The resolution also calls for holding accountable those responsible for violence. Widespread violence can almost always be traced back to ringleaders. That was the case in Rwanda, where a small band sparked a genocide. Kenyans don't want their country ripped apart, but a small number of recruiters, I suspect, are leading it in that way. We should do our best to let would-be killers, including government officials, know that the world is watching and they will face the consequences if they incite violence.

The State Department's top official charged with Africa recently called the violence "ethnic cleansing." We cannot be complacent. The potential for violence spiraling upward should never be discounted. This is the reason, of course, that our Peace Corps is leaving Kenya.

Looking back a few months, the U.S. and the international community was complacent and somewhat naive about

the Kenyan elections. News reports and analysts expressed surprise over the election violence. I chaired the Africa Subcommittee for 8 years working with Chairman PAYNE. There is a tendency, an understandable one, to see African "successes," and Kenya has been described as one. While many African countries have made progress, many African countries face fundamental and very difficult challenges that leave them very vulnerable. A better realization of that, a more realistic view, I think, would lead to a better Africa policy.

Kenya is a very important country. Its economy is key to East Africa. This violence has been economically devastating to many Kenyans. We have terrorism concerns in the region. So we have humanitarian and other reasons, other reasons besides just the question of the inhumanity here to help Kenyans move forward. It is Kenyans themselves who must look within to help get out of this crisis. But the U.S. and others should help, and this resolution calls for that help. I urge support for it, and I commend Chairman PAYNE for authoring it.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank the gentleman from California and commend him for the outstanding work that he did as chairman of this subcommittee and his continued interest in the subcommittee's activities.

I would like to say that I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey cosponsoring this resolution, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. WOLF, who has been a true real leader on issues in Africa, too. One of the things that I must say, as I already mentioned about Mr. ROYCE, that our Subcommittee on Africa, regardless of which political party tends to chair it, has worked in a bipartisan manner for the 20 years that I have been a member of the committee, sometimes in the majority, sometimes in the minority.

But the thing that has been very encouraging is that in 95, 96 percent of the time, I would say we are on the same page. We see things the same way. We might have to tweak a word or two here, but by and large, we have been able to move forward on so many important issues because of the bipartisan spirit.

Once again, Mr. ROYCE, I appreciate your continued support, and, of course, Ranking Member SMITH, who is not only doing a tremendous job here but with the Helsinki Commission, and for the fact that he is very interested in the situation in China, I appreciate your continued human rights efforts. It's a pleasure to work with you.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PAYNE. I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. KENNEDY. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his work in this area and just say, having just returned from another part of the world that has been turned upside down by election disturbances in Pakistan, with the assassination of Benazir

Bhutto, it's clear to me that the United States' interest in monitoring elections is paramount because of the national security implications in all of these parts of the world, that we have election monitors stationed in all of these places of the world where there are elections.

I know that the NDI and the NRI, the National Democratic Institute, National Republican Institute and these organizations that we promote as a country, we need to, as a Congress, continue to support those organizations because they are absolutely indispensable towards our national security in helping to secure better faith and confidence in these elections that are taking place around the world. If there is confidence in these elections, and, clearly, these elections have been called into dispute, especially here in Kenya, then there is going to be an unraveling of confidence, and, as we have seen, an occurrence of violence. That occurrence of violence is going to be destabilizing, not only to the region but also to our own national security interests.

That is why I support this resolution and certainly want to salute my colleagues in saying that in the future, we need to do more to support these efforts of monitoring these elections and giving the support that they need on the ground to make sure that they really are transparent elections in every sense of the word.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank you very much. Let me also commend you for the work that you continue to do in Cape Verde and other developing countries, and your work in Haiti certainly makes all of us proud.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Again, I want to thank Chairman PAYNE for his great leadership on this issue. We work very well together on that committee.

Mr. Speaker, this was very important, and it is very important that we get a very strong vote by the House on behalf of the Payne resolution. We need to send a clear message to Kenya that we are watching, that we care deeply about what is unfolding there, and that we stand in solidarity there with those who have lost loved ones, with the IDPs and others.

We want a robust democracy in Kenya because they want a robust democracy in Kenya. The people deserve it. We thought they had it to some extent.

I think the chairman's mention of Ethiopia was a very important one. We thought Ethiopia was moving in the right direction. An election was held. It was seriously marred with irregularities, and then a series of killings followed thereafter. That's still a very unsettled part of the world as well. Again, I want to thank the chairman for his important resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 283, calling for a peaceful resolution to the current electoral crisis in Kenya, introduced by my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, Chairman PAYNE. This important legislation commends the Kenyan people for their significant strides towards democracy and calls for the peaceful resolution of their current electoral crisis.

As a senior Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs as well as the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, I am deeply concerned with the current crisis in Kenya. It saddens me to see the once relatively stable country of Kenya explode into chaotic violence, which has left more than 900 people dead and forced 300,000 people from their homes. Democracy must move forward in Kenya, and the cry for clear, transparent and peaceful elections must not go unheard by the international community. As Kenya's political crisis also becomes a humanitarian emergency, with over 300,000 people displaced from their homes and the distribution of food aid halted, experts have begun to warn of a looming health crisis. It is vital for the people of Kenya that we work rapidly to bring this conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

This important legislation denounces Kenyan security forces from using unwarranted force and urges them to respect the human rights of Kenyan citizens. This legislation further condemns the callous terrorization to civil society groups, journalists, religious leaders, and civil rights leaders.

While Kenya has long been an important friend and ally to the United States, at times our relationship has been strained due to concerns about corruption and human rights conditions in the sub-Saharan nation. However, this intricate relationship has been recently renewed and reinvigorated with the advent of the 1992 multiparty elections in Kenya. The people of Kenya have shown a desire and commitment for democracy that is unprecedented and sets a new standard for the region. Their unparalleled commitment to democracy and respect for the democratic process is indicated in the high voter turnout and peaceful voting on election day.

On December 27, 2007, the desire of the Kenyan nation for a meaningful change in politics and the revival of democracy was manifest in the millions of Kenyans who took to the polls. The months preceding the December elections showed opposition candidate Raila Odinga leading in the polls over incumbent President Mwai Kibaki. Amidst domestic and international cries of polling irregularities, the Electoral Commission of Kenya declared President Kibaki as the winner.

It is not the election itself but rather the aftermath of the elections and a way forward that concerns us here today. The Kenyan Constitution authorizes the establishment of the Electoral Commission of Kenya, ECK. While the ECK is comprised of 22 commissioners, 19 of the commissioners were appointed by President Kibaki last year, which is authorized by the Kenyan Constitution. What is not authorized was the appointment of the new commissioners without proper consultation with opposition parties, which violated the Inter-Parliamentary Parties Group Agreement of 1997. While the ECK quickly declared President Kibaki the winner, the chairman of the commission later admitted that he "was

under intense political pressure from powerful political leaders and the ruling party." Furthermore, press reports quote the Kenya Electoral Commission Chairman Samuel M. Kivuitu as stating that "the day he went to deliver the certificate declaring Kibaki the winner, he saw the chief justice already at the State House reportedly waiting to swear in Kibaki." The swearing-in ceremony itself was so rushed that it is said organizers forgot to include the national anthem in the program. Mr. Speaker, to call these events "irregularities" as the ECK commissioners and ECK staff have conceded, is a vast understatement. In order for Kenya to continue moving forward on its current democratic trajectory, elections must be transparent, free, and fair, none of which were seen in the December 27 election. This legislation calls upon the two leading presidential candidates to accept offers of external and internal assistance to help find a solution to the current crisis that has the support of the people of Kenya.

What is equally disturbing was the United States' reaction to this electoral crisis. While the EU observers criticized the election for its myriad of inconsistencies, on December 30, the United States government reportedly congratulated President Kibaki for his victory. In a recently released report, the EU concluded, "the 2007 general elections have fallen short of key international and regional standards for democratic elections. Most significantly, they were marred by a lack of transparency in the processing and tallying of presidential results, which raises concerns about the accuracy of the final results of this election." Following both regional and international uproar, the United States seemingly changed its position in January as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, declared that "serious flaws in the vote tallying process damaged the credibility of the process." Such inconsistency on the part of diplomatic corps of the United States sends a poor message to our friends and allies struggling for democracy across the sea.

As outrage over the electoral results permeated throughout the country, so too did spontaneous demonstrations of anger and ultimately violence. Recent statistics reported by the UN and Kenyan sources state that since late December more than 900 people have been killed and an estimated 300,000 displaced, including some 80,000 children under the age of five. International observers have proclaimed that while some protestors died due to mob violence, many others were reportedly shot and killed by police. While the Kenya military did not engage in riot control for most of January, press reports and Kenyan sources state that Kenyan police and security were given authority to use lethal force to disperse mobs. In the wake of the disputed election results, the Kenyan government banned demonstrations and initiated media restrictions, which seem to have further stoked the fire.

Mr. Speaker, with the intolerable number of Kenyans dead and displaced, it is imperative that the United States play a meaningful role in resolving the current crises. With two failed international missions, it is time that we rethink our strategy in addressing the current crisis.

The ongoing violence as a means to achieve political objectives in Kenya must come to a halt. We need the superior support of the United Nations to assist those affected

by violence, and use all the diplomatic means to persuade relevant political actors to commit to a peaceful resolution to the crisis. This legislation emphasizes precisely these issues.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this extremely important legislation that arbitrates for the Kenyan people.

□ 1600

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 283, 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. PAYNE. 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.

CONGRATULATING LEE MYUNG-BAK ON ELECTION TO PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 947) congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishing him well during his time of transition and his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 947

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea share a longstanding and comprehensive alliance rooted in the common principles of freedom and democracy;

Whereas on June 11, 2007, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 295 recognizing "the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expresses appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its contributions to international efforts to combat terrorism";

Whereas on December 19, 2007, the Senate passed S. Res. 279 recognizing that "the strength and endurance of the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea should be acknowledged and celebrated";

Whereas, since 2000, the United States House of Representatives and the Republic of Korea National Assembly have engaged in an interparliamentary exchange to discuss issues central to the U.S.-Republic of Korea relationship;

Whereas there are deep cultural and personal ties between the peoples of the United States and the Republic of Korea, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors and exchanges each year between the two nations, as well as the nearly two million Korean-Americans;

Whereas Congress recognizes January 13 as Korean-American Day, honoring the con-

tributions of Korean-Americans in forging stronger bilateral ties between our two countries;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is the United States seventh largest trading partner and the United States is the third largest trading partner of the Republic of Korea with nearly \$80 billion in annual trade volume;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea are working closely together to promote international peace and security, economic prosperity, human rights, and the rule of law; and

Whereas Lee Myung-Bak, upon winning the election to become the next President of the Republic of Korea, stated that he would seek to further strengthen the relationship with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishes him well during his time of transition and on his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, 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 resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I would like to first thank my friend Mr. ROYCE of California for introducing this resolution which congratulates President-elect Lee Myung-Bak on his victory in the South Korean presidential elections.

In electing Lee Myung-Bak, the South Korean people have selected a man of exceptional accomplishment and proven leadership. During his 27 years at the helm of Hyundai Group, Mr. Lee transformed the company from a successful but relatively small local corporation into South Korea's largest industrial conglomerate with a dominant worldwide presence.

Mr. Lee and Hyundai's success helped drive the Republic of Korea's dramatic success as an East Asian economic "tiger" in the seventies, eighties and nineties. The parallel is particularly appropriate since in English the Korean word "hyundai" means "modern." As Mr. Lee led the company to new heights, he played a direct role in the spectacularly rapid modernization of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee's extraordinary professional career is right at home among the American Dream stories of our Nation. The son of a cattle rancher who fell onto hard times, Mr. Lee was born into poverty and worked his way through

college as a garbage collector. Relying on his talents and work ethic, he eventually rose to the pinnacle of the business world.

Committing himself to politics, he became the mayor of Seoul and applied his leadership skills and his no-nonsense approach to improve that important city. Now as South Korea's president, he is uniquely able to lead and further strengthen his country, one of the United States' closest and most significant allies.

Mr. Lee's story is a potent reminder that the friendship between the United States and the Republic of Korea is based not only on our shared interest but also our shared values. For over 50 years, our two countries fought together against common threats such as communism, but the foundation of our alliance is a common commitment to democracy, individual liberties, and human rights.

The end of the Cold War did not end the critical role of our alliance in promoting and protecting political and economic freedoms in Asia and around the world. Today, we work side by side to combat international terrorism, denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, and promote peace and stability in northeast Asia. This work relies on our strong military alliance, bolstered by 28,000 military personnel stationed in the Republic of Korea.

We also share a dynamic economic relationship. With two-way trade approaching \$80 billion, South Korea is the United States' seventh largest trading partner, and the United States is the fourth largest trading partner of the Republic of Korea. Our shared commitment to free, fair, and open political systems is reinforced by our commitment to free, fair, and open markets.

Further strengthening our bilateral relationships and our bonds of friendship are the millions of South Korean visitors that come to the United States and the millions of visitors from the United States that travel to South Korea every year. Many South Koreans who come to the United States do so to visit their Korean American family members, who make up a vitally important part of the United States' social and economic fabric.

Based on these shared interests and values, the U.S.-Republic of Korea relationship is strong and is poised to grow even stronger.

With this resolution, we in Congress rightly congratulate Mr. Lee Myung-Bak on becoming the next president of South Korea, welcome his inauguration on February 25, and look forward to the opportunity to work with him to further strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

I strongly support this resolution, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, House Resolution 947, which I authored and which has the support of Chairman LANTOS and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. PAYNE and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA of the Foreign Affairs Committee, among others.

I serve as a member of the Asia Subcommittee and as the vice chairman of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange. This resolution congratulates Lee Myung-Bak on his election as president of the Republic of Korea and wishes him well during his time of transition.

In this country, Korean Americans watched the Korean presidential campaign with great interest, and their community has played a very important role in bringing greater attention to issues of mutual importance, and I would like to recognize their efforts.

The U.S. partnership with Korea dates back to 1882 with the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation between the Kingdom of Chosun and the United States. This treaty contemplates everlasting amity and friendship between our two peoples, and for over 125 years, we have worked to achieve this.

One of the truest tests of our partnership with South Korea came in June of 1950 when Communist North Korea invaded the South. American and South Korean forces fought valiantly side by side and they warded off that Communist onslaught.

In the 60 years since, the U.S.-South Korean relationship has blossomed in every respect: economic, political, militarily. Nearly 30,000 U.S. troops stand along with the South Korean Army to preserve stability in northeast Asia. South Korea has grown into the seventh largest trading partner with the United States.

And on February 25 of this year, Lee Myung-Bak will assume the presidency of the Republic of Korea. He does so at a critical time during our partnership. The Republic of Korea and the U.S. once again face a great challenge in dealing with a nuclear-armed North Korea, a regime that denies its citizens the most basic of human rights. The Six Party Talks have stalled, and Kim Jong-Il's regime has continually failed to come clean on the extent of its nuclear programs. Yesterday, Admiral Michael McConnell, Director of National Intelligence, testified that "while Pyongyang denies a program for uranium enrichment, and they deny their proliferation activities, we believe North Korea continues to engage in both."

I am hopeful that President-elect Lee Myung-Bak will offer a new, effective approach to these challenges. To date, Lee Myung-Bak has argued that the previous administrations gave too much unconditional aid to buy reconciliation with the North. In a recent press conference, President-elect Lee said he would like to discuss human rights and the whereabouts of abducted

South Koreans with Pyongyang. Such "controversial" issues, amazingly, were taboo to previous governments which sat out a U.N. condemnation of North Korea's human rights abuses just last fall.

Importantly, President-elect Lee is a strong proponent of the U.S. trade agreement. As the South Korean Army continues to strengthen, the economic relationship between our two countries will increasingly define this overall relationship. That is why I heard so much about the trade agreement on my trip to Korea last summer in my role as the vice chairman of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange.

At a time when many are worried about the future of our economy, it is essential that we expand into foreign markets. The Korea-U.S. FTA will do just that, opening up Korean markets to U.S. products. If KORUS isn't passed, it won't just be our economy that will suffer, but our relationship with the Republic of Korea.

In closing, I would like to congratulate President-elect Lee on his victory. In the past 60 years, the U.S.-Republic of Korea alliance has helped move both countries forward. I know many of us in Congress greatly look forward to the opportunity to work together to further our already-strong partnership.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to the ranking member, Mr. SMITH, for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman on his authorship of this fine resolution. I rise today to express my support for the resolution honoring the upcoming inauguration of Mr. Lee Myung-Bak as 17th President of the Republic of Korea.

South Korea's rise from the ashes of war and subsequent evolution as a vibrant and prosperous democracy is truly one of the miracles of the second half of the 20th century.

I believe that our Korean war veterans, who sacrificed so much and fought so valiantly, and all of the American people, can take great pride in the assistance that we provided for that remarkable evolution.

Today, the bright lights in the night sky on the southern half of the Korean peninsula stand in marked contrast to the shadow of darkness that enfolds North Korea. North Korea is a tragic failed state and is one of the great losers of the Cold War; yet its starving yearn to breathe free and share in the prosperity of South Korea.

The peaceful, democratic reunification of North Koreans with their southern brothers is a noble endeavor to which we should give our full and unflinching support.

Mr. Lee's inauguration comes at a time when we have reached a crossroads on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea must decide whether to completely and unconditionally renounce its nuclear weapons program and finally join the family of nations. Its alternative is to slip slowly into the abyss as a dynamic South Korea leaves it farther and farther behind.

The fact that President Lee has given a firm indication that he wishes to work together with the United States and our allies as a team to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis is welcome news indeed. Mr. Lee has also said that it is his priority to strengthen an alliance which was forged in the crucible of the Korean War.

From the dark days of the Pusan perimeter to the brilliant Inchon landing, American, Allied, and South Korean troops all fought together in the drive to victory with the liberation of Seoul. This is in part the shared history of our two countries which has linked us in a common destiny.

I would especially like to commend President Lee for raising the long-forgotten issue of the old soldiers of South Korea, left behind as POWs in the North and held against their will for over 50 years since the signing of the armistice. I would also like to note with extreme sadness that more than 8,000 U.S. servicemen remain missing in action from that conflict.

Finally, the alliance and friendship between the Republic of Korea and the United States have been promoted and deepened by the many contributions of our own vibrant Korean American community. While ever mindful of the old country from which they came, Korean Americans have stepped forward in innumerable ways, in science, medicine, religion, business, education, music, athletics, and culture, to make invaluable contributions to the United States.

In saluting President-elect Lee and the strength of our alliance, we also honor those Korean Americans who have ensured that the links between our two countries are truly the ties that bind.

So, President-elect Lee, we wish you and your country Godspeed as you approach your inauguration on February 25.

□ 1615

Mr. PAYNE. Let me once again say that I certainly support this very timely resolution and urge that our two countries continue to forge strong relations.

We, as has been mentioned, have a very strong Korean American community, even in my State of New Jersey. But also, I'd just like to mention, now that I'm thinking about it, several years ago I had the opportunity to visit a hospital in Ethiopia. A Christian organization built a hospital. Much of the funds came from individual businesspeople from South Korea. The Myung Sung Christian Hospital in Addis is the finest hospital in all of Ethiopia, and it was built by the Koreans who wanted to show their apprecia-

tion for Ethiopian soldiers who fought with them in the Korean War.

And, as a matter of fact, it's very interesting that the South Korean Government still pays veterans a monthly stipend, those who are still alive, of course, and who served in that war, they send them a check every month to show their appreciation for the Ethiopians who fought. I don't know of many countries that have done anything like that.

So, Mr. ROYCE, I certainly support your resolution.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I am pleased that the House is considering H. Res. 947 today, congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea. I was proud to co-sponsor this resolution and I join with my fellow Members in wishing him well during his time of transition this month.

When Lee Myung-Bak is inaugurated on February 25, I am confident that he will do much to broaden the longstanding relationship between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America. In the past month, he has already met with President Bush and Vice President CHENEY, as well as several members of the President's Cabinet and Members of Congress.

President-elect Myung-Bak is well-qualified to assume his new role. He earned a B.A. in Business Administration at the Korea University and later served as a Visiting Scholar at George Washington University here in Washington, DC before being awarded two Honorary Doctor of Economics degrees.

Additionally, President-elect Myung-Bak's past professional experience has honed his vital business, diplomatic, and political skills. For 15 years, he was the CEO of 10 Hyundai Group affiliated companies. He then served as a National Assemblyman from 1992 to 1998 before being elected Mayor of Seoul in 2002.

I applaud President-elect Myung-Bak for expressing his commitment to free market policies that encourage both foreign and domestic investors. I look forward to the ratification of the United States-South Korea Free Trade Agreement and I welcome his proposed plans to reduce trade restrictions and lower tax rates. Furthermore, as the Republic of South Korea assists in negotiating Pyongyang's denuclearization, I urge the President-elect to closely integrate U.S. and Japanese initiatives related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Today, I join my colleagues in congratulating President-elect Myung-Bak, and I wish him, his wife and four children success in the years ahead.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 947, sponsored by my friend and colleague from California, Mr. ROYCE, which offers the House of Representatives' congratulations to Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea.

Additionally, this resolution recognizes the very special and longstanding relationship between South Korea and the United States; a relationship whose modern day form was first forged in the heat of battle as U.S. and South Korean soldiers fought to defend South Korea from aggression by Communist North Korea. In fact, our history of friendship reaches beyond the past century; and just last year we

celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Korean American Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation which was signed in 1882.

In my opinion, it is hard to overestimate the importance of the close bond between the United States and South Korea. The United States and Korea have a mutual defense treaty that dates back to 1953, and Korea has supported U.S. military efforts abroad, as recently as in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Korea has been one of only four partners and allies that stood with us through all four major conflicts since World War II. In addition, South Korea demonstrated her great friendship and generosity in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, pledging over \$30 million in aid for relief and recovery efforts—the fourth largest amount donated by any foreign country.

On June 30, 2007, representatives of both governments signed the historic United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement. If and when this agreement is approved by Congress I believe it will increase trade and investment flowing through our agriculture, industrial, consumer products, automobile and financial services sectors. I believe this agreement will enhance the strong partnership between two great democratic nations and will open the door wider to the exchange of science and ideas that will cause us both to continue to prosper.

This agreement is a natural extension of the strong affinity between our two countries, marked by extraordinary diplomatic, political, military, and economic cooperation. Although the devil is always in the details, I understand that this agreement could potentially be the most commercially-significant free trade agreement signed by the United States in more than a decade.

As many of my colleagues already know, South Korea is already the United States' seventh largest export market and sixth largest market for U.S. agricultural products. In fact, according to the latest statistics, our annual bilateral trade totals nearly \$80 billion. Any agreement that can open up more Korean markets to U.S. goods and services can only have a positive effect on the American economy by creating more and better jobs, enriching consumer choice, and boosting U.S. industry and manufacturing.

Koreans have invested nearly \$20 billion in the United States, and have created American jobs through companies like Hyundai Motors, Samsung Electronics, and Kia Motors. And as the largest investor in Korea, the United States already has a leading presence in that country.

As I have said before and will continue to say, I think it is important to note that trade relationships do more than just facilitate economic growth; this FTA recognizes our special relationship with South Korea that I mentioned before and makes the strong statement that we will continue to stand with our allies.

South Korea is the fifth largest tourism-generating country to the United States with over 800,000 Koreans visiting the U.S. every single year. This number is expected to double (at the minimum) when South Korea joins the Visa Waiver Program. According to the Department of Homeland Security, South Korea also has the largest foreign student population in the U.S. Nearly 2 million Americans of Korean descent live in communities all across our Nation, representing all walks of life and making innumerable contributions to the enrichment of our Nation's culture and economy.

South Korea is a strong, unwavering ally in the U.S.-led Global War on Terror, having dispatched the third largest contingent of troops to Iraq, and to Afghanistan (where a South Korean soldier was killed during hostile action), and to Lebanon in support of peacekeeping operations; and South Korea is a key partner in the Six-Party Talks to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue.

I firmly believe that South Korea may be the premier success story of U.S. foreign policy in the post-World War II period. Having assisted South Korea in transforming itself from a war-torn, impoverished economy into a successful democracy with a free enterprise economy (the world's 11th largest), South Korea is now an indispensable partner with the United States in promoting democracy, a free market economy and respect for the rule of law around the world.

I believe that President-Elect Myung-Bak understands and appreciates the important history behind our bilateral relations. His desire to better relations with the United States through an emphasis on free market solutions encourages me that the work we have begun will continue to grow under his leadership. I look forward to a continuation of the United States-South Korean partnership during the President-Elect's term and for many years beyond.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 947 and join me in congratulating President Lee Myung-Bak, and extending to him the very best wishes of the House of Representatives as he assumes office later this month.

Mr. FALOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, let me first commend our distinguished colleague and member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for being the author of and introducing this important resolution.

The underlying context for this important resolution, which congratulates President-elect Lee Myung-Bak and wishes him well as he assumes his new duties on February 25, 2008, is that the Republic of Korea has, through the industrious will of its people and the unyielding leadership of its elected officials, transformed itself into a successful democratic nation.

As the twentieth century taught us all too well, democratic governance is a fragile enterprise. That the Republic of Korea, in merely six decades, emerged from the ashes of colonial rule and war torn poverty to become the eleventh largest economy in the world and America's seventh largest trading partner, is a tribute to their strong democratic principles and indelible desire to live peacefully and prosperously despite the enormous challenges facing the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asia region.

Madam Speaker, the strong alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has proven itself to be a relevant and resilient relationship since our involvement when we fought side by side in the Korean War nearly 58 years ago. Out of that often "forgotten" conflict was born one of the most significant dividing lines of the Cold War, the demilitarized zone on the 38th parallel but, at the same time, one of the most successful alliances in our Nation's history.

The Republic of Korea has remained a steadfast ally of the United States. South

Korea has contributed the third largest coalition troop contingent in Iraq, pledged \$460 million toward postwar reconstruction and had previously also committed troops for peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, and Lebanon. As a key member of the Six-Party Talks to denuclearize North Korea, the Republic of Korea shares an important responsibility for broader security in Northeast Asia. Today, we are committed absolutely to compelling the North Korean regime to eliminate its nuclear program and to ensuring that promises made by Pyongyang are, in fact, followed through with verifiable action.

The combination of South Korea's efforts to stand alongside the United States in meeting the global threats of the 21st century as well as the North Korean challenge makes this resolution particularly important today. President-elect Lee Myung-Bak has stated that he "will do [his] best to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem through cooperation and a strengthened relationship with the United States." I am very encouraged by President-elect Lee's remarks and, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, I look forward to working with his administration to this end.

What is clear from our longstanding relationship over the past half-century is that it is reciprocal. As President-elect Lee's Special Envoy to the United States, Dr. Chung Mong-Joon, said recently after meeting Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte last month, "We both need each other." Let me also take this opportunity to once again congratulate my good friend, Dr. Han Seung-soo, on his nomination to become Prime Minister. I am confident that Dr. Han's nomination will serve to further consolidate our alliance partnership under President-elect Lee's leadership.

Madam Speaker, many years ago, I served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, and I remember vividly the presence of more than 300,000 soldiers from South Korea who bravely served and fought alongside our American forces. Through that particular experience, I learned quickly and firsthand, the special friendship and bond that existed between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

I personally will never forget the sacrifices that South Korean soldiers made in that terrible conflict in Vietnam. In fact, South Korea has the unique distinction of being one of only four allies that fought alongside the United States in all four major conflicts since World War II and I hope that my other colleagues will join me in thanking the leaders and people of the Republic of Korea for the untold sacrifices they made to be with us when we needed help.

This resolution, while focusing on the peaceful, democratic transition to the presidency of Lee Myung-Bak, honors our special alliance but also welcomes a strengthening and deepening of the relationship between our two countries and our two peoples.

I have had the privilege on several occasions to visit the Republic of Korea and I have observed that the South Korean people are among the most industrious men and women in the world. However this trait for hard work and entrepreneurship developed, it has carried over despite geographic distance to the more than two million Americans of Korean heritage and descent that live throughout our own country today. The vibrant Korean American communities across the United States include

some of the most prominent individuals that have contributed to every facet of American life in every state and territory.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is very important to show our sense of appreciation to all South Koreans, to express how much we care about them and how important they are to our strategic and economic interests in that important region of the world. Its effect is not just to deliver good wishes to President-elect Lee as he assumes office on February 25, but to send a message of solidarity to the government and people of the Republic of Korea and to the soldiers who have fought side by side with the men and women of our own armed forces over the past nearly 60 years.

For all these reasons, this resolution is most fitting, and proper. I wish to congratulate President-elect Lee Myung-Bak and commend again my good friend, the gentleman from California, for offering and proposing this resolution. I strongly encourage my colleagues to offer their own expressions of support and urge the House to adopt this resolution today.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JONES of Ohio). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 947.

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. PAYNE. Madam 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 PARITY IN APPLICATION OF CERTAIN LIMITS TO MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4848) to extend for one year parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4848

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

SECTION 1. PARITY IN APPLICATION OF CERTAIN LIMITS TO MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS.

(a) AMENDMENT TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—Section 9812(f)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "2007" and inserting "2008".

(b) AMENDMENT TO THE EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—Section 712(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1185a(f)) is amended by striking "2007" and inserting "2008".

(c) AMENDMENT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—Section 2705(f) of the Public

Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-5(f)) is amended by striking “2007” and inserting “2008”.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF MEDICARE PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIERS IN FEDERAL PAYMENT LEVY AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1874 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) INCLUSION OF MEDICARE PROVIDER AND SUPPLIER PAYMENTS IN FEDERAL PAYMENT LEVY PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services shall take all necessary steps to participate in the Federal Payment Levy Program under section 6331(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as soon as possible and shall ensure that—

“(A) at least 50 percent of all payments under parts A and B are processed through such program beginning within 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section;

“(B) at least 75 percent of all payments under parts A and B are processed through such program beginning within 2 years after such date; and

“(C) all payments under parts A and B are processed through such program beginning not later than September 30, 2011.

“(2) ASSISTANCE.—The Financial Management Service and the Internal Revenue Service shall provide assistance to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to ensure that all payments described in paragraph (1) are included in the Federal Payment Levy Program by the deadlines specified in that subsection.”.

(b) APPLICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFSET PROVISIONS TO MEDICARE PROVIDER OR SUPPLIER PAYMENTS.—Section 3716 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “the Department of Health and Human Services,” after “United States Postal Service,” in subsection (c)(1)(A); and

(2) by adding at the end of subsection (c)(3) the following new subparagraph:

“(D) This section shall apply to payments made after the date which is 90 days after the enactment of this subparagraph (or such earlier date as designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services) with respect to claims or debts, and to amounts payable, under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. DEPOSIT OF EXCESS SAVINGS IN PAQI FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any amounts otherwise made available to the Physician Assistance and Quality Initiative Fund under section 1848(1)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(1)(2)), there shall be made available to such Fund—

(1) \$93,000,000 for expenditures during or after 2009;

(2) \$212,000,000 for expenditures during or after 2014; and

(3) \$44,000,000 for expenditures during or after 2018.

(b) OBLIGATION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall provide for expenditures from the Fund specified in subsection (a) in a manner designed to provide (to the maximum extent feasible) for the obligation of the entire amount specified in—

(1) subsection (a)(1) for payment with respect to physicians’ services furnished during or after January 1, 2009;

(2) subsection (a)(2) for payment with respect to physicians’ services furnished on or after January 1, 2014; and

(3) subsection (a)(3) for payment with respect to physicians’ services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY.

To ensure that the assets of the trust funds established under section 201 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401) are not reduced as a result of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the general revenues of the Federal Government to those trust funds the following amounts:

(1) For fiscal year 2008, \$1,000,000.

(2) For fiscal year 2009, \$5,000,000.

(3) For fiscal year 2010, \$1,000,000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Madam 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise to urge support for this bill which was developed jointly by the Energy and Commerce Committee, the Ways and Means Committee, and the Education and Labor Committee. This bill would extend the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996, the first-ever Federal parity law.

Over 10 years ago, Congress passed and President Clinton signed into law legislation that required partial parity by mandating that annual and lifetime dollar limits for mental health treatment under group health plans offering mental health coverage be no less than that for physical illnesses. This legislation was authorized for 5 years, and has been extended every year with bipartisan support since its initial authorization expired. The bill before us would extend the Mental Health Parity Act for another year. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support its passage.

Madam Speaker, let me also say that while the 1996 law was a good first step, we clearly have much further to go before we can achieve full mental health parity. That is why it is imperative that we pass H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, introduced by my colleagues Representative PATRICK KENNEDY and Representative JIM RAMSTAD. I want to congratulate and thank both of them. Mr. KENNEDY will be speaking shortly in favor of his legislation.

In spite of the 1996 law and widespread recognition that mental illness and substance abuse are treatable illnesses, there still exist glaring inequities between health insurance coverage for mental health and that for other medical conditions. As we all know, these inequities can have dire con-

sequences for friends, families and society in general. H.R. 1424 will take our Nation one step further to ensuring that every American can access the mental health, substance abuse and addiction treatment that they need to live healthy, happy and productive lives.

Madam Speaker, by putting mental health on par with medical and surgical benefits, we will be improving the availability and affordability of health care for those who suffer from mental health illnesses and addiction diseases. This will not only reduce the pain and anguish of many of our constituents and their families, but will benefit our Nation as a whole. So let’s extend the good work that has already been done and work together to build upon the framework so that we can improve the lives of millions of Americans.

I reserve the balance of my time, Madam Speaker.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

We’re gathered here today to debate or support H.R. 4848, a bill which extends that which Congress has passed before, and that was an important bill for its time. It’s an important bill to extend for, in doing so, we acknowledge the innate value of helping those suffering from mental illness. We acknowledge in Congress that for those who suffer these afflictions, they may be relieved of that suffering through receiving necessary treatment.

In compassion, we as a body extend our hand in support of those who suffer the pains of mental illness. We acknowledge that their illnesses are real, and that the appropriate treatments give them hope to slough off the yoke of their illness and again become a fully productive member of our Nation, our workplace and our family.

The significance of this act may be overshadowed by other events of the day, but it is essential that we not fail to appreciate the value of this moment, not only in terms of what this bill does but what it does not do and, moreover, why we need to enact this law at all.

First to the reasons for this bill. As John Adams said, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

He made that comment not because our Constitution is a vehicle to support any particular religion; rather, he noted the inherent inadequacies of any body of laws, and that they cannot replace the moral light that should guide us when no law has yet been writ to define that path.

Indeed, we cannot legislate common sense, we cannot mandate morality, and we cannot litigate compassion. We can, however, establish laws to define the limits of what can be tolerated. And where the laws do not apply, we hope that the goodness and faith that guides our hearts is sufficient to drive us to do the right thing.

Unfortunately, when it comes to dealing with mental illness, our society, our culture and our government has failed to do the right thing. We have spent billions, hundreds of billions, I dare say, over the years to help those with mental illness, but we have remained short-sighted at best, or blind at worst as to what we truly must do.

It is my wish that people would be personally guided by their own sense of justice and compassion to do the right thing in the treatment of mental illness. Instead, we remain willfully and woefully ignorant to the causes, the diagnoses, and the treatment of mental illness. We have denied its very existence, perhaps wasting our hope in the hope it would go away. We have instead tried to wish away its effects. We have minimized the impact, trivialized the causes, and criticized the patients. We have used words to make mental illness the butt of cruel jokes. We have used words like "crazy" or "retarded" or "idiot," as if attaching a derogatory label would free us from the responsibility for helping or treating those with these illnesses.

I ask you: Would we use such disparaging remarks to describe persons with cancer, with diabetes, with heart disease? Could demeaning words make any of those diseases disappear or less painful? Can derisive words motivate someone to seek help? No, instead they drive the person further into the shadows to deny their own illness, to avoid treatment and not even help themselves.

In many ways, we have not advanced very far beyond the days of the Salem witch trials when those with mental illness were ignorantly tried as criminals, sentenced to death, or cruelly treated with torture.

Think this is not true today? Well, think again. Our prisons are filled with persons who suffer from mental illness. Our courts are packed with victims of child abuse or sex abuse. Our churches are filled with those who are praying to be relieved of the terrible strains befalling them. Families break up. Jobs are lost. Children fail in school and lives are lost from untreated mental illness. And yet we continue to deny it is there and place barriers between the patient and the cure.

In my many years of practicing psychology, I have never, never met a patient who was cured by denial. But denial is the common treatment for so many when it comes to acknowledging or treating mental illness.

Listen, you cannot whisper it away, for even in the silence, even in the darkness, mental illness cries out for help.

One in five Americans will suffer from a diagnosable mental illness. One in 10 young people suffer from mental illness severe enough to cause some form of impairment.

Untreated drug and alcohol addictions cost Americans \$400 billion each year. A Rand study estimated that de-

pression alone cost employers \$51 billion per year in absenteeism and lost productivity.

Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States. More years of life are lost to suicide than any other single cause except heart disease and cancer.

Thirty thousand Americans commit suicide annually, and half a million attempt it. Among college students, three die each day from suicide.

The Federal Government estimates that about 12½ million people have alcohol problems. It costs businesses \$134 billion a year in lost productivity.

Does treatment work to help people with mental illness? Yes, it does. Studies of depression in the workplace have shown thousands of dollars of savings per employee when they receive treatment.

We note that when 80 percent of health care costs are used to treat chronic illness, that the risk for depression doubles among those who are chronically ill and not receiving treatment. The cost doubles as well.

The combination of appropriate medication and treatments have been very effective in treating anxiety, depression, bipolar illness and behavior disorders. But when health plans do not pay for appropriate professional care, where does the treatment come from?

Seventy-five percent of psychiatric medications are prescribed by non-psychiatrists. Now look at that in the context of other illnesses. Would we tolerate it if 75 percent of insurance plans said that most babies would be delivered by people with minimal training? How about requiring that brain surgery is done by those who only had a few weeks of training in medical school. Would we accept that? We would not.

This bill extends what we have done before. It helps in a small but important way. But it does not move us to where we need to be. Perhaps the lesson here is that there are many things we need to do for ourselves, many things we need to do to reach out to others and help. But it does not cure the barriers. It does not identify which diagnoses need to be treated. We will need to do more. Eventually we as a Nation need to come to terms with what needs to be done. The cost savings of providing the right treatment are huge. The costs of continuing to provide the wrong care, or denying care, are massive.

As Benjamin Franklin said, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY), who has probably done more to address the issue of mental health parity than any Member of Congress. He actually came to my district, we had a hearing on the issue, and I really appreciate all that he has done on the issue.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank Chairman PALLONE for his work in bringing the extension of this mental health parity law to the floor. I want to acknowledge his help on H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Act, and say I join him in saying today is a great start in us extending this law on lifetime and annual limits. But, as he mentioned, we want to get full parity, which means we want to get the real bill that extends full coverage of mental illnesses to all health insurance plans. Just as we would expect health insurance plans to cover the rest of our body, cancer, diabetes, everything else, we shouldn't expect any less for mental illnesses.

And yet, unlike many other physical illnesses, mental illnesses are excluded from most health insurance plans. In fact, 98 percent of our health insurance plans in America charge higher copays and deductibles for mental illnesses simply because of stigma, simply because of discrimination.

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Because of the shame and because Americans are too afraid to say that they are willing to say enough is enough, and they're not willing to say that's wrong, and they're not going to sit idly by while insurance companies say that they can get away with it, we in the Congress ought to stand up and say, enough is enough. We are going to pass the law that says civil rights matter in this country, and if you are born with a mental illness, just as if you were born with any kind of physical disability, you should not be discriminated against. And that is what we mean when we say we want to pass the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. We can't afford any more days without this law.

As my good friend said over here, each year 1.3 billion workdays are lost due to mental disorders, more than any other, arthritis, stroke, heart attack, or cancer combined.

We cannot afford one more day without parity because the Department of Justice estimates that drug-related crime costs our Nation \$107 billion a year. We cannot afford one more day without parity because 80 percent of the trauma-related admissions in our emergency rooms in this country are drug- and alcohol-related, implicated in car accidents, shootings, stabbings, and domestic and violent incidences, as well as overdoses.

We cannot afford one more day without parity because workers' untreated depression cost their employers \$31 billion a year in lost productivity and cost their employers \$135 billion in lost productivity just due to alcoholism alone.

I will tell you this: We are paying for this in so many other ways, we cannot afford not to spend the money on treatment up front.

But the fact of the matter is, insurance companies continue to deny treatment. Just take one case of Katie

Kevlock, a 16-year-old from Pennsylvania. The insurance company said to her, It is not enough that you came in here hooked on heroin. We need to see you overdose before we are going to give you treatment coverage.

Guess what her mother said? Well, I'm not sure my daughter's got an overdose in her before I can bring her back for her treatment.

Well, guess what? She, of course, overdosed, and she didn't survive that overdose. But that's what that insurance company demanded. They demanded that she have an overdose before she qualified for treatment, but she didn't survive that overdose. She died like millions of other Americans, and that is the cost of us not providing treatment.

Treatment works. Recovery works. We need to end the stigma of mental illness and addiction in our society. That's why we need to pass H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act; and that's why we need to extend the bill today to provide one more year of annual lifetime limits for the current parity law.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the compassion and passion of my friend from Rhode Island who has been such a leader in mental health parity.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON), another great leader whose heart goes out to those in need of mental health issues.

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for the time. I want to thank Chairman PALLONE for his work on this legislation as well.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4848. This important legislation will extend the current mental health parity laws to individuals that desperately need coverage and care.

Madam Speaker, I dare say every single one of us in this Chamber, and probably everyone we know, knows someone, cares about someone, perhaps a member of our very own family, who has faced the challenge of mental illness and who could benefit from additional mental health coverage.

Thousands and thousands of people suffer from mental health illnesses and addictions in our country. My family is no different from any other family who maybe has a loved one or a member of that family who has dealt with these very significant and difficult problems. This legislation would continue bringing much-needed treatment to those who are in such need.

Addictions and mental illnesses are afflictions that have long been stigmatized and brushed aside by our society and our institutions. Not only is this societal perception deterring many individuals from seeking and receiving much-needed treatment, but also the lack of insurance coverage for such treatments prevents many individuals from gaining access to the critical help and the treatments that they need.

Many individuals go months or maybe even years without treatment for serious illnesses due to the stigma that our society has placed on these serious diseases. They feel like they must hide their illness from their friends or their family while trying to lead a normal life.

However, these illnesses and the individuals who suffer from them deserve care and treatment just as if they were suffering from some other illness or disease. The victims of mental illness should no longer have to suffer in silence and in secret.

For too long, people have been told they must take care of themselves while battling these diseases and illnesses. Those battling their debilitating effects haven't been able to receive the stability of care that's available when adequate health insurance coverage is in place.

The legislation we are considering today takes steps in the right direction by continuing the current mental health parity laws. However, current laws are not perfect, and they need to be amended to improve the health care of mental addictions and illnesses in our country.

I have been a proud cosponsor of the mental health parity efforts in the past, and I will continue to be an ardent supporter of these efforts to have full mental health parity in America. I support legislation that was already mentioned, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, which is legislation that would make full mental health parity the law of the land. This legislation is needed, and it should have been passed long ago.

This legislation has been championed by my good friend PATRICK KENNEDY, the Member from Rhode Island, who we just heard from. He's been such a leader on this effort, and he and JIM RAMSTAD of Minnesota, from our side of the aisle, have really worked so hard and so diligently on this legislation. I really believe that through their work, and the work of many of us, we will help to deliver what people battling addiction and mental illness have long needed and want; that is, the help that they need.

We have to continue to ensure that every individual has access to the health care coverage that they need. Every single individual that's affected by these sicknesses should not be without mental health coverage in our country.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4848 to continue to provide mental health coverage to the thousands of individuals who are so desperately in need of that help.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague Representative PALLONE on his work on H.R. 4848 which is important for us to support because it does extend certain mental health coverages. But as we've all been

saying here today, it is just as important that we continue to work very hard to enact and pass H.R. 1424, which is the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, and I want to salute Representatives RAMSTAD and KENNEDY for their tremendous work on this bill.

Mental health parity is the right thing to do. Clearly, there are so many individuals and families that are in pain in this country because they are not receiving the mental health counseling services, the substance abuse and addiction treatment services that they deserve and that our society ought to provide to them.

But it is also the smart thing to do. All of the statistics, even if you just wanted to look at this through the cold, calculating lens of what the bottom line represents in terms of cost to our system and our society, all of the studies that have been done show that there are tremendous savings to be had if we focus on these kinds of service.

There have been many statistics that have been cited today. I will cite a few more. Depressed workers lose 5½ hours per week of productive work time. That adds up to tens of billions of dollars lost a year to employers. Alcohol-related illness and premature death cost over \$130 billion in lost productivity in 1998, and the statistics go on and on and on.

Even the most tightfisted insurer will discover very quickly once we have mental health parity in place that the costs are a lot and that, in fact, there are savings to be had as you reallocate dollars to mental health treatment and substance abuse treatment in terms of the savings in related medical treatment.

So it is absolutely the right thing to do, and particularly at this time when we have so many stories of returning veterans who are suffering from traumatic brain injury, from mental health issues and need the support that can come from this, from this larger bill, from the Paul Wellstone Act.

So I urge my colleagues to support this extension through H.R. 4848 of certain mental health coverages, but I join all those who are advocating very strongly that we move forward and enact the larger bill, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I am just inquiring how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 9½ minutes, and the gentleman from New Jersey has 10½ minutes.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, one of the important points that we need to recognize as we address these issues of mental health and mental illness today are the causes. For so often, as I described earlier, when people are thinking about or talking about mental illness, we often times do not understand that it really

is a problem of brain functioning. It's written off too often as the worried well of people complaining or malin-gering, when really we need to understand the following.

When we're talking about problems with heart disease, it's easy to look upon those problems, to look at X-rays and other tests and MRIs and see if the function of the heart is appropriate, if the valves are working, if the arteries and veins are blocked or free.

When we look at other illnesses throughout the body, there are so many tests which we have grown accustomed to, MRIs, CT scans, EKGs, et cetera. And we look at those things and we're able to see that something is wrong based upon the results of those tests.

One of the problems with mental illness, leading to the prejudices about mental illness, is that there are no tests like that. One cannot take an X-ray of the brain and say that the person has depression or anxiety disorder or bipolar illness. There have been multiple studies looking at patterns that may show up on some tests. But my point is this: Just because we cannot see it on a medical test like that does not mean it does not exist.

Back in the 1800s, Louis Pasteur described the microbes that finally led us to understand about germs and diseases. Before that, no one had any tests to look at that. It did not mean they didn't exist. That merely meant that we did not know that they were there. But it was a full century later before we found that one could treat diseases with antibiotics, and we're still learning more about it.

So, too, it is important we understand that so often when discussing these issues of mental illness treatment, people raise the question that you cannot really test for it. Now, those are areas that science and research are still needed to determine what we can do, but it does not mean they don't exist just because we cannot find those.

Instead, what we rely on is the comments made by persons themselves or watching the behavior of persons because, indeed, those are the indicators that tell us something is wrong with the function of the human brain. It is a neurological problem. It is a neurobehavioral exhibition of those problems. It is those problems that we have to understand that sometimes are treated with medication and sometimes are treated with counseling and sometimes both, but we have to make sure we understand that we cannot write these off with treatments just by ignoring them or just saying that someone else without treatment because an insurance plan will cover that is enough.

□ 1645

Many times cardiologists will tell us that they recognize when they give someone a diagnosis that it's terminal or severe, that many of those patients

will themselves exhibit symptoms of depression, so they automatically write a prescription for an anti-depressant drug. That's not enough.

The comments I made before about how, when a person has a chronic illness, their health care costs can double if they have untreated depression, that alone should wake us up to understand that we need to be treating mental illness, not ignoring it. That alone should wake up employers to understand that improved productivity and lowered health care costs should be enough to motivate us to do that. That alone should be information that the Congressional Budget Office, who scores these bills, should tell us that there are scores that are important in terms of savings. Unfortunately, they don't tell us scores for prevention. And so it goes on.

These are things we need to be continuing to do, and that's why we will continue to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, allow me to thank the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey for his kindness and his leadership, and to add my appreciation as well for Congressman KENNEDY for the years that he has worked on this issue. And I join them in raising our voices.

I remember the leadership that came from another Member from New Jersey, and Congressman PALLONE has now embraced this issue in his capacity and leadership on the Energy and Commerce Committee. And my classmate, Congressman KENNEDY, has been pressing this message along with Congressman RAMSTAD for a very long time, that we have the capacity and the empathy and sympathy to address the question of mental health parity, but we have not yet had the energy and the results-oriented efforts that it needs.

I pay tribute, of course, to the late Senator Paul Wellstone, who came to my district some years ago through my invitation as cochair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and visited our juvenile detention centers and emphasized that many of the juveniles that were then incarcerated also needed greater access to mental health facilities and mental health services.

Mental health parity and the extension thereof of the annual lifetime limits is crucial to save lives. How many of us have seen on the news or addressed our constituents where seniors, parents are calling the police for their adult children who are suffering from mental health needs? Tragically, some of those encounters end in death. There is no need for that.

In addition, we will be seeing, as the war in Iraq ends and Afghanistan's war and conflict ends, numbers of individuals coming back who have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress, and we will say that's the Veterans Affairs'

concern, or brain trauma. Yes, in the realm of the framework of their return, it may be; but they will live, and through their lifetime may have encounters that need to have the coverage of a mental health parity bill.

I support H.R. 4848 and thank Congressman PALLONE for the insight to move forward on this extension. But I pray tell that we will find it in our determination to move forward on the Paul Wellstone parity bill that is being carried by Congressman KENNEDY and a number of others. I have supported this legislation for a number of years, so I rise enthusiastically for H.R. 4848.

And, if I might, having missed the discussion on H. Con. Res 283, the bill dealing with Kenya, I simply want to add my statement into the RECORD, but call out for the compliance with this legislation, as it is passed, that we have sanctions for those who will not come to the peace table, that we compliment Kenya for its democracy, but, as well, that we push them toward a settlement of this vicious incident, having killed 900 people.

I end my comments by asking for enthusiastic support for H.R. 4848.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, many important things have been said by several Members, and passionately, on this bill. What we also have to remember, as we wrap this up, is somewhere in America there are people who are suffering in silence, there are children who are facing abuse, angry spouses who are attacking one another, anxious mothers struggling to care for their children, and, of course, throughout the workplace, as has been so carefully documented here, so many problems. It is important that we not only pass this bill strongly but also continue to work together.

I commend my colleague, Chairman PALLONE, and the work that he does and to continue the work that he does in leading this. Myself and many Members from our side of the aisle continue to stand ready to make sure we work out any issues with regard to expanding issues of mental health parity. We know that all of us care deeply about those in need and all of us remain committed to helping those in need from our side of the aisle.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, today we are voting to extend for 1 year, through 2008, the 1996 Mental Health Parity Act. This act bars the use of arbitrary annual and lifetime caps on mental health services if they are not also used on other medical benefits. We need to extend this first good step taken by Congress more than a decade ago, but there is still work to be done to reach true parity in the treatment of mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders.

When the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 passed Congress, it provided only partial parity for mental illness and excluded addiction benefits from the equitable treatment other mental health services received under the bill. Left untouched were other important and potentially costly parts of an insurance policy

such as limits on inpatient days and outpatient visits and other out-of-pocket expenses such as copays, coinsurance, and deductibles. These limits result in denying millions of Americans needed treatment and/or incurring huge out-of-pocket costs.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office found in a May 2000 report that 87 percent of employers complying with the act merely substituted other restrictive limits on things already mentioned for the annual and lifetime limits prohibited under the 1996 act.

Today we must not only extend the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 but also continue to work on building this act to achieve true parity by passing H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007. The legislation has been favorably approved by all three committees of jurisdiction in the House.

Mental illness and alcohol and drug addiction are painful and private struggles with staggering public costs, not to mention the toll these conditions take on families and communities. Representatives KENNEDY and RAMSTAD have been faithful champions of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 and speak courageously of their own triumphs.

I urge my colleagues to vote to extend the authorization of the current protections already in place and to continue to work for more comprehensive parity.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4848. This legislation is an extension of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996.

This bill requires that annual and lifetime dollar limits for mental health treatment under group health plans offering mental health coverage be no less than that for physical illnesses.

Mental disorders are the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for individuals between the ages of 15–44. In fact, 54 million Americans currently suffer from mental illness.

Unfortunately, the stigma of mental illness prevents millions of Americans from receiving the health care they need. Arbitrary limits on insurance benefits also serve as a significant barrier to many Americans seeking help.

The original Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 was an important first step toward mental health parity and mandated that annual and lifetime limits in mental health coverage be equal to those applied to medical and surgical benefits.

While I support this bill, I strongly believe that we must pass H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

The scientific community has long told us that mental illness and substance abuse are biologically-based, and the Surgeon General recognized that fact in the 1999 Surgeon General's report.

The sad reality, however, is that the health insurance market still does not provide true parity to mental health and substance abuse coverage.

Individuals who struggle with mental illness or substance abuse have no guarantee they'll get the treatment they need—even if they have health insurance.

Mental illness and substance abuse are serious issues for many Americans who too often do not receive the appropriate treatment. Twenty-six million Americans struggle with substance abuse addictions.

I hope that we will recognize the struggles that individuals with substance abuse addictions face in seeking treatment.

I strongly support H.R. 4848 and hope that we will build on this piece of legislation by considering H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2007 sometime this session.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise to voice my support for H.R. 4848, the extension of the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 (MHPA). This legislation would extend MHPA for 1 year, maintaining the current provisions for parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits.

For group plans that choose to offer mental health benefits, the MHPA requires those plans to provide benefits for mental health treatment subject to the same annual and lifetime dollar limits as their coverage of physical illnesses. Unfortunately, insurance plans may still limit the amount and type of mental health treatment covered. For example, an insurance company can cap the number of times a patient may visit the doctor's office, not only annually, but over the course of a lifetime.

"Partial parity" is an oxymoron. Rather than rely on stop-gap measures and patch-work fixes, the need for true mental health insurance parity must be recognized and acted upon. I strongly encourage my fellow members to quickly pass H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, which puts mental health coverage on an equal footing with medical and surgical coverage.

The inequity of coverage with regard to mental health and substance abuse treatment benefits is tantamount to discrimination against the mentally ill. It is built upon the insurance companies' strategy of denying rather than providing care in order to maximize profits. The notion that an insurance company can limit medical care based on cost is immoral. Only medical professionals should dictate the amount and type of care a patient receives. H.R. 676, the United States National Health Insurance Act, would provide health care coverage for all, including coverage of mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Madam Speaker, it is our duty to end this intolerable discrimination against the mentally ill, and provide timely, appropriate, and adequate health care for all, free of the loopholes, pitfalls, and entanglements which exist under the current fragmented, non-system of care.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4848, 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. BROUN of Georgia. Madam 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman, one of his secretaries.

DO-NOT-CALL REGISTRY FEE EXTENSION ACT OF 2007

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 781) to extend the authority of the Federal Trade Commission to collect Do-Not-Call Registry fees to fiscal years after fiscal year 2007.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 781

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 "Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FEES FOR ACCESS TO REGISTRY.

Section 2. of the Do-Not-Call Implementation Act (15 U.S.C. 6101 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. TELEMARKETING SALES RULE; DO-NOT-CALL REGISTRY FEES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Trade Commission shall assess and collect an annual fee pursuant to this section in order to implement and enforce the 'do-not-call' registry as provided for in section 310.4(b)(1)(iii) of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other regulation issued by the Commission under section 3 of the Telemarketing and Consumer Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act (15 U.S.C. 6102).

"(b) ANNUAL FEES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall charge each person who accesses the 'do-not-call' registry an annual fee that is equal to the lesser of—

"(A) \$54 for each area code of data accessed from the registry; or

"(B) \$14,850 for access to every area code of data contained in the registry.

"(2) EXCEPTION.—The Commission shall not charge a fee to any person—

"(A) for accessing the first 5 area codes of data; or

"(B) for accessing area codes of data in the registry if the person is permitted to access, but is not required to access, the 'do-not-call' registry under section 310 of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, section 64.1200 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other Federal regulation or law.

"(3) DURATION OF ACCESS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall allow each person who pays the annual fee described in paragraph (1), each person excepted under paragraph (2) from paying the annual fee, and each person excepted from paying an annual fee under section 310.4(b)(1)(iii)(B) of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, to access the area codes of data in the 'do-not-call' registry for which the person has paid during that person's annual period.

"(B) ANNUAL PERIOD.—In this paragraph, the term 'annual period' means the 12-month period beginning on the first day of the month in which a person pays the fee described in paragraph (1).

"(c) ADDITIONAL FEES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall charge a person required to pay an annual

fee under subsection (b) an additional fee for each additional area code of data the person wishes to access during that person's annual period.

“(2) RATES.—For each additional area code of data to be accessed during the person's annual period, the Commission shall charge—

“(A) \$54 for access to such data if access to the area code of data is first requested during the first 6 months of the person's annual period; or

“(B) \$27 for access to such data if access to the area code of data is first requested after the first 6 months of the person's annual period.

“(d) ADJUSTMENT OF FEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) FISCAL YEAR 2009.—The dollar amount described in subsection (b) or (c) is the amount to be charged for fiscal year 2009.

“(B) FISCAL YEARS AFTER 2009.—For each fiscal year beginning after fiscal year 2009, each dollar amount in subsection (b)(1) and (c)(2) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

“(i) the dollar amount in paragraph (b)(1) or (c)(2), whichever is applicable, multiplied by

“(ii) the percentage (if any) by which the CPI for the most recently ended 12-month period ending on June 30 exceeds the baseline CPI.

“(2) ROUNDING.—Any increase under subparagraph (B) shall be rounded to the nearest dollar.

“(3) CHANGES LESS THAN 1 PERCENT.—The Commission shall not adjust the fees under this section if the change in the CPI is less than 1 percent.

“(4) PUBLICATION.—Not later than September 1 of each year the Commission shall publish in the Federal Register the adjustments to the applicable fees, if any, made under this subsection.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) CPI.—The term ‘CPI’ means the average of the monthly consumer price index (for all urban consumers published by the Department of Labor).

“(B) BASELINE CPI.—The term ‘baseline CPI’ means the CPI for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2008.

“(e) PROHIBITION AGAINST FEE SHARING.—No person may enter into or participate in an arrangement (as such term is used in section 310.8(c) of the Commission's regulations (16 C.F.R. 310.8(c))) to share any fee required by subsection (b) or (c), including any arrangement to divide the costs to access the registry among various clients of a telemarketer or service provider.

“(f) HANDLING OF FEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The commission shall deposit and credit as offsetting collections any fee collected under this section in the account ‘Federal Trade Commission—Salaries and Expenses’, and such sums shall remain available until expended.

“(2) LIMITATION.—No amount shall be collected as a fee under this section for any fiscal year except to the extent provided in advance by appropriations Acts.”.

SEC. 3. REPORT.

Section 4 of the Do-Not-Call Implementation Act (15 U.S.C. 6101 note) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 4. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

“(a) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—Not later than December 31, 2009, and biennially thereafter, the Federal Trade Commission, in consultation with the Federal Communications Commission, shall transmit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce that includes—

“(1) the number of consumers who have placed their telephone numbers on the registry;

“(2) the number of persons paying fees for access to the registry and the amount of such fees;

“(3) the impact on the ‘do-not-call’ registry of—

“(A) the 5-year reregistration requirement;

“(B) new telecommunications technology; and

“(C) number portability and abandoned telephone numbers; and

“(4) the impact of the established business relationship exception on businesses and consumers.

“(b) ADDITIONAL REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2009, the Federal Trade Commission, in consultation with the Federal Communications Commission, shall transmit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce that includes—

“(1) the effectiveness of do-not-call outreach and enforcement efforts with regard to senior citizens and immigrant communities;

“(2) the impact of the exceptions to the do-not-call registry on businesses and consumers, including an analysis of the effectiveness of the registry and consumer perceptions of the registry's effectiveness; and

“(3) the impact of abandoned calls made by predictive dialing devices on do-not-call enforcement.”.

SEC. 4. RULEMAKING.

The Federal Trade Commission may issue rules, in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code, as necessary and appropriate to carry out the amendments to the Do-Not-Call Implementation Act (15 U.S.C. 6101 note) made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, the bill we are considering on the House floor today, which is Senate 781, the Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act, is identical to H.R. 2601, which was introduced by my friend Mr. STEARNS, the former ranking member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection.

On December 11 of last year, the House passed H.R. 2601 by voice vote, and I urge similar swift passage of S. 781 today.

Madam Speaker, this bill extends the authority of the Federal Trade Commission to collect the fees that administer and enforce the provisions relating to the national do-not-call registry. In 2003, Congress passed the Do-Not-

Call Implementation Act, which authorized the FTC to establish fees sufficient to implement the national do-not-call registry as originally authorized by the Telemarketing and Consumer Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act of 1994. As has been said on numerous occasions, this initiative has proven to be one of the most popular laws in history. Consumers have registered more than 145 million telephone numbers since the registry became operational in 2003. The FTC's authority to annually establish the appropriate level of fees to charge telemarketers for access to the registry expired several months ago, in 2007, and S. 781 restores that authority and renders it permanent. I will restate what I said back in December when we considered this legislation on the House floor. As Members of Congress, it is in our best interest to swiftly pass this bill in order to avoid the wrath of millions of angry constituents who are being called by telemarketers during dinner time. We need to facilitate the continuing operation of the do-not-call registry and vote for this bill.

As a result of an agreement reached with the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, we are sending to the President's desk for his signature the Senate-passed version of the bill introduced by Senator PRYOR. However, Senator PRYOR's bill is identical to Mr. STEARNS' bill, and my friend from Florida deserves all the credit for this fine piece of legislation. As is the case with the vast majority of bills passed out of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, of which I serve, this is a bipartisan measure that was crafted in consultation with the appropriate agency of expertise, in this case, the Federal Trade Commission. The original House bill passed the subcommittee by voice vote on October 23, and a week later on October 30 was unanimously approved in the full Energy and Commerce Committee. Majority and minority committee staff worked together on this bill. I am so proud of how they worked together. Mr. STEARNS, as well as the ranking member, Mr. BARTON of Texas, who is the ranking member of the full committee, should both be commended for their cooperation with Chairman JOHN DINGELL and Chairman BOBBY RUSH. I also would like to congratulate and welcome the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) as the new ranking member of the subcommittee on which we serve. I am positive that the track record of bipartisan cooperation will continue under Mr. WHITFIELD's leadership. Unfortunately, it is my understanding that Mr. WHITFIELD, I looked forward to seeing him on the floor today, but he is currently in Kentucky dealing with the frightening devastation wrought by last night's tornadoes. Our thoughts and prayers go out to him and his constituents and all those who were adversely affected by this tragedy, not only in that State but in other States as well.

With that, Madam Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote.

At this time, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Let me thank, first of all, the discerning, clairvoyant, highly observant and eloquent statements from the gentleman from North Carolina for his kindness in recognizing that it is, indeed, my bill. I appreciate his very eloquent statement.

Mr. WHITFIELD was supposed to be here, but, of course, with the tornadoes, he cannot be here. He flew back to Kentucky to take care of his constituents, so he is to be commended for that.

But I rise today also in support of this bill, which is my bill which came through my subcommittee, the Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act of 2007. The Senate bill is 781.

As pointed out, this bill is identical to H.R. 2601 which I introduced and which passed this Chamber by voice vote under suspension of the rules on December 11, last year. As the sponsor of the companion legislation to the Senate bill and as the former ranking member of the committee with jurisdiction over consumer protection, I assured all my colleagues that this legislation is necessary and, of course, very timely. The gentleman from North Carolina mentioned that it is one of the most popular bills we have passed in Congress, and indeed it is.

I can also assure each of you that it will have an immediate and meaningful impact on our constituents, much more so than many of the bills that we've passed this year.

The Congress originally passed the Do-Not-Call Act in 2003 in response to the growing concern about the persistent invasion of unsolicited telemarketing calls to consumers' homes. Now, at that point I was chairman of the Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection Subcommittee, and I took great pride that our committee came together with JAN SCHAKOWSKY, who was the ranking member, to put together the do-not-call registry. She is to be commended today, too, for her support and her enabling of this legislation.

The idea was very simple: Consumers could place their home phone numbers on a list, and telemarketers would then be prohibited from making unsolicited phone solicitation. In order to avail themselves of the tranquility afforded then by the registry, consumers simply call a toll-free number from the telephone line they wish to register, or they could add their number via the Internet. Telemarketers then access the registry at the Federal Trade Commission to obtain a list of registered numbers over the Internet and then remove their numbers from their call list. Pretty simple. These telemarketers then pay a simple fee for such access. It is those fees that fund

the registry, including the maintenance and, ultimately, the enforcement of the violators of this legislation.

□ 1700

The program has been a huge success, as the gentleman from North Carolina has pointed out, with one recent polling finding there is over 150 million active telephone numbers on the registry. My colleagues, that's roughly 70 percent of Americans who avail themselves of the registry benefit. That poll also found over 90 percent of those registered with the do-not-call list do indeed receive fewer unsolicited telemarketing calls.

The Federal Trade Commission must also be commended for its part in making the registry a success. Without vigorous enforcement, a prohibition would be meaningless. Consumers who receive unwanted telemarketing calls log complaints via either a toll-free telephone number or the Internet. As a result, the commission has pursued 35 cases for violations of this do-not-call provision in the bill and has collected \$25 million combined in civil penalties and equitable relief.

Unfortunately, the commission's authority to collect the fees necessary to maintain the registry expired last September. This legislation restores the commission's authority to collect the necessary fees to maintain and simply update the registry in a timely manner. Further, this act provides businesses with certainty into the future regarding the fees they pay to access the registry.

So, my colleagues, while this bill sets specific access fees, it also ensures Congress will receive the information necessary to assess in the future whether those fees are simply sufficient and appropriate. The Senate bill requires the Federal Trade Commission and the SEC to submit two reports to Congress biennially. One report shall include information regarding basic registry statistics such as the number of consumers registered, number of persons paying for access, and the impact of new telecommunications technology on the registry. The second report addresses consumer reports of abuse of registry exceptions, including the recent reports of "lead generators," unsolicited mailers, and we've all gotten those unsolicited mailers through the mail, used to establish a business relationship. Then once that business relationship is established, they can come back and call you or otherwise trick you into answering these little lead generators. And most frequently the people who do answer them are seniors, who are very conscientious, and then that, in fact, involves waiving their do-not-call protections. As time passes and people think of new ways to circumvent these protections, we will want to ensure we have the necessary information to keep pace with these folks that are trying to trick our constituents, thereby protecting their

original intent of the do-not-call registry.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, many of our constituents still express their gratitude for enacting the original Do-Not-Call Act, simply enabling them to make their home hours more peaceful without irritating telemarketing interruptions, especially around suppertime. The popularity and success of the do-not-call registry is without question. It is successful and it is one area in which this Congress has acted in a bipartisan fashion, almost unanimously on the House floor with approval. So I urge all my colleagues' support.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I want to thank the gentleman for his comments.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank both the chairman and the ranking member for bringing this bill to the floor.

Madam Speaker, as pointed out, this has been one of the most popular pieces of legislation that we could pass certainly during my short tenure in Congress. And, Madam Speaker, I would only point out that with a 10 percent approval rating, it is incumbent upon us to continue to pass legislation that is indeed popular.

I am an original cosponsor of the Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act, and as has been pointed out, this bill will extend the Federal Trade Commission's authority to collect fees and to administer and force the do-not-call registry. This registry is popular. This registry's effect has been profound.

Since the creation of this registry, as we heard testimony in our committee as we worked on the bill earlier this year, over 145 million telephone numbers have been registered. And as we heard from Ranking Member STEARNS a little while ago, that number is now up to 150 million telephone numbers.

As the Director of the Federal Trade Commission, Linda Parnes, eloquently stated in her testimony before the Energy and Commerce Committee last October, the do-not-call registry "helps to restore the sanctity of the American dinner hour."

While I firmly believe in a free market and I believe that businesses should be able to and should be responsible for formulating their own business plans and business practices, I also believe that Americans have a right to privacy. People should be able to have the option of whether or not they want to receive telephone calls from telemarketers in the privacy of their homes. Thanks to the do-not-call registry, Americans can sign up and they are afforded this decision and this discretion.

To keep the registry working in the future, it is imperative that we act

swiftly and pass this important legislation to further extend the protection of privacy for all Americans. As Commissioner Parnes pointed out, let's help restore the sanctity of the American dinner hour once and for all.

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I am going to urge my colleagues to vote "aye" on this measure, and let's send it on to the President's desk.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 781, the "Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act," and I urge its swift adoption by the House.

This bill is identical to H.R. 2601, which the House passed on December 11, 2007, to extend the authority of the Federal Trade Commission to collect fees to administer and enforce the provisions of law relating to the ever-popular national Do-Not-Call registry. The registry was established by Congress to enable citizens to place their personal phone numbers on a list that prohibits unwanted commercial solicitations over that number. By any measure, this program has been wildly successful—more than 145 million telephone numbers have been placed on the list, pesky phone calls from telemarketers have declined, and the FTC's enforcement has been vigorous—but the agency's ability to collect fees to fund this operation expired after September 2007. Therefore, we need to act.

By agreement with the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, we are sending the later Senate-passed bill to the President. At this time, I want to commend Representative STEARNS, the sponsor of the House-passed bill and then Ranking Subcommittee Member, for his leadership on this important consumer protection issue. I also commend Representative RUSH, a cosponsor of the House bill and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, for expeditiously bringing that bill, of which I am the lead Democratic sponsor, to the House floor last year. We would not be here today without their efforts.

I would note to the House that, as part of the agreement, the Senate today will take up and pass H.R. 3541, legislation also passed by the House on December 11, 2007, to eliminate the automatic removal of telephone numbers from the registry, thus clearing the bill for the President's signature. Current rules provide that telephone numbers be removed from the list after 5 years, thus requiring consumers to reregister their numbers in order to fend off telemarketing calls. Most consumers are unaware of this requirement. This places a particular burden on the elderly, the group most often victimized by telemarketing frauds. The House-passed bill contains common sense exceptions as well as requirements to ensure the accuracy of the list. I thank the Federal Trade Commission and the Direct Marketing Association for their improvements to the bill, and I commend Representatives DOYLE and PICKERING for their strong bipartisan leadership on this legislation.

This strong package of bipartisan consumer protection bills will serve the American public well, and will stand as a testament to what bipartisanism and good will across the Capitol can accomplish.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 781.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY RELATING TO CUBA AND OF THE EMERGENCY AUTHORITY RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF THE ANCHORAGE AND MOVEMENT OF VESSELS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-93)

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 ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, which states that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2008.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 6, 2008.

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 5 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas) 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. Res. 867, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 942, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 943, by the yeas and nays.

Postponed votes on H. Con. Res. 283, H. Res. 947, and H.R. 4848 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.

COMMENDING THE HOUSTON DYNAMO SOCCER TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2007 MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER CUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 867, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 867.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 373, nays 0, not voting 56, as follows:

[Roll No. 29]

YEAS—373

Abercrombie	Camp (MI)	Drake
Ackerman	Cantor	Dreier
Aderholt	Capito	Duncan
Akin	Capps	Edwards
Allen	Capuano	Ehlers
Altmire	Cardoza	Ellison
Andrews	Carnahan	Ellsworth
Arcuri	Carney	Emanuel
Baca	Carter	Emerson
Bachmann	Castle	Engel
Bachus	Castor	English (PA)
Baird	Chabot	Eshoo
Barrett (SC)	Chandler	Etheridge
Barrow	Clarke	Everett
Bartlett (MD)	Clay	Fallin
Barton (TX)	Cleaver	Fattah
Becerra	Clyburn	Feeney
Berkley	Coble	Ferguson
Berman	Cohen	Flake
Biggart	Cole (OK)	Forbes
Bilbray	Conyers	Fossella
Bilirakis	Cooper	Foxx
Bishop (GA)	Costa	Frank (MA)
Bishop (NY)	Costello	Franks (AZ)
Bishop (UT)	Courtney	Frelinghuysen
Blunt	Cramer	Garrett (NJ)
Boehner	Crenshaw	Gerlach
Bonner	Crowley	Giffords
Bono Mack	Cuellar	Gilchrest
Boozman	Culberson	Gillibrand
Boren	Cummings	Gohmert
Boswell	Davis (AL)	Gonzalez
Boustany	Davis (CA)	Goode
Boyd (FL)	Davis (KY)	Goodlatte
Boyd (KS)	Davis, David	Gordon
Brady (PA)	Davis, Lincoln	Granger
Brady (TX)	Deal (GA)	Green, Al
Bralley (IA)	DeFazio	Green, Gene
Broun (GA)	DeGette	Gutierrez
Brown (SC)	Delahunt	Hall (NY)
Brown, Corrine	DeLauro	Hall (TX)
Brown-Waite,	Dent	Hastings (FL)
Ginny	Diaz-Balart, L.	Hayes
Buchanan	Diaz-Balart, M.	Heller
Burgess	Dicks	Hensarling
Burton (IN)	Dingell	Herger
Butterfield	Doggett	Herseth Sandlin
Buyer	Donnelly	Higgins
Calvert	Doyle	Hill

Hinchey
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Insole
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott

NOT VOTING—56

Alexander
Baldwin
Bean
Berry
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boucher
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Conaway
Cubin
Davis (LL)
Davis, Tom
Doolittle
Farr
Filner
Fortenberry
Gallegly
Gingrey

Graves
Grijalva
Hare
Harman
Hastings (WA)
Hinojosa
Hooley
Hulshof
Jefferson
Kuhl (NY)
Lantos
Lipinski
Lowey
Manzullo
McMorris
Rodgers
Moore (WI)
Pence
Petri

Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Westmoreland
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

□ 1854

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 29, I was away from the Capitol attending a function in my capacity as Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 942, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 942.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 367, nays 0, not voting 62, as follows:

[Roll No. 30]

YEAS—367

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Biggart
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Brady (TX)
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyd (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Cantor

Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott

NOT VOTING—62

Alexander
Baldwin
Bean
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boucher
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Conaway
Cubin
Davis, Tom
Doolittle
Farr
Filner
Fortenberry
Gallegly
Gingrey
Graves
Grijalva

Hare
Harman
Hastings (WA)
Hinojosa
Hooley
Hulshof
Jefferson
Kuhl (NY)
Lantos
Lipinski
Lowey
Manzullo
McMorris
Rodgers
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murtha
Pence
Petri
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich

Rangel
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rohrabacher
Ross
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (WI)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott (GA)
Smith (WA)
Stark
Tanner
Terry
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Woolsey
Wynn
Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes left in this vote.

□ 1902

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 30, I was away from the Capitol attending a function in my capacity as Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

REMEMBERING THE SPACE SHUTTLE "CHALLENGER" DISASTER AND HONORING ITS CREW MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 943, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 943.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 371, nays 0, not voting 58, as follows:

[Roll No. 31]

YEAS—371

Abercrombie	Buchanan	Deal (GA)
Ackerman	Burgess	DeFazio
Aderholt	Burton (IN)	DeGette
Akin	Butterfield	Delahunt
Allen	Buyer	DeLauro
Altmire	Calvert	Dent
Andrews	Camp (MI)	Diaz-Balart, L.
Arcuri	Cantor	Diaz-Balart, M.
Baca	Capito	Dicks
Bachmann	Capps	Dingell
Bachus	Capuano	Doggett
Baird	Cardoza	Donnelly
Barrett (SC)	Carnahan	Doyle
Barrow	Carney	Drake
Bartlett (MD)	Carter	Dreier
Barton (TX)	Castle	Duncan
Becerra	Castor	Edwards
Berkley	Chabot	Ehlers
Biggert	Chandler	Ellison
Bilbray	Clarke	Ellsworth
Bilirakis	Clay	Emanuel
Bishop (GA)	Cleaver	Emerson
Bishop (NY)	Clyburn	Engel
Bishop (UT)	Coble	English (PA)
Blunt	Cohen	Eshoo
Boehner	Cole (OK)	Etheridge
Bonner	Cooper	Everett
Bono Mack	Costa	Fallin
Boozman	Costello	Fattah
Boren	Courtney	Feeney
Boswell	Cramer	Ferguson
Boustany	Crenshaw	Flake
Boyd (FL)	Forbes	Forbes
Boya (KS)	Cuellar	Fossella
Brady (PA)	Culberson	Fox
Brady (TX)	Cummings	Frank (MA)
Braley (IA)	Davis (AL)	Franks (AZ)
Broun (GA)	Davis (CA)	Frelinghuysen
Brown (SC)	Davis (IL)	Garrett (NJ)
Brown, Corrine	Davis (KY)	Gerlach
Brown-Waite,	Davis, David	Giffords
Ginny	Davis, Lincoln	Gilchrest

Gillibrand	Mahoney (FL)	Roybal-Allard
Gohmert	Maloney (NY)	Royce
Gonzalez	Marchant	Ryan (OH)
Goode	Markey	Salazar
Goodlatte	Marshall	Sali
Gordon	Matheson	Sánchez, Linda
Granger	Matsui	T.
Green, Al	McCarthy (CA)	Sarbanes
Green, Gene	McCarthy (NY)	Saxton
Gutierrez	McCauley (TX)	Schakowsky
Hall (NY)	McCollum (MN)	Schiff
Hall (TX)	McCotter	Schmidt
Hastings (FL)	McCrery	Schwartz
Hayes	McDermott	Scott (GA)
Heller	McGovern	Scott (VA)
Hensarling	McHenry	Sensenbrenner
Herger	McHugh	Serrano
Herseeth Sandlin	McIntyre	Sessions
Higgins	McKeon	Sestak
Hill	McNerney	Shadegg
Hinchey	McNulty	Shays
Hirono	Meek (FL)	Shea-Porter
Hobson	Meeke (NY)	Sherman
Hodes	Melancon	Shimkus
Hoekstra	Mica	Shuler
Holden	Michaud	Shuster
Holt	Miller (FL)	Simpson
Honda	Miller (MI)	Sires
Hooley	Miller (NC)	Skelton
Hoyer	Miller, Gary	Slaughter
Hunter	Miller, George	Smith (NE)
Inglis (SC)	Mitchell	Smith (NJ)
Inslee	Mollohan	Smith (TX)
Israel	Moore (KS)	Snyder
Issa	Moran (KS)	Solis
Jackson (IL)	Moran (VA)	Souder
Jackson-Lee	Murphy (CT)	Space
(TX)	Murphy, Patrick	Spratt
Johnson (GA)	Murphy, Tim	Stearns
Johnson (IL)	Musgrave	Stupak
Johnson, E.B.	Myrick	Sullivan
Johnson, Sam	Nadler	Sutton
Jones (NC)	Napolitano	Tancredo
Jones (OH)	Neal (MA)	Tauscher
Jordan	Neugebauer	Taylor
Kagen	Nunes	Thompson (CA)
Kanjorski	Oberstar	Thompson (MS)
Kaptur	Obey	Thornberry
Keller	Olver	Tiahrt
Kennedy	Ortiz	Tiberi
Kildee	Pallone	Tierney
Kilpatrick	Pascrell	Towns
Kind	Pastor	Tsongas
King (IA)	Paul	Turner
King (NY)	Payne	Udall (CO)
Kingston	Pearce	Udall (NM)
Kirk	Perlmutter	Upton
Klein (FL)	Peterson (MN)	Van Hollen
Kline (MN)	Peterson (PA)	Velazquez
Knollenberg	Pickering	Visclosky
Kucinich	Pitts	Walberg
LaHood	Poe	Walden (OR)
Lamborn	Pomeroy	Walsh (NY)
Lampson	Porter	Walz (MN)
Langevin	Price (GA)	Wamp
Larsen (WA)	Price (NC)	Wasserman
Larson (CT)	Putnam	Schultz
Latham	Rahall	Waters
LaTourrette	Ramstad	Watson
Latta	Rangel	Watt
Lee	Regula	Waxman
Levin	Rehberg	Weiner
Lewis (CA)	Reichert	Welch (VT)
Lewis (GA)	Renzi	Westmoreland
Lewis (KY)	Reyes	Wilson (NM)
Linder	Reynolds	Wilson (OH)
LoBiondo	Richardson	Wilson (SC)
Loeb sack	Rodriguez	Wittman (VA)
Lofgren, Zoe	Rogers (AL)	Wolf
Lucas	Rogers (KY)	Wu
Lungren, Daniel	Rogers (MI)	Yarmuth
E.	Ros-Lehtinen	Young (AK)
Lynch	Roskam	
Mack	Rothman	

NOT VOTING—58

Alexander	Davis, Tom	Hulshof
Baldwin	Doolittle	Jefferson
Bean	Farr	Kuhl (NY)
Berman	Filner	Lantos
Berry	Fortenberry	Lipinski
Blackburn	Gallegly	Lowe
Blumenauer	Gingrey	Manzullo
Boucher	Graves	McMorris
Campbell (CA)	Grijalva	Rodgers
Cannon	Hare	Moore (WI)
Conaway	Harman	Murtha
Conyers	Hastings (WA)	Pence
Cubin	Hinojosa	Petri

Platts	Ryan (WI)	Weller
Pryce (OH)	Sanchez, Loretta	Wexler
Radanovich	Smith (WA)	Whitfield (KY)
Rohrabacher	Stark	Woolsey
Ross	Tanner	Wynn
Ruppersberger	Terry	Young (FL)
Rush	Weldon (FL)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there is 1 minute remaining in this vote.

□ 1910

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 31, I was away from the Capitol attending a function in my capacity as Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 29 on H. Res. 867, Commending the Houston Dynamo soccer team for winning the 2007 Major League Soccer Cup, I am not recorded, as I was absent due to my attendance at a funeral. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 30 on H. Res. 942, Recognizing the significance of Black History Month, I am not recorded, as I was absent due to my attendance at a funeral. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 31 on H. Res. 943, Remembering the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster and honoring its crew members, who lost their lives on January 28, 1986, I am not recorded, as I was absent due to my attendance at a funeral. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

□ 1915

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

SILENT GENOCIDE

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. Madam Speaker, it is February 6, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave. And before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That is just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives lost on September 11, only it happens, Madam Speaker, every day in America.

It has now been exactly 12,798 days since the judicial fiat called *Roe v.*

Wade was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of our own unborn children. And all of them, Madam Speaker, had at least four things in common: they were just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone; each one of them died a nameless and a lonely death; each of the mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same; and all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to blindness and invincible ignorance while history repeats itself, and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of innocent human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath. The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says, "No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the declaration, not the casual notion, but the declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Every conflict or battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are. And yet another day has passed, Madam Speaker, and we in this body have failed again to honor that commitment. We have failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more unborn children who died without the protection that we should have given them.

Perhaps tonight, Madam Speaker, maybe someone new who hears this sunset memorial will finally realize that abortion really does kill a baby, that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express, and that 12,798 days spent killing nearly 58 million children in America is enough. Perhaps we will realize that the next time we meet that America is great enough to find a better way than abortion on demand.

And so tonight, Madam Speaker, may each of us remind ourselves that our own days in the sunshine of life are numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time, and if it should be that this Congress is allowed to continue on yet another day to come, may that day be the one when we hear the

cries of the unborn at last. May that be the day that we find the humanity, the courage and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge in our Nation called abortion on demand.

Madam Speaker, it is February 6, 2008, 12,798 days since *Roe v. Wade* in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING FORMER FIRE CHIEF ED HANZEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SUTTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a deep sense of appreciation to pay tribute to former fire chief, Ed Hanzel, who passed away on December 31, 2007 while serving as a combat firefighter in Iraq.

Ed, who devoted over 32 years of his life to his community as a firefighter, embarked on two separate tours in Iraq following his retirement in 2002. Retirement did not suit Ed, who felt he could make a positive contribution in Iraq while continuing to provide for his family.

And although Denise, his wife of 36 years, worried for his safety, Ed was determined to protect our brave soldiers by utilizing his professional firefighting skills on military bases as a combat firefighter. One morning, at the onset of his second tour, Ed informed a coworker he wasn't feeling well and went to rest. Later that day, Ed Hanzel passed away.

Ed was a strong man. He had beaten cancer a few years ago. His death in Iraq surprised his family and friends who knew him for his easygoing nature, his sense of humor, and his ability to light up a room with his bright eyes and genuine smile. After his passing, countless firefighters, emergency medical personnel and other safety forces from 11 neighboring departments joined together to honor Ed's memory. With fire truck ladders extended to form an arch, an American flag was flown at the peak, symbolizing Ed's devotion to his country.

A medical helicopter flew low over the crowd, and a fire truck adorned with a black wreath sounded a traditional last call, concluding a ceremony to celebrate a former fire chief, a humble fire chief, who often appeared embarrassed when called "Chief."

The respect and admiration Ed earned as a firefighter, a paramedic and a SWAT medic could not have been

more visible as his peers joined together around an empty pair of boots and a firefighter's helmet to honor their fallen colleague.

We will always remember Ed for his ever-present smile, his commitment to his community, his sense of humor, and his dedication to his family. On behalf of the people of Ohio's 13th District, I want to express my deepest sympathies to his wife, Denise, and son, Brian. We have lost a great man, and they have lost a great husband and father who gave all in service to others and our country.

We grieve Ed's passing, but we celebrate his life and service and we take solace in knowing we are better people for having known him.

HONORING CORPS' ROLE IN ALLOWING FAMILY OF FALLEN MARINE TO ADOPT SON'S K-9 PARTNER, LEX

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. Madam Speaker, on December 21, 2007, I had the privilege and honor to visit Marine Corps Base Albany, Georgia to witness firsthand the compassion of the United States Marine Corps.

I am extremely grateful to the United States Air Force for making it possible for me to take part in a visit that was so special, I can hardly describe it in words. On that day, the Jerome Lee family of Quitman, Mississippi, was able to adopt their son's canine partner, Lex, who was released from his duty as a military working dog.

Jerome and Rachel Lee's son, Corporal Dustin Jerome Lee, was a United States Marine Corps dog handler who was killed in action on March 21, 2007, in Fallujah, Iraq. Corporal Lee and his canine partner Lex, a 7-year-old German shepherd, were a highly trained explosive detection team. Lex, who was due for retirement after his combat tour in Iraq, suffered shrapnel wounds from the same enemy-fired rocket-propelled grenade that took Corporal Lee's life.

Following Corporal Lee's death, the Lee family began seeking to adopt their son's canine companion who was with their son during his last moments on Earth. However, after filing the necessary paperwork, the Lee family was told that Lex had been medically evaluated and, although injured, he was fit for duty and not yet eligible for adoption.

After learning their story, I spoke with Corporal Lee's father, Jerome Lee, by phone on several occasions. Mr. Lee continued to express the joy and comfort that caring for Lex would bring to him and his family, and he requested my assistance in securing their adoption of Lex.

I am so grateful to the United States Marine Corps and Commandant James

Conway for helping me ensure that the Lee family's request was granted. I am also very grateful to Brigadier General Michael Regner and Major General Robert Dickerson for their role in enabling this adoption to proceed. I know that Dustin is in heaven, and happy that his family now has Lex. Allowing the Lee family to adopt Lex was a fitting thank you to parents who gave the ultimate gift of their son for this country.

The United States Marine Corps has demonstrated its tremendous compassion and understanding by making this adoption a reality for the parents of one of our Nation's fallen heroes. Again I extend my deep condolences to Mr. and Mrs. Lee, as well as all those in this country who have lost a loved one fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Although Lex will never replace their son, welcoming Lex into the Lee family and home will keep a big part of Corporal Lee's life alive for their family. Lex loved and protected Corporal Lee on the battlefield, and Corporal Lee's family is now able to love and protect Lex in the peaceful surroundings of their home in Mississippi.

May God bless the United States Marine Corps and all of our men and women in uniform, and may God continue to bless America.

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.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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EDWARD W. BROOKE III, UNITED STATES SENATOR, RETIRED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor for a special purpose this evening, a purpose that I think every Member of this House would want to join in during Black History Month. It is a rare bipartisan opportunity to honor a man whom I think Democrats and Republicans alike are equally proud of. He is a lifelong Republican, and yet, I, a lifelong Democrat, have come to ask Members to sign on to H.R. 1000, a bill to honor the first African American popularly elected to serve in the Senate of the United States. You heard me. He was not a Democrat, he was a Republican, and

his name is Edward W. Brooke III, United States Senator from Massachusetts, 1967 to 1979.

I come during Black History Month because I think it would be a wonderful opportunity for the House on both sides of the aisle to do something together that both wanted to do, instead of simply talking about Black History Month in the abstract, doing something for a former Member of the United States Congress who indeed was African American. His service was of such quality that the President of the United States, several years ago, already awarded former Senator Brooke the highest national medal that our government can offer, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. But the highest medal we can offer is the Congressional Gold Medal. The Senate, where Senator Brooke served, has already unanimously passed this resolution. This is a special time, I think, that the House would want to follow suit.

I want to note, Madam Speaker, just how broad range was the support in the Senate. When you have Senator HARRY REID and MITCH MCCONNELL on the same bill to honor this former Senator, I think it says it all. When you have Senators ranging from Senator EDWARD KENNEDY to Senator TED STEVENS, I think that is the very definition of a bipartisan bill, and they were among the cosponsors.

Why did they do this? Why has Senator Brooke already gotten the highest medal that the President of the United States can offer? It is because of his distinguished career in the Senate; it is because he did a breakthrough at the time that breakthroughs were not even done; and it is because of his service in other ways.

He received the Bronze Star, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit from the Italian Government for his leadership during 195 days in combat in Italy as a captain in World War II in the segregated 366th Combat Infantry Regiment. That, Madam Speaker, is the very definition of a patriot.

I, of course, know about Senator Brooke. This is perhaps somewhat personal to me, because he was born and raised in the District of Columbia. Mind you, his greatest service did not occur in this city as a native Washingtonian, but only in this city after he was elected to the Senate.

He was born and raised in segregated Washington, DC. The city was as segregated as any southern city then, including its public schools, the very public school from which I graduated as well, Dunbar High School. He was educated at Howard University and then went to Howard Law School, and hadn't left the District of Columbia until he went to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Then somehow he realized there were greener pastures than his own hometown, and he went to Massachusetts to set up the practice of law and got the idea in his head that in a State with al-

most no African Americans, with almost no Democrats, he could get to be, first, the first black Attorney General in the United States, and then the first Senator elected by popular vote to the United States Senate.

We all know that it is very difficult for an African American or a person of any minority to be elected statewide. When this happened in the mid-sixties, I think we stand in awe of what kind of man it must have taken to have effected this change then.

So I ask Members if they will, before this month is over, and there are other Members trying to help me do so, join most of the Members of the House who have already signed on to H.R. 1000 to award the Congressional Gold Medal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TIME TO WAKE UP ON THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, this week, ExxonMobil reported it beat its own record for the highest annual profits ever recorded by any company with its net income rising to \$40.6 billion in 2007, the highest record profits of any company in American history. Those profits are due to the surging oil and gasoline prices that we are all paying. Meanwhile, here in Washington, the establishment sits around the table in anticipation of the President's budget proposal. Lobbyists, advocates, lawmakers, and agency heads wait in anticipation.

This year it seems that the President has outdone himself by pushing up our national debt to \$9.2 trillion, nearly \$10 trillion. When President Bush took office, gasoline cost \$1.45 a gallon. When he took office, gasoline cost \$1.45 and we were showing surpluses after the discipline we had exacted here during the 1990s, surpluses in our budget of \$5.6 trillion. Now gasoline regularly rises above \$3 a gallon and the annual budget is in the red, his latest budget as submitted by over \$407 billion, and you know it is going to rise to over half a trillion dollars with the war costs.

What a story. While the Nation goes deeper into the red with higher gas prices and bigger deficits, oil companies are making out like bandits. Compare a \$407 billion budget deficit for our country with \$40.6 billion in exorbitant profits taken in by ExxonMobil in 2007. ExxonMobil posted the largest profit in U.S. history, sucking those dollars from our people.

While we are considering a stimulus package to jump-start our economy, imagine how solving our tremendous energy crisis could help every single American. We are talking about sending pennies to some Americans in this so-called stimulus package, while these giants are running off with billions and billions and billions of dollars. Where is the courage of this Congress to balance these accounts and to make sure that those who need help in our country actually get it?

If you add up the President's budget request for the Army Corps of Engineers, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Labor, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Commerce, and the entire Environmental Protection Agency, it costs \$2 billion less to run them all than ExxonMobil made in 2007. Think about that.

Let's think about what it means for our Nation's priorities. It is more important for ExxonMobil to make billions than it is for us to conduct scientific research or to clean up the environment or to extend unemployment benefits or to help businesses in this economy, small businesses try to survive, to fix up our levees and our bridges and our roads?

Think about the millions of Americans we could help who are facing a meltdown in the housing market and losing their most important form of savings. Think about the nearly 200,000 homeless veterans living on the streets of our country. What an embarrassment. Think about the 33.5 million Americans that are food insecure and regularly go to bed hungry as our food pantries run dry.

It is often said that a budget is the real show of a nation's values. When President Bush complains about how America is addicted to oil in his State of the Union but then fails to move our Nation to energy independence, we sure know where his values fall. When our society allows our oil barons to make off with billions, skimmed away from the American people, we know where those loyalties lie.

With oil prices continuing to rise, the high price of gasoline continues to fuel our trade deficits. With oil prices as high as \$98 a barrel last year, the monthly trade deficit from oil rose to a level rarely seen, \$24 billion just in November of 2007.

We all know that this FY 2009 proposed Bush budget is an empty shell from a lame duck President, but somehow we had expected more. Congress should reject the President's proposed budget and rewrite it in a way that protects the American consumer, invests in energy independence, and provides a real stimulus for the American economy at a time when the American people are crying for it.

Millions and millions of Americans are losing their homes, their most important form of savings. When is this Congress and when is this President going to wake up?

Madam Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD.

[From the Blade, Feb. 2, 2008]

SURGING PRICES PUMP UP OIL GIANT'S RECORD \$40.6B PROFIT

NEW YORK.—ExxonMobil reported yesterday that it beat its own record for the highest annual profits ever recorded by any company with net income rising to \$40.6 billion in 2007 thanks to surging oil prices.

The company's sales last year, more than \$404 billion, exceeded the gross domestic product of 120 countries.

ExxonMobil made more than \$1,287 of profit for every second of 2007.

The company also had its most profitable quarter ever. It said net income rose 14 percent, to \$11.7 billion, or \$2.13 a share, in the last three months of the year.

Like most oil companies, Exxon benefited from a near doubling of oil prices, as well as higher demand for gasoline last year. Crude oil prices rose from a low of around \$50 a barrel in early 2007 to almost \$100 by the end of the year—the biggest jump in oil prices in any one year.

"Exxon sets the gold standard for the industry," said Fadel Gheit, an oil analyst at Oppenheimer & Co. in New York.

Oil companies all have reported strong profits in recent days.

Chevron, the second-largest American oil company, said yesterday that its profits rose 9 percent last year, to \$18.7 billion.

The backlash against the oil industry, which periodically has intensified as gasoline prices have risen in recent years, was swift.

One advocacy group, the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights, called the profits "unjustifiable."

Some politicians said Congress should rescind the tax breaks awarded two years ago to encourage oil companies to increase their investments in the United States and raise domestic production.

"Congratulations to ExxonMobil and Chevron—for reminding Americans why they cringe every time they pull into a gas station," Sen. Charles Schumer said (D., N.Y.).

Exxon defended itself against claims that it was responsible for the rise in oil prices.

Anticipating a backlash, Exxon has been running advertisements that highlight the size of the investments it makes to find and develop energy resources—more than \$80 billion between 2002 and 2006, with an additional \$20 billion planned for 2008. The company says that in the next two decades, energy demand is expected to grow by 40 percent.

"Our earnings reflect the size of our business," said Kenneth Cohen, Exxon's vice president for public affairs. "We hope people will focus on the reality of the challenge we are facing."

Given the darkening prospects for the American economy, some analysts said oil company profits soon might reach a peak. Oil prices could fall this year if an economic slowdown reduces energy consumption in the United States, the world's biggest oil consumer.

Such concerns have pushed oil futures prices down about 10 percent since the beginning of the year. Oil fell 3 percent, to \$88.96 a barrel, yesterday on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Exxon shares fell a half-percent, to \$85.95.

Some analysts said high oil prices, and the record profits they create, were masking growing difficulties at many of the major Western oil giants.

Faced with resurgent national oil companies—like PetroChina, Petrobras in Brazil, or Gazprom in Russia—the Western companies are having a hard time increasing production and renewing reserves.

As oil prices increase, countries like Russia and Venezuela have tightened the screws on foreign investors in recent years, limiting access to energy resources or demanding a bigger share of the oil revenues.

At the same time, many of the traditional production regions, like the North Sea and Alaska, are slowly drying up.

Western majors, which once dominated the global energy business, now control only about 6 percent of the world's oil reserves. Last year, PetroChina overtook Exxon as the world's largest publicly traded oil company.

Excluding acquisitions, Exxon was the only major international oil company with a reserve replacement rate exceeding 100 percent between 2004 and 2006, meaning it found more than one barrel for each barrel it produced, according to a report by Moody's Investors Service, the rating agency.

In a related development, the OPEC cartel, which met in Austria yesterday, left its production levels unchanged, resisting pressure from developing nations to pump more oil into the global economy.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is set to meet again next month. The cartel signaled it would be ready to cut production to make up for a seasonal slowdown in demand in the second quarter.

OPEC's actions mean the cartel is determined to keep prices from falling below \$80 a barrel, according to energy experts.

The U.S. response to OPEC's decision was measured.

"I think everyone is fully aware that having a reliable and steady and predictable supply of oil is a benefit to the global economy," White House spokesman Tony Fratto said. "We hope that they understand that their decisions on oil production have a real impact on the economy."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Ms. SUTTON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-552) on the resolution (H. Res. 955) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4137, COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2007

Ms. SUTTON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-523) on the resolution (H. Res. 956) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4137) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

PAYING THE PRICE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S FLAWED PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, at least President Bush is consistent. Like the other seven budgets that he has submitted to this Congress, it is no surprise that his eighth and final request continues to reflect spectacularly flawed priorities. There was some debate earlier this week about whether the budget should be printed and distributed to congressional offices. Perhaps the best decision would have been to spare us the books and save the trees.

For the eighth year in a row, the administration has degraded the budget process. This budget barely goes through the motions. Instead of formulating a blueprint to guide this Nation toward what should be our fiscal priorities, the budget continues the flawed policies of the past 7 years.

Without putting forth an honest or straightforward budget, the President has yet to attempt seriously to meet our goals, goals that we should all share of budgetary accountability, enforcement, and fiscal responsibility. This is why so many of our colleagues, Madam Speaker, have already accurately described the President's budget request has a pro forma document with little meaning or relevance, that has also been described as arriving on Capitol Hill "dead on arrival," and that is perhaps a very, very good thing. Perhaps the lack of truth in budgeting represents the best example of why "change" has become the overriding theme of this coming election.

This Congress should refuse to be misled again by a budget that hides the true costs of the devastating fiscal policies of this administration. For example, omitting total war costs gives an artificially deflated notion of what the deficit will be, and we now have the Secretary of Defense estimating that the true cost of the war in fiscal 2009 will be \$170 billion, as opposed to the \$70 billion that is put in the budget as a placeholder. That number alone will drive the deficit up to over half a trillion dollars. The President's budget also omits the cost of extending the tax cuts, the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, which disproportionately favor those who need those tax cuts the least.

Let me just cite two very troubling aspects of a budget that is shot through with scores of troubling aspects. The first is one that is of particular importance to my home State of New York. We have been fighting, those of us in New York, and this fight has been led primarily by CAROLYN MALONEY and also VITO FOSSELLA and JERRY NADLER, to see to it that the brave Americans who responded to the site of the World Trade Center, first to try to rescue people, then to recover bodies and then to clean up what came to be known as "the pile," some 70 percent of them are suffering from various health ailments relating to the toxins that they were exposed to in the days immediately following those attacks on the Twin Towers.

In the current year, the Congress committed to spend \$150 million to pro-

vide for the ongoing health care needs and monitoring of those very brave first responders and rescue workers. The President's budget cuts that number to \$25 million.

My question for the President is: Have all of these people all of a sudden become well? Have they been miraculously cured? Or, more likely, has the President simply decided that providing health care for these very brave Americans is simply not a Federal responsibility? In either case, I certainly hope that this Congress will do the right thing and restore that funding.

The second has to do with education, particularly access to higher education. In his State of the Union message, the President chided the Congress for not having fully funded his American Competitiveness Initiative. Yet we are now presented with a budget that eliminates two programs for student financial aid that are absolutely crucial for needed students to attend college. One is called Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, approximately \$750 million a year, and the other is Perkins loans, approximately \$670 million a year. For those two programs, the President advocates taking approximately \$1.4 billion out of the student loan program, and does so while costs are rising and the ability of students to pay is declining.

How can we have a competitive workforce, how can we have a competitive Nation, if we don't even provide our young men and women with access to college?

Future generations of Americans will pay the price for the President's flawed priorities and more debt as a consequence of his actions. In fact, the debt that will be accrued over the 8 years of the Bush Presidency will amount to some \$3.5 trillion. That is an amount that exceeds the combined debt of all of the Presidents from George Washington through the first President Bush.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues, I implore my colleagues, to resolve one last time to defeat this budget request from the President and to restore middle-class, mainstream priorities, the very priorities that our new majority has been working on now for the last year.

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HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor tonight to talk about health care, which we sometimes do in this hour. It's an important subject, and we are going to hear a lot about this over the coming year. We have got a Presidential election that is now in full throttle across the country.

We just had Super Tuesday, and by a strange turn of events the nominations are not settled and my home State of Texas now next month will, in fact, play a big role in helping select the nominees of the two parties. During this coming month, I expect we will hear a great deal about the plans and visions and the aspirations of the different candidates for health care.

But let's not forget, when we talk about health care, that it is on the floor of this House where about 50 cents out of every health care dollar that is spent in the United States of America today, it is on the floor of this House where that spending originates. I can't help but observe the last speaker who was addressing the House on the subject of the budget was critical of the President's budget, which is his prerogative and his right, but I would remind the previous speaker that it is his party that is in charge, as it was last year, and while it is the President's obligation to present a budget to the Congress every year, it is then the Congress' obligation to work on that budget and pass a budget, which will be voted on later in the year, that either accepts or rejects those proposals put forth by the President.

Indeed, last year, that is exactly what happened. So the budget that went forward last year was not the President's budget, I would point out to the gentleman from New York, but the budget last year was the budget passed by the majority on the House of Representatives floor last year, and the same thing will be true this year. They are in charge. It is their right and prerogative under the rules of the House that they will have absolute authority to create the budget and, as a consequence, those things that are felt to be important are going to be those things that are championed by their side. Those things that are felt to be less important will be those things that are left of the budget. That responsibility lies in the House of Representatives. Under the rules of the House, that responsibility lies with the majority party. Currently, the majority party is the party of the gentleman who just spoke.

So while I appreciate his passion, I appreciate his fervor in talking about the President's budget, I think he would be better served to actually spend some time talking to his leadership about the priorities as they come forward over this next year, because there are some significant problems that faced this House last year that were simply kicked down the road at the end of the year.

In fact, we saw a repeat of that last week. We were obliged to reauthorize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act so that we have the tools necessary, our intelligence community has the tools necessary to prevent terrorist attacks on our homeland security and to help protect our soldiers who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. We couldn't do it, so we kicked the can

down the road a couple of weeks right at the end of the year, December.

We were supposed to do something about Medicare because physicians across the country were facing a 10.1 percent reduction in their reimbursement, a 10.1 percent pay cut if Congress didn't act. Well, we did act. We prevented that, but we prevented it for 6 months. Six months. What an insult. What an insult to the physicians of this country who are taking care of our Medicare patients, the patients we have asked them to care for. We couldn't even do our work to give them the certainty of what they would be reimbursed for the next year? No, it's 6 months is all you get, Doc, and then we're going to come back and visit it again. And, oh, by the way, we'll be in the middle of that Presidential campaign by then, so don't expect us to devote much more attention to it in June than we were able to muster in December.

But I digress. My purpose in being here tonight is to speak a little bit about what is going on in the practice of medicine, and, in spite of the fact that I may sound a little bit despondent, I will tell you that I am so optimistic about the world ahead, what the future holds for the young people today who are contemplating a career in health care.

When I was a young medical student in the mid 1970s in Houston, Texas, I could never have imagined that the day would come in my lifetime when a person could, of their own volition, go to the Internet and, with a couple of mouse clicks, find a place that would analyze their DNA and for less than \$1,000 provide them vital insights into their genomic makeup so that they might be forewarned about some diseases, so that they might be forewarned about some conditions and use those tools to help manage their health well into the future.

Now, we hardly know what the results of this type of investigation are going to be. It has only been in the last couple of months, in fact, I think it was Thanksgiving that I read the New York Times article that talked about one of these labs that would provide this service. But who would have thought when I was in medical school in the mid-1970s that this day would have dawned where that information is available not just to the physician, it's available to the patient, to anyone who wishes to go on the Internet and seek out that information, seek out that lab and have that type of analysis done.

Think back on 20 or 30 years ago, a patient went to the doctor, the doctor gave a diagnosis, recommended a treatment plan to the patient, who pretty much had to accept what was given or go get a second opinion. Then, of course, in the late 1990s, and I know this very well because I was practicing actively at that time, render a diagnosis, write out a treatment plan, the patient would go to the Internet and check it out and then they come back

and say, Doctor, this is what you're supposed to be doing. I went to the Internet and read about this.

Now in the 21st century a patient will be coming to their physician and providing genomic information and saying, Doctor, here's what I'm at risk for developing. How are you going to help me keep that from occurring? You know, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, the head of the National Institutes of Health, talks about a world where medicine becomes a great deal more personalized. It's no longer one size fits all, it's no longer just one antidepressant is out there for everyone. It's a much more personalized endeavor.

Because of the ability to know this information about the human genome, it's going to be a great deal more predictive. As a consequence, because of that predictive value, preventive medicine is going to take on new meaning, a meaning that, again, I would have never thought possible early in my training.

Finally, medicine is, of necessity, going to become more participatory. A patient will no longer be just a passive passenger along for the ride on their medical journey. No, they will have to be an active participant in managing their health care from times of health and times of disease.

Medicine is right on the verge of a truly transformational time. You add what we know, what we are beginning to understand and learn about the human genome and look how fast information comes at us nowadays. It is, again, just hard to think that back in the mid-1970s when I was in medical school, Internet, never heard of an e-mail, what's that? And now these are things that we take for granted. To our children, these modalities are simply second nature. They cannot imagine existing for even a day in a world where a cell phone and e-mail are not readily at their fingertips.

The speed at which information comes to us is truly phenomenal and, as a consequence, in professions such as the health care professions, a dramatic effect is going to be felt because of the ability to sort through large amounts of information over a short period of time and to extract data from those large amounts of information.

On the floor of this House, in September of this year, we reauthorized legislation pertaining to the Food and Drug Administration. It was truly landmark legislation. I don't know if my friends on either side of the aisle really recognized how significant that legislation was, because, for the first time, for the first time the Food and Drug Administration is provided with the tools for collecting that type of information and proactively researching that database.

The day may well dawn when a problem like Vioxx is discovered early, early in its release into general use and the types of difficulties that were encountered with that medication several years ago will, in fact, be a thing of the

past. The red flags will be up. The warnings will be there. They will come immediately to someone's attention because of the type of database management that will be available. Truly, we will have a system that is totally interactive. The resultant effect on public health will be profound, because it's not just the side effects and the untoward effects that we are talking about, what if there was an unexpected beneficial effect where, perhaps, more people ought to be offered the benefits of this therapy or this medication.

Certainly, the story that we have learned with the type of medicine, the class of medicine called statins that lower cholesterol, that story has evolved significantly over the last several years. In the early 1990s, a LDL cholesterol of less than 130, you're in good shape. Then a couple of years later, it was less than 100, and now it's well under 100. The numbers to shoot for have gone down because the experience with that medicine, the information and data that has been gathered has pointed the way for physicians to understand that a subsequent lowering of that value will, indeed, protect a person's health in ways that they wouldn't have imagined when those medicines were first released.

Medicine is in a transformational time. Congress is going to have a lot to do with how medicine is practiced and paid for and regulated, not just in the next couple of years, but in the next 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, 50 years. The decisions that we make on the floor of this House today are going to extend far into the future, probably far beyond the lifetimes of many of us who serve in this House today.

But Congress really is not in the business of being transformational. Congress is transactional. We heard that just a few moments ago with the discussions on the budget. What does Congress do? We take money from this group and we give it to this group, and it defines who we are morally if we listen to the rhetoric of the last speaker. But that's what Congress does. We transact, we take money from this group, and we give it to this group. If you will watch the discussion that unfolds on the budget over the next several weeks, that will become intuitively obvious to the most casual of observers.

However, in a body that is so focused on the transactional, is it possible to keep an eye on the transformational and be certain that we don't derail the transformation that is likely to be occurring in medicine today? That's one of the tasks, that's one of the challenges, that's one of the obligations that we have serving in this body.

Now, I would submit if Congress wants to participate in the transformation, if they want to participate in improving health care, they are, in fact, capable of doing so. In fact, Congress could be a partner in the transformation if we can step back from the transactional long enough to focus on

the transformational. This is not just theoretical.

I had an opportunity to speak to Dr. Michael DeBakey, pioneer in heart surgery, a gentleman of great renown. We honored him on the floor of this House with a Congressional Gold Medal earlier this year. I had an opportunity to sit down with Dr. DeBakey. He talked about some of the changes that he has seen in his lifetime. He related how when he was a young man and graduated from medical school and then did his residency at Tulane Charity Hospital in New Orleans, he wanted to go into research. But he knew that in order to have the credentials to go into research he would have to go to Europe in order to obtain those credentials. This was back in the 1930s. Well, nowadays, someone who graduates from medical school and finishes their training and wants to devote a lifetime to research gets those credentials in the United States of America. In fact, other physicians travel to this country, to our hospitals, to our Texas Medical Center in Houston, to our Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, to our M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston. They travel to our country to get those credentials because that's where the best science is being done.

Dr. DeBakey reflected what caused the change between the time he graduated in the mid-1930s and what we see now at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. He maintained the cause of that change was the focus and attention, and, yes, the funding that Congress provided to medical research right after the Second World War. Indeed, the funding and the vision of the entire National Institutes of Health was a product of that type of visionary thinking.

So as Dr. DeBakey presented that thought to me, it was with the underscored emphasis that Congress can do this because Congress has done this before. So if we stay focused on helping and protecting and promoting that transformation in medicine, then it is possible for Congress to be, again, a participant in that transformation and not an enemy of that transformation.

Now, I am fortunate, because I did spend a number of years practicing medicine, working one time in a multi-specialty practice, part of my time in a solo practice, part of my time in a single specialty practice, having practiced medicine in several different modalities during my lifetime, it gives me the ability to see things from the provider's side and now to see things from the policy side.

□ 2000

It is so important that we spend the effort understanding those things that will work and understanding those things that will not work.

I alluded earlier when I first started speaking about the problems that we face because we couldn't do our work in December and we postponed any real reform on the reductions in physicians'

payments that we see year after year. You have seen me put up the posters that detail how hospitals, drug companies, HMOs are paid on a cost-of-living adjusted basis year over year, but physician reimbursement is paid on a crazy formula that reduces and ratchets down reimbursements year over year. That just simply won't work.

When I talk about Congress being a transactional body and that transactional activity being the enemy of the transformational, that is precisely the type of transactional activity to which I am referring.

Think of it. We always talked about the laws of supply and demand. What are we doing to the supply side of that equation if we are actually telling our doctors we don't value what you do, and we don't care about the fact that you take care of our sickest patients, our Medicare patients? That is just not important to us in Congress, and then we underline that by postponing dealing with it for 6 months. Again, an assaulting concept to the doctor who is toiling day after day to take care of the patients that we have asked them to take care of for us.

Another aspect of that activity, as the year wound down last year, was the attempt to attach a rather inflexible program of e-prescribing to whatever fix we managed to achieve for the Medicare payment. Now, e-prescribing is not inherently a bad concept.

Madam Speaker, you think about it, I am left-handed so my handwriting has never been good. And then I went to medical school and had to take notes fast, and my handwriting got worse. And then I got old, and my handwriting got even worse. And so it is very difficult to read those handwritten prescriptions that we scribble out quickly at the end of a patient visit. What a benefit it would be to the patient, to the pharmacist, and to the physician to have a method whereby that prescription was shot to the pharmacist via e-mail at the time of the patient encounter. It would save waiting time, no problems with legibility, and there could be computer algorithms that were developed that would prevent a patient receiving a medicine to which they were allergic or which would counteract or interfere with another medicine they were taking. So a good concept. And then like so many things, Congress deals with it in a way that makes it untenable.

The e-prescribing bill introduced by a Senator on the other side of the Capitol, said, Doctor, if you do this, we will provide you a carrot and a stick. The carrot is a 1 percent increase in your reimbursement for taking care of that patient and providing an electronically written prescription at the end of that patient visit. Just 1 percent.

Now I am going to make some numbers up because it makes the math work. In fact, the numbers are probably much lower than what I am going to make up. But assume a physician

working in an average practice in a city like mine sees a Medicare patient, return visit, moderate complexity. Assume they are paid \$50 for that visit. That is actually pretty generous if you look at most of the Medicare fee schedule reimbursement rates. But because it makes the math easy, let's say \$50.

So if that doctor participates in an e-prescribing regimen, what does that mean? It means they get an extra 1 percent. That is 50 cents for those of you slow at math. So that visit is going to take about 15 minutes if you do it correctly. Again, remember it is a moderately complex Medicare patient, a senior citizen. So you get an extra 50 cents if you, instead of writing that prescription by hand, you put it into a laptop or BlackBerry and send it off to the pharmacist electronically.

You can see four of those patients in an hour. If you are really pushing yourself and you have everything firing on all eight cylinders in the office and the front desk and nurses are moving along, you can see four patients in an hour. So four \$50 visits. So that is \$200 reimbursed for that hour's work. That is not the doctor's pay. Don't misunderstand me. He has to pay all of the overhead as well. Nevertheless, during that hour, that physician will generate \$200 in revenue. For that, if they do e-prescribing, we will reward them and give them an additional \$2 for that hour's work.

That is not a great incentive, but let's think about it also from the fact that it is not just one prescription that doctor writes for that Medicare patient, no. The average Medicare patient has three or four prescriptions. So when you figure it on a per prescription basis, the actual benefit to the physician is somewhat less than 10 cents for every prescription that is handled electronically. And it is a little bit more involved to do that. A doctor who is used to writing out a prescription quickly can do so quickly. Typing it into a laptop or BlackBerry is going to take longer, maybe a minute or two minutes. But if you are seeing 30 patients a day, 2 minutes per patient, that adds up to an extra hour, and that extra hour is an hour away from hospital activities, seeing other patients, an hour away from family. It comes from somewhere, because we all know that the hours in the day is a zero sum game. If you take an extra hour, it comes from somewhere else.

So we are going to compensate for that. We are going to pay a little less than 10 cents per prescription as it is written.

What if you don't do it? You say it isn't worth it. You cut my reimbursement every year in Medicare, I have to take on this big expense, I have to learn a new technology, pay the expense of the software maintenance, I am not going to participate.

Well, the bill that was introduced last December, after 4 years' time, would have applied the stick to encourage, again, our physician community

to utilize this technology. And the stick was a 10 percent penalty.

Wait a minute, a 1 percent up tick and a 10 percent penalty. That is imbalanced. Let's go back to our hypothetical return visit, moderately complex Medicare patient, a \$50 reimbursement, 10 percent penalty, that is a \$5 penalty for that visit. And if you are seeing four patients an hour, that is a \$20 penalty for that hour's work. You see the balance. If you do it, we will pay you \$2 because we think it is worth that. If you don't do it, it will cost you \$20.

And we wonder why our senior citizens call up to get an appointment with a physician when they get covered on Medicare and no one wants to see them? This is the way we behave. We cut their pay. We can't agree amongst ourselves to do something rational to protect physician reimbursement rates at the end of the year. And by the way, we want to add this thing on top, this secondary insult on top of the others.

I urge Congress to not focus on the transactional; focus on the transformational. What do you need? If you are going to move from a system we have today, which is based on a written prescription, to a true electronic prescription environment, who do you need on your side on that? I am telling you, if you don't have the doctor on your side, it is not going to happen. Yes, you can frighten and cajole and preach all you want, but it is important for Congress to remember that this transformation will take place faster, with much more expediency, if we will take the time and trouble to instruct, educate, provide for, provide the proper support and proper compensation for our physician community if they undertake it, embracing this type of technology.

One of the things we are going to hear a lot of as we go through this Presidential election year, terms like "universal coverage," "universal access," and they don't mean the same thing, so it is important to spend a few minutes differentiating between the two. We will hear talk about mandates and whether they are a good thing or a bad thing. We will hear "individual mandates," "State mandates," "employer mandates," and it is important to spend a few minutes discussing the differences between those terms as well.

Let's deal with the concept of universality of medical care. That is one that many people in this body and many people on the Presidential trail today say they want to see.

Now, universal coverage, universal access. Universal access, everyone has insurance whether they want to do it or not. It is a little tough to do that in a free society, but yes, we can write laws that can make that happen. See the discussion on mandates in a few minutes. But universal coverage is one of the options available to us.

Universal access would say that everyone has access, everyone has the

ability to go out and purchase an affordable policy. And if they can't afford it, they have the ability to access a funding mechanism that will provide the type of premium support, the type of premium assistance to get them that coverage. And that debate will occur over this next year.

Universal coverage, universal access.

On the whole issue of mandates, and this is an important concept for people to understand, is it better to say this is law, this is something you have to have, or is it better to create the types of programs that people will actually want to have? Let's think about that for just a minute.

What does the term "individual mandates" mean? It means a law is passed by a legislative body, in this case the Federal Government, although it has been tried at the State level. An individual mandate means that everyone has to go out and buy insurance. In my home State of Texas, we have that with our automobile policies now. Everyone has to buy an automobile policy. With an individual mandate, that is how we would achieve universal coverage. You have to buy insurance, and if you don't, there is a penalty to be paid of some sort.

In the State of Massachusetts, in really what I consider a very bold attempt to provide coverage for everyone, an individual mandate was instituted. It hasn't worked out exactly as planned, and some of the difficulties encountered in Massachusetts were cited in California as a reason why that State's plan for universal coverage was recently defeated in the California State Senate. Many people looked at the option, or the requirement, I should say, of buying insurance and said, I don't know. And then remember the law of supply and demand. We increase the demand because we mandate it, you have to do it. What happens? The price goes up, and as a consequence some people looked at that and said, I really can't afford that. I will pay the fine rather than buying the insurance. Truly a perverse incentive.

So some of the support for the concept being talked about in California found itself lacking when faced with that equation in another part of the country. How can you consider putting an individual mandate on when it drives costs up and people find themselves in a position that they would rather pay the fine for not having the insurance than they would to purchase the insurance itself?

When we talk of mandates, and there have been several studies done on this, think back to the 1960s. The United States Congress put a mandate out there that every motorcycle rider in the country would have to wear a helmet. They reversed that mandate and put that obligation, correctly, in the court of the States to make that decision. And the reason Congress reversed that decision was the hue and cry and outcry from across the land from mo-

torcycle riders saying that you can't make me wear a helmet in a free society, and Congress eventually backed down. And so that was kind of an unpleasant experience with mandates.

Most States do have an individual mandate for automobile insurance, and they get good compliance with that. But it is interesting, one of the States with the best compliance has no individual mandate. So mandates don't always equal better compliance, and nowhere is that more evident than our current tax structure.

□ 2015

The Internal Revenue Service, which collects our taxes, there's a mandate, an individual mandate on every person who earns above a certain income level that you will pay taxes. You will pay a percentage of that in taxes and, in fact, everyone knows, it's no secret that if you don't pay that tax the punishment is going to be sure, it's going to be swift, and it's going to be extremely unpleasant.

We've got 15 percent of the country right now that lacks health insurance. Can we get improvement on that number by putting an individual mandate on?

Look at the case with the Internal Revenue Service. A severe mandate, severe penalties for noncompliance, and what is our compliance rate with the Federal income tax? It's about 85 percent. In other words, 15 percent don't comply. So this requires a good deal more study and a good deal more attention than just simply making that leap of faith and saying everyone needs insurance, therefore, there will be an individual mandate that everyone will have insurance.

Again, there were some problems with the cost structure when that was tried in Massachusetts to the point that the people in California, the State Senators in California, when they looked at that, said, maybe that's not the best idea for us.

Well, once we determine what the overall goal is, then perhaps our path will be a little bit easier. Certainly we want to democratize our health care in a way that preserves choice, makes certain that patient focus is the central theme, and we want to continue to promote innovation, because, remember, America is the country that is known for medical and scientific innovation.

Well, what about the concept of creating products that people actually want? Do we have a model? Do we have a template that we can look at to perhaps discuss that a little further?

And, in fact, we do. We passed a bill on the floor of this House, late in the night of November 22, 2003, called the Medicare Modernization Act which provided for a prescription drug benefit for citizens on Medicare who had not had one previously. It was called Medicare part D.

What's been the experience with Medicare part D? And I will stipulate

that there were people on both sides of the aisle in this House, there were people on the right who were critical of the Medicare part D program, and there was certainly no shortage of critics on the left who were critical of the Medicare part D program.

But as that program was instituted and has now been up and running for over 2 years, what lessons have we learned from Medicare part D? Well, we've learned that more than 90 percent of the persons who were eligible for that coverage have, in fact, enrolled.

Wait a minute. With the IRS, with severe and certain and sure penalties, we only get 85 percent compliance. With Medicare part D, by creating programs that had value to patients we've got 90 percent compliance, and 80 percent are happy with the program. If we go back to our friends at the IRS and say, what's the percentage of people that are happy with the way our tax system is administered, I don't think the number is 80 percent.

Consider that when we passed that bill on the floor of this House in the early morning hours of November 22, or actually I guess it started on the night of November 22. It was in the early morning of November 23 that the bill actually passed. Consider at that time we were told by the best actuaries at the Office of Management and Budget and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services that it was going to cost about \$37 a month for that coverage. What has the experience been? The average plan costs less than \$24 a month now, over 2 years into the program.

So this is a Federal program that relies on some competitive forces and relies on some participation of the private sector, and, in fact, has reined in some of the increase in spending that was feared to accompany this program by restoring the savings and incentives and leveraging competition and getting the buy-in from the patients themselves. What would be the more favorable trajectory? Force people into a program, difficult to do in a free society, and your compliance rate may not be exactly what you want it. Or would it be better to create a program of value that also relied a little bit on some competitive forces to keep that cost down.

Now, one of the great debates that was had on the floor of this House a year ago when the current majority party took over was the whole concept of reforming the part D benefit. And we don't hear much about that anymore. They weren't successful. One of the big proponents, or one of the big themes that was proposed was to cause or ask or demand that the Secretary of Health and Human Services negotiate drug prices with drug companies. I will just tell you from a lifetime in health care that HHS or CMS, they don't negotiate prices, they set prices. That's what they do. And many of us on my side of the aisle felt that that would be counterintuitive to the way this pro-

gram was working, and in fact, it was working.

And, you know, Madam Speaker, and this is only partly in jest, but if we wanted to create a program where the head of a Cabinet agency, an agency secretary was to negotiate, maybe we ought to look to the Department of Education and ask the Secretary of Education to negotiate prices with college deans for the cost of higher education. That might be a better trajectory. I'm waiting to see that legislation come forward from the majority.

But, nevertheless, part D was left untouched last January. I'm grateful that it was, and I think again the numbers speak for themselves. This is a template. This is a model, this is a program that we perhaps should seek to duplicate because it created a condition of value, that consumers, that patients, that individuals wanted, and the compliance rates are high. The satisfaction rates are high. And, most importantly, seniors now are getting the medicines they need to keep them out of the hospitals and out of the doctors offices, and the overall cost for delivering Medicare, while it is still extremely high and still likely unsustainable over time, it has at least moderated or ameliorated over the last couple of years. In fact, the trustees' report from June of last year that came out said the bad news is Medicare is still going to be broke. The good news is it's going to go broke a year later than what we told you before. So seeing the beginnings of that cost savings and how that can change the practice of medicine and the delivery of health care in this country, that's a powerful anecdote for people to consider.

One of the things that we talked about is the speed at which information will come to us in the future. And there's no question that it's increasing every day. Most of us wear a BlackBerry on our belt that has more computing power than the big computers on Apollo 13. It's astounding what's happened with computer power over the last two or three decades. And we hear a lot about the improvements of health information technology, the improvements in the platforms and what that improvement can mean to patient care, what it can mean to the practice of medicine, what it can mean to bringing down the cost of medicine. And, indeed, these are powerful influences.

Madam Speaker, I will tell you I haven't always been a big proponent of things like electronic health records. But as my experience on the ground in Louisiana in 2005 and early 2006 taught, getting to visit the medical records room at Charity Hospital shortly after it had been dewatered, I didn't know that dewatered was a verb, but, nevertheless, that's what the Corps of Engineers told us they did, and indeed, these flooded basements were now available for people to go into, the scene in the medical records room, the medical records that were damaged by

the high water, damaged by the chemicals that circulated in that water, the black mold that was going on these paper records made it abundantly clear that these were records that could never provide useful information to a physician or a patient again. And how much more powerful would it have been to have that information available electronically, available to be transmitted from New Orleans to Dallas or Houston or wherever the person had had to travel to after that terrible storm and in the ensuing aftermath. It changed my thinking on electronic health records and electronic medical records.

But I will also tell you, I'm concerned about the Federal Government's ability to create the structure that people feel is necessary for that day to dawn where electronic health records are, indeed, the standard. And I say that because when I came here 5 years ago, the discussion was, the Federal Government is going to create those platforms. It is going to create the software. It is going to create the type of information technology that private industry will then follow the leadership of the Federal Government. And, Madam Speaker, it's 5 years later and we still don't have it.

I did have the opportunity to speak to a CEO of one of the larger insurance companies in this country a few months ago. In fact, he talked at a symposium that was put on by Health Affairs downtown the first of November. He talked about within his company he has 45,000 employees, and fully 15 percent were employed in the development of software. Fifteen percent were employed in the development of that information technology architecture that we all talk about here on the floor of this House. In fact, he said if his software development portion was a stand-alone company, it would be one of the largest software development companies in the United States of America. And yet it is a single branch of a single private insurance company. And more to the point, they had developed algorithms, mostly from financial data, but they had tens of thousands of conditions, medical conditions that they had studied, again using purely financially data, and they had found some things that actually seemed clinically very relevant and certainly important for a company that might be interested in holding down the costs of administering health care. They found that if they paid for A and B, C was very likely to follow, and guess what? They were very likely to have to pay for D, and D cost a lot of money. The example given to me was of treating an individual with a heart attack. If that individual with a heart attack, if they did not anticipate an episode of depression following that individual's illness, it would very likely interfere with their rehabilitative efforts after they got out of the hospital, and so their likelihood of a long term return to health and productivity was curtailed.

And again, they found this by analyzing financial data, that if they put someone in the hospital for a heart attack, successfully treated them, discharged them, but did not anticipate depression, they were very likely at some point to pay for a hospitalization for depression, pay for treatment of another heart attack because they didn't comply with the regimen after they got out of the hospital. Very powerful information. And as someone who spent 25 years in clinical medicine, I will tell you, that's just exactly the type of information that would be extremely valuable to the clinician.

Well, what's the problem? The Federal Government said 5 years ago that it was going to develop the platforms that private industry would then take up and follow, and we haven't done it. And yet here's an individual from the private sector excitedly telling me about what his company is doing and the benefits that they've found. And you have to ask yourself, would it not perhaps be better for the Federal Government to allow that to happen, allow a company to develop that type of software, to develop those types of programs, to perhaps bring the clinicians now and begin to populate some of those fields with clinical data so that they could get even better and more accurate information.

And I asked that individual, well, what would it take? What would you need to see from us to allow this to work better for you? And, no great surprise, he talked about the things that we talk about on the floor of this House all the time. He said, it wouldn't hurt to have some regulatory reform. It wouldn't hurt to have some reform in what are known as the Stark laws that prevent hospitals and physicians from doing too much together for fear of some type of unjust enrichment. We would need some modifications to some of the privacy laws. And at the end of the day, too, we're going to need some safe harbors with liability. But if you provided us that, we could really take this to the next level. And we won't. And yet they're ready to make the investment and they're already making the investment, even without any Congressional activity, because they find it delivers value to their patients, to their physicians and, yes, to their bottom line because they're a profit-oriented company.

What is the difficulty with this body recognizing that that type of activity is going on all around us, and maybe we don't need to reinvent the wheel here on the floor of this House. Maybe we just need to wake up and look around at what is happening literally just across the street.

□ 2030

Now, some of the other things I want to talk about this evening before I run out of time, I have already alluded to the problem with supply and demand in our physician workforce.

Just a little over 2 years ago when he was finishing up his term as Chairman

of the Federal Reserve Bank, Alan Greenspan came and talked to a group of us one morning and the inevitable question about Medicare came up: How are we going to pay for it in the future? What is it going to cost? And the Chairman was concerned as well, but he did say, When the time comes, I think Congress will make the hard decisions that Congress is required to make so that the program will continue. He stopped, and then he went on to say, What concerns me more is will there be anyone there to deliver the care when you need it?

And we've already talked about some of the problems that are inherent in the formula by which Medicare reimburses physicians.

And one of the things I don't think I can stress enough on the floor of this House, because I don't think Members understand this, they think, well, that's just Medicare; that's just a part of the practice of medicine. That's not the whole story. Well, it is about half the story. Actually, the Federal Government does pay for about half of the health care expenditure in this country, if you go back to the first moments of this discussion.

But the other thing is that the rates by which Medicare reimburses for health care informed the rates that are set by the private insurance companies in this country.

So indirectly, we have a system of Federal price controls on medicine in this country today. And that's why, when we ratchet down the reimbursement rate for physicians on Medicare, and everyone in the body is quick to say, Oh, well, doctors make plenty of money. There's no need to worry about that. Remember, also, we are affecting not just Medicare, over which we have jurisdiction, but we are also affecting those reimbursements in the private sector as well because there is not a level playing field between provider and third-party payer. That's one of the problems inherent in our system now. People that go to the physician don't actually pay the physician; they pay the insurance companies. Same with the employers. They don't actually pay the physician; they pay the insurance company.

So that interposition of a third-party intermediary has created a good deal of the tensions and a good deal of the problems that we see today.

But we must not forget, that is a system that is there, that is a system that is in place, and when we make a decision about Medicare reimbursement rates, the ripple effect throughout the health care world in the reimbursement is significant, it's profound, and it is immediate.

One of the things that I feel very strongly about is that we do need to help people know what they're buying and what they're getting in health care. And one of the bills that I introduced early in the first session, the last year of this Congress, was H.R. 1666, which does deal with health care transparency.

It sets a floor of a level of transparency that should be available in every State. Many States have already undertaken this work. My home State of Texas has, and, in fact, patients can go to the Internet to a Web site. It's texaspricepoint.org, abbreviation txpricepoint.org, and they can get information about the hospitals in their county. Most of it is pricing information. Other information, other useful clinical information such as length of stay is also available.

At some point I expect there will also be the transparency about things like complication rates and infection rates, but it's still a work in progress. Other States have done similar activities. The State of Florida with its RxCompare. People can compare prices for different prescriptions, which has been useful for the people of Florida.

What the intent of H.R. 1666 was to not provide a Federal standard but at least to provide a level of transparency below which States should not go. And I would like to see this House of Representatives at some time take on this problem, because I think it is one that is extremely important.

And it does lead in to the other issue of how States and hospitals report complications, such as infections. And, again, I do think there is a role for Congress, I do think there is a role for the Federal Government, not so much in writing that legislation State-by-State, but providing the framework by which the reporting can occur to allow a Federal agency such as the Centers for Disease Control the ability then to aggregate that data and provide useful information back in real-time to the States and to the hospitals and to the physicians about infection rates in their particular areas.

Most epidemiologists will tell you the chance to measure is the chance to cure, or the chance to prevent, in the case of infections. And the metrics, just the activity of undergoing the metrics in those conditions, will often-times lead to improvements that were unanticipated at the beginning of that program of metrics.

Other legislation that's out there that deals with our physician workforce, H.R. 2583, H.R. 2584, both bills designed to affect individuals earlier in their career, in the health care workforce even prior to the entrance into medical school, the ability to provide a little bit more flexibility and a little bit more balance in the health profession scholarship, a little bit more flexibility in loan forgiveness and tax incentives for individuals who are going to medical school and will agree to practice in medically underserved areas in high-need specialties, and that is essentially primary care, also fields like OB/GYN and general surgery, to provide a little bit more flexibility to help incent people who are willing to make those types of decisions. And there is significant lifestyle decisions that they are making to undertake those type of careers.

And then there's another program to increase the number of primary care residencies that are available, again, in high-need areas, medically underserved areas for specialties that are in high demand, and, again, we are principally talking about the primary care specialties.

The barriers for entry for a medium-sized to moderate-sized hospital to start up a residency program are essentially costs. And some of those start-up costs in this legislation can be provided for in a loan. And there will be a loan that is paid back so that money will recycle, and the overall return to the taxpayer is increased that way. It will allow those hospitals the ability to set up a residency program where none has existed in the past. And I can think of many, many hospitals in my home State of Texas that could benefit from that type of activity.

And one of the things when people study how physician manpower is distributed, you can say a lot of things about doctors, but sometimes we are not very imaginative and we don't tend to go very far from where we trained, and there are some valid reasons for that. You get comfortable with referral patterns. People know you from your training program, so they're apt to refer to you. There's a degree of comfort there. And myself, for example, I went into practice less than 25 miles from where I did my training. A lot of doctors do follow that same sort of trajectory.

So if we can move the training programs into the areas that need the physicians, it may then follow that those physicians who train in those programs will end up staying in those medically underserved areas.

It's difficult for me to come to the floor of the House and talk about things related to health care and at least not mention some of the problems that we face with our medical justice system in this country. And I know there are lots of people out there with a lot of different ideas, caps on non-economic damages, medical courts, early offer arbitration. The time has come for us to have a serious discussion to put some of the partisan differences aside, to put some of the special interests aside and have a rational discussion about how we can meaningfully impact that problem in this country.

My home State of Texas passed rather significant legislation 4 years ago dealing with the issue of caps on non-economic damages. It was patterned after an earlier California law, the Medical Injury Reform Act of 1975. It was passed out in California, which put a \$250,000 cap on noneconomic damages. The Texas legislation was a little bit different. Instead of a single cap, there were three different caps, each capped at \$250,000, but the aggregate was \$750,000 compensation available for noneconomic damages. It has worked very well in my home State of Texas.

The year that I left practice to come to Congress, we were in crisis. We had

gone from 17 medical liability insurers down to two. You certainly don't get much in the way of competition when you only have two insurers, and as a consequence, the price for those premiums was ever escalating. Now we have had many insurers come back to the State. They've come back to the State without an increase in premiums. And, in fact, Texas Medical Liability Trust, my last insurer of record, has returned, the last time I checked, 22 percent reductions and dividends back to their physicians that they cover. And that's significant because, remember, these premiums were going up by 10, 15, 20 or 25 percent year over year, and then on the past 4 years, they've not only stabilized, but they've come down 22 percent.

Small and medium-sized hospitals that self-insure for medical liability have had to put less in reserve against a bad judgment, and as a consequence, there has been more money to spend on just exactly the kinds of things you want your community hospital to be spending its money on; things like nurses' salaries, capital improvement, investing in their capital infrastructure.

So it is a good news story from the State of Texas in terms of what we've been able to do with liability in my home State, and I'm not going to say that's the only answer, but I think it is a very good answer. I introduced legislation, H.R. 3509, to essentially provide the Texas legislation on a national scale.

In fact, we had a lot of talk about the budget earlier tonight. Last year, I offered that bill to the Budget Committee because the Congressional Budget Office scored it as nearly a \$4 billion savings over 5 years. I realize that's not much when you are talking about a \$3 trillion budget, but that's \$4 billion. That's a significant savings, and I was willing to donate that to the Congress.

Take up that concept, write it into law in your budget resolution, and let's get something done to stabilize medical liability prices in this country, not so much for my home State of Texas, as we've already done it. But what about Pennsylvania? What about New Jersey? What about Maryland? What about New York? Maybe those areas could benefit from some of that same type of thinking as well.

Well, suffice it to say that that concept was not accepted, but I will extend the offer to members of the Budget Committee on both sides of the aisle that \$4 billion in savings is still available to you. H.R. 3509 is the bill, and I will be happy to relinquish all ownership rights and donate that to the greater good of the United States Congress and the people of the United States.

One last piece of legislation that I want to mention, and it was introduced right at the end of the year, H.R. 4190. We talk on the floor of this House a lot about the problem of the uninsured. In

fact, I've spent some time talking about it this evening.

H.R. 4190 isn't a new insurance program. It isn't a new expansion of Medicare or Medicaid or SCHIP. What H.R. 4190 does is take the concept of being uninsured and extend that privilege to everyone who serves in the United States Congress. H.R. 4190 would remove us, as Members of Congress, from the Federal Employee Health Benefits plan, provide us a voucher, if you will, to go out and purchase insurance on the open market. And I can't help but think, if we were put in the position of many Americans who are faced with those decisions about having to buy health care coverage on their own out in the open market, perhaps we would get a little more creative about the unequal treatment from the Tax Code for employer-derived insurance versus an individually owned policy. Perhaps we would get a little bit more creative about providing a little more flexibility in a health savings account.

Perhaps we would get a little bit more flexible even if we are of the mindset that said, Well, we are going to extend our single-payer health care to more and more people. Well, what if Members of Congress had the same problem finding a doctor that your senior citizens at home tonight are having when they call up the doctor they've seen all of their lives and are told, Sorry, we can't take any more Medicare patients?

Well, H.R. 4190 is an intriguing concept. I haven't had much interest as far as cosponsorship is concerned, but it's still out there. It's still available, and I welcome Members from both sides of the aisle to think about that, to look at that, and see if we couldn't forge a common bond and a good-faith effort to really do something for the people who lack insurance coverage in this country or the people who are fearful that they will lose their insurance company if their job changes or their financial situation changes.

There's a lot of things out there on the horizon, Madam Speaker. There is a lot of good that this Congress can do. I think it is important for me to make the point one last time that medicine is evolving in a big way. It's going to change significantly in our lifetime.

□ 2045

Congress can participate in that evolution, and actually participate and be a force for good if we're only willing to pick up and take on the work that the American people have sent us here to do.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your indulgence.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, we're here this evening as part of the Speaker's 30-Something Working Group, and I'm going to be joined by some other members of that group who will be familiar faces to our colleagues who have participated in these Special Orders presentations.

We're going to talk specifically tonight about the budget that the President dropped on our doorstep on Monday. Now, this was an exciting series of days for the American people. We, of course, had Super Bowl Sunday, one of the most exciting Super Bowls we've ever seen. We had Super Tuesday last night, very exciting for all the American people to watch the unfolding for the Presidential election for this year. And in the middle of that, we had Monday.

And what happened on Monday? Most Americans say, well, not a whole lot happened, but in Congress a lot happened because the President put before us a \$3.1-trillion budget. Now, the American people may say, well, that sounds like a lot of money, and it is a lot of money. But what does it look like? What does \$3.1 trillion look like? Our colleagues may be interested to see that. This, Madam Speaker, is what \$3.1 trillion looks like. This is what the President sent us, both electronically and in paper format. This is a very big document, the entire Federal budget as proposed by the administration for the coming fiscal year 2009.

I'm going to talk a little bit about what's in this budget, but before I did that I wanted to take a little walk down memory lane for our colleagues. And many don't need to be reminded of this fact, but in the last 4 years of the previous administration we had four consecutive budget surpluses. And those surpluses, at the end of that administration and the beginning of the current administration, budget surpluses were forecast as far as the eye can see. And there was every reason to expect that the budget was going to be balanced throughout the next administration. The projection over 10 years by the Congressional Budget Office was \$5.5 trillion of budget surplus over 10 years. That was the projection.

Well, now we're 7 years, going on 8 years, into this new administration. This is the eighth and final budget that President Bush is going to send to this Congress. And what has been the outcome of this \$5.5 trillion surplus? And we talked about the Presidential election, Madam Speaker, and I would remind my colleagues about the debate of the 2000 election. The number one issue that was discussed in that election was, what are we going to do with this surplus? We have an enormous budget surplus, \$5.5 trillion, and all the ways that that money could be used. Are we going to pay down the debt? Are we going to shore up Social Security, put that money into the trust fund? How are we going to use this enormous surplus that's facing us over the next 10 years? That was the debate in the year 2000.

Well, in this Presidential election year we're not having that debate anymore because, you see, Madam Speaker, that surplus is gone. That surplus was gone in the first year of this administration. Instead of \$5.5 trillion of budget surplus over a 10-year period, we've had \$3.5 trillion of deficit spending over the first 7 years of this administration. And I'm going to talk in some detail about what this fiscal year 2009 budget says, and it includes an enormous amount of deficit spending.

What we have before us is a budget that for the eighth time in 8 years continues enormous deficit spending. But we can't lose sight of the fact that when this administration first came into office, that wasn't the projection. That wasn't the way it was supposed to be and that wasn't the way it had to be. But, unfortunately, decisions were made in a fiscally irresponsible manner, and now before us is a budget that is \$407 billion over budget. We have a \$407 billion deficit for one year, fiscal year 2009, the third highest single year budget deficit ever submitted to the Congress behind only the budget that was sent to us last year by this President, which was \$410 billion, and the 2004 budget also submitted to this Congress by the President.

So we have a record here of destroying projected surpluses and creating record deficits. \$9.2 trillion of debt, Madam Speaker, faces this country before this \$400 plus billion deficit that's been submitted to us.

We can't continue to charge things to the credit card. The way the previous administration turned the all-time record deficits of the 1980s into all-time record surpluses in the 1990s was through pay-as-you-go budget scoring. And that's very simple: It's what we all do in our own home checkbooks. It's what every business in America is forced to do. You have to have money on one side of the ledger to spend it on the other. And if you want to increase spending or if you see a decrease in your revenue, you have to have an offset on the other side to balance it out. Well, those are the rules that this Congress operated under from 1991 through 2001.

Unfortunately, this administration did away, and the Congress, in conjunction at that time in 2001 going into 2002, did away with pay-as-you-go budget scoring. And since that time, before this current session of Congress, every penny that was spent through the Federal Government was charged to the national credit card. We're going to let somebody else worry about it. We're going to transfer this funding to our children, our grandchildren, and our grandchildren's grandchildren. Well, unfortunately, the problem with using credit cards that way is the bill comes due, and the bill has come due, Madam Speaker.

We're going to talk about the coming economic crisis that this country faces, the possibility, if not the certainty, of a recession, and the economic stimulus

package that this Congress came together in a bipartisan way to put forward to help resolve that issue. We're going to save that discussion for a little bit later.

But in the discussion over the budget, it can't be lost that in presenting a \$407 billion deficit budget before this Congress, that this President has made incredibly deep cuts in some very important programs that mean a lot to a lot of people in this country. Veterans programs, veterans health care, slashed. Medicare cut by \$556 billion over 10 years, a cut in Medicare at a time when you're exploding the deficit by \$407 billion. And we're going to talk specifically about the misplaced priorities included in this budget.

Before we go line by line and get into that level of detail, Madam Speaker, I do want to turn it over at this point to my 30-Something colleague, Mr. MURPHY from Connecticut, who has joined us and is going to give us some detail on what he views this budget to be.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you very much, Mr. ALTMIRE. I don't want to take too much time because I know the American people are eager to hear your detailed line-by-line analysis of the President's budget, so let me be brief.

You hit it on the head here. I mean, this budget that the President has proposed to us is the worst of both worlds. It cuts spending on programs that everyday middle-class families and seniors and the disabled use to simply grab hold of the apparatus of opportunity that has been stolen from them, and at the same time, it continues to spend wildly in other parts of the budget. It continues to give away massive, unjustified tax breaks for the richest 1 percent of Americans that aren't even being asked for by many of those people. And it results in a pretty ugly picture over the next several years for this country if we were to adopt the budget that the President put before us.

It would mean massive cuts, as you've already laid out, to health care programs, to law enforcement programs. And, Mr. ALTMIRE, this budget has got a 100-percent cut to the COPS program. The COPS program is the acronym for the community policing initiative that was started by President Clinton over 10 years ago. It is one of the most successful law enforcement programs that this Nation has ever seen. Any Member of this House on the Republican side of the aisle or the Democratic side of the aisle can just go down to their local police department, any one of them, and ask their local cops whether or not community policing has worked. It has. That's not me saying it, that's not just the statistics saying it, that's the experiences of thousands of community policemen who have been on the beat for years.

Now, what's happened over time is the Republican Congress year after year slashed and burned that line item, and so many communities either had

to take cops off the community policing beat or start picking up the tab themselves. That means increased property taxes for people because somebody has to pay for it. And this budget that we're looking at right now takes out the entire amount for community policing. I guess I just don't understand how you justify that. I mean, I would love to have somebody from the administration on this floor try to explain in a commonsense way why they don't believe that the experiences of thousands of communities and thousands of police officers is true, which is that community policing works.

But here's the other side of this equation, Mr. ALTMIRE, and I know we're going to talk about this. At the same time, it's not like we're getting anywhere for all of the cuts in this budget because this budget envisions the Federal deficit continuing to explode. Now, this is a small little chart, you probably can't see it, but this is a pretty dramatic, but accurate, representation of what's going to happen to the Federal debt.

In 2001, we had about \$5.8 trillion in Federal debt, and you can at least see that it only is going in one direction. Under the President's budget, by 2013 we're going to owe \$13.3 trillion to foreign nations, Mr. ALTMIRE.

We are cutting funding for programs that matter, we are spending money wildly in other parts of the budget, primarily in the defense budget, and what we get in the end is a Federal budget that is more out of whack, more out of balance than it ever has been, and families who are struggling, amidst this economic slowdown, who are going to see less services and less help from their government.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I'm sure the gentleman from Connecticut would agree that it's ironic, given the fact that it was a week ago that we sat here together in this Chamber and listened to the President's State of the Union Address. And I liked some of what the President had to say on fiscal responsibility, challenging the Congress, challenging his administration to take the budget and make tough decisions and be fiscally responsible.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Let me stop you there for a second, because I liked what he said, too. But I would have liked it if he had said it for the last 7 years of his administration. I mean, you know, I hope it wasn't lost on anyone watching that State of the Union speech that for the last seven Congresses, as the Republican-led majority has spiraled spending out of control, has added on political earmark after political earmark, the President was absolutely silent on that matter. And it is just incredibly convenient that in the year in which the Democrats take control of the House of Representatives is the first year that we hear in a State of the Union speech the President talking about grants in Federally approved budgets.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Well, and again, the things that were said as far as fiscal responsibility made some sense, and I was happy to hear them. And you're right, we had not heard them over the past 7 years, and that led to the deficits that the gentleman and I have both talked about.

Now, we sat here and we heard that. And I thought that hopefully that would translate to the President submitting a budget where the actions actually matched the words that we had heard a week ago. Unfortunately, it didn't. The President, a week later, submits to Congress a budget that's \$407 billion out of balance. And we're living in a time when the second largest line item in the Federal budget that is before us is the interest on the national debt, which is \$9.2 trillion. The second largest line item in this budget is interest on the national debt. Now, that alarms me, Mr. MURPHY, and I'm sure it alarms you. And I would want to do something about that if I was submitting a budget before Congress. And I would want to show, having just talked about fiscal responsibility, that I was committed to fiscal responsibility. But, unfortunately, we have a budget that makes all the wrong decisions because it is fiscally irresponsible, it does have misplaced priorities, it does move in the wrong direction as far as increasing the deficit at a time when we already have a record debt, but it cuts programs like Medicare and Medicaid.

This is at a time when more and more Americans are struggling to afford health care, especially senior citizens. And to propose a budget that cuts Medicare by \$556 billion over a 10-year period, at the same time freezing payments to hospitals, to nursing homes, to hospices, to home health agencies, it just doesn't make any sense because health care costs aren't going to stop. Health care costs have been going up above the rate of inflation every year for as far as anyone can remember.

□ 2100

The technology that's used for health care, the increase in the amount of baby boomers that are qualifying for the Medicare program for the first time this year, in 2008. The costs of Medicare are exploding. So to just say we are going to cut Medicare over the next 10 years by \$556 billion doesn't mean health care is going to be less expensive, fewer people are going to qualify for Medicare, and fewer people are going to use the program. And certainly it doesn't mean that home health agencies, hospices, and hospitals are going to have fewer expenses just because we are going to be reimbursing them.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ALTMIRE. I would.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Let's hammer that home in a real world way for people. What does it mean when the President's budget reduces payments

to nursing homes? In Connecticut, we have had a real crisis with a particular nursing home group that has gotten a lot of attention in the paper, Mr. ALTMIRE, in the last several months regarding some really inexcusable conditions in those nursing homes, low levels of staffing, no remediation when violations had been found. And that problem is not going to get better if the solution from the Federal Government is to cut the funding that goes to those nursing homes. These nursing homes are already stretched very thin. There already isn't enough staff to cover the residents and make sure that seniors that are staying there are living under safe and humane conditions at all times in some places.

This cut that the President is talking about in the cut and reimbursement rates to nursing homes is going to have a direct effect on the care that many thousands, hundreds of thousands of seniors get in this country. Your loved ones, your neighbors, their care is going to be compromised by this.

The safety of your community is potentially going to be compromised by a zeroing out of the COPS budget. Communities will be less safe because there will be fewer community police on the beat. Those are the real world consequences of the budget that the President is putting before us.

And the question is just a matter of choices. And that's what I hope that every Member of this House goes out and endeavors to ask over the next month or so as we debate this Bush budget, which is are you sure that your community wants to spend another \$70 billion in Iraq rather than put cops on the beat or put staff in your grandmother's nursing home? Are you sure that the constituents in your district want to give away another massive tax break to the richest 1 percent of Americans instead of putting cops on the beat or putting staff in your grandmother's nursing home? Those are the questions that people are going to have to ask. And I think, Mr. ALTMIRE, there's only one answer to that in any district in this country whether you are represented by a Republican or a Democrat.

Mr. ALTMIRE. And the gentleman knows that there are three legs to this stool that we are talking about. One is the increase in spending leading to the deficit. One is the misplaced priorities of the cuts to programs that are critically important. The third is what's left out of this budget that we all know we have to deal with, and I'm going to save that discussion for a little bit later as we walk through some of these programs. But the full cost of the Iraq war and the cost of the alternative minimum tax relief for this year are not included in this budget. So a \$407 billion deficit without even including probably the two largest items that we are going to have to face in the next year, we'll get to that point, but there are a lot of issues here.

When I talk to people when I go back home in the district, I hear a lot about

entitlement spending, and when I go home, I think I can make a pretty good case that Medicare is important and we shouldn't be cutting Medicare at a time when the number of people qualifying for Medicare is rising exponentially and health care costs are going up. I can make a pretty good case, I think, for that. But I will still hear people say, You know what? I'm not on Medicare. That's an entitlement program. I don't care about that. Cut it. It's a boondoggle. Just cut it. I do hear people say that. They're wrong, but they say it. Well, there are some things in this budget that nobody, nobody in their right mind could justify freezes or cuts in these types of programs. And maybe our colleagues are out there and they say, Show me. What are you talking about? What is in the budget that we shouldn't cut?

Well, how about research, health care research through the National Institutes of Health? I think that's something that affects everybody. If you're not directly affected by health care research, you certainly have somebody in your family or you have somebody, a loved one or a friend, that is affected. And let's talk about the type of research that we are talking about.

This budget freezes funding for life-saving medical research at the NIH, National Institutes of Health, regarding diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, cancer, and heart disease. At a time when our medical technology in this country is greater than anywhere else in the world and our research and our ability to find treatments and cures for these diseases exceeds any time in the history of the planet, we are going to cut funding for medical research for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, cancer, and heart disease? I think, Mr. MURPHY, that we make a pretty good case that that's not a cut that should happen.

This budget also slashes funding, and this is inexcusable, slashes funding by \$433 million, 7 percent of the overall budget for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, responsible for infectious disease control, prevention programs, and health promotion. So we hear a lot about the avian flu, the bird flu, the possibility of a pandemic through diseases, whether it be a terroristic issue or just something we can't control on the health side. That may be the number one public health threat facing the country right now, the possibility of a pandemic flu, a worldwide spread of some disease, and we're going to take this opportunity to cut the Centers for Disease Control specifically for infectious diseases by 7 percent? That's what we are going to cut in this budget when we are adding \$407 billion to the national debt for 1 year? I think it's inexcusable. So I really don't think there is anybody that I am going to run into in my district that's going to say that's a good idea.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I just want to share a story with you, if you

will yield, Mr. ALTMIRE. I was getting on a plane this morning to come down to Washington from my district, and an older gentleman recognized me as I was going through the security checkpoint. And he stopped me, and he said, I have written you a letter. I've got a real problem with what you're doing down there. And I said, Talk to me about it.

And he looked me in the eye and started to tear up a little bit, and he said, My wife died of cancer last year. And he said, I can't for the life of me understand why you guys, and he lumped us all together, and I tried to explain the differences a little bit to him, but it was a very emotional moment. He said, I can't understand how you guys are cutting the funding for the programs that might save the life of the next wife who has cancer and instead you're spending money, billions of dollars, overseas on a war that's making us less safe. And he was tearing up.

I mean, this is a personal and emotional issue for so many people in this country, as it should be, because they know. They read about the advances that are being made in science. Whether it be stem cell research or the thousands of other lines of inquiry that are making progress every day in this country, they know that it could be their loved one's disease whose cure or treatment is right around the corner. This should be a personal issue to everyone in this Chamber, and everyone should have to answer that question that you posed as to how on Earth we can pass a budget that freezes medical research that is going to cure diseases and make people better just in order to balloon a deficit, just in order to fund a war, just in order to fund massive tax cuts for the wealthy. The priorities are just so screwed up, and any person in this world can tell a story of a loved one who would be hurt by those cuts.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Absolutely. And I thank the gentleman for that story. And I've had similar circumstances in my district where people wonder why we are cutting Alzheimer's funding, where they have a loved one who has struggled with that disease.

I also want to talk about education and what this budget does for education. I think just about anyone should agree that's a national priority. Few things in the budget are more important than education. Well, what does this budget do?

This budget freezes education funding, which results in cuts in real terms. And instead of investing in innovation in the classroom, the budget eliminates, eliminates, the \$267 million program providing grants to States for classroom technology. It freezes the \$179 million mathematics and science partnerships. At a time when we're struggling to compete in the global economy with countries like China and others that are investing heavily in science education, we are cutting it. At least the President is proposing cutting it in his budget.

It freezes targeted improvement and achievement in math and science programs that do that. And instead of making college more affordable, the budget eliminates, completely eliminates, supplemental education opportunity grants; the Perkins loan program, one of the staples of student assistance for higher education in this country, eliminates; and the Leveraging Education Assistance Partnership program, the LEAP program, which many of my colleagues know is necessary to provide financial support specifically targeted to needy students who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to pursue a higher education. These are the programs that are being eliminated under this budget. Not frozen, not cut, but eliminated.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. At the very time, Mr. ALTMIRE, where our country is most in need of a skilled workforce. I mean you know it, because you do the same tours that I do to manufacturing facilities and work-sites, that every company in our district is screaming to us, Do something about the workforce. I can hire people if you make sure that they are trained and educated and ready to work on day one. And so as we're sort of seeing a massive slowdown in this economy, potentially on the way to a recession, this is the very worst time to be cutting back our commitment to higher education programs, to worker and job training programs. And it runs totally counter to what we have been doing here in this Congress.

I mean, we need to remind the President that he signed into law the biggest expansion in college aid since the GI bill, increasing the maximum allowable Pell grant, the direct grant to students by \$500, providing for loan forgiveness to potentially tens or hundreds of thousands of students who go into public service professions; and, most importantly, cutting the interest rate for student loans in half from 6.8 to 3.4 percent, which is going to save the average college student in Connecticut about \$4,000 over the lifetime of the repayment of their loan. That's real dollars when you couple it together with the other benefits that that package had.

And that was a bipartisan success. That was conceived by Democrats. It took Democrats taking control of Congress to put that on the agenda. But there were a lot of our friends on the Republican side of the aisle that voted for it, and there was a President, maybe reluctantly, because he changed his position over time, but there was a President that signed that.

So we have come together as a Congress to recognize the importance of helping kids and helping families pay for the increasing cost of higher education, and we should especially recognize the importance of that when our economy is having trouble getting its engine going. That's when we should be investing in workers. That's when we should be investing in education. And

as you have so ably and accurately outlined, Mr. ALTMIRE, this President's budget does an immediate 180 degree turn on the investments that we have been making and should continue to make in higher education.

Mr. ALTMIRE. And the gentleman from Connecticut represents a district in some ways that is similar to my district. We both have a manufacturing base that has suffered in recent years as a result of the global economy and a variety of factors. And as the gentleman said, at the very time when we should be finding ways to help people that have suffered as a result of these job losses and a loss of manufacturing, find new job training sources, find educational opportunities for our kids so they can stay in our communities instead of having to leave town, a problem that we are struggling with, I think, probably in both of our districts, the President uses this budget as an opportunity to eliminate, not freeze, not cut, but eliminate vocational education.

And he slashes the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program by 45 percent; afterschool programs by 26 percent; teacher quality State grants by \$100 million, which helps incentivize high quality people to go into the teaching profession, people who have other options, who could become doctors or lawyers or chemists or any other profession. We want to incentivize the best and brightest in this country to go into teaching to educate our kids, and everyone knows the importance of what goes along with that. Well, the President proposes cutting the budget by \$100 million for that program.

And, similarly, the gentleman from Connecticut talked about the fact that middle-class workers are seeing their wages stagnate and American jobs have been lost, 17,000 lost jobs just last month. And at this time when we should be finding ways to stimulate the economy and create jobs, instead, the President's budget slashes \$234 million for job training programs.

□ 2115

Again, not to repeat myself, but it is worth pointing out, in an atmosphere of a budget that creates \$407 billion in deficit spending, out of balance, and that slashes employment services more than \$500 million in cuts for Americans looking for work. These are people who are motivated, who want to find jobs, who are looking for work, and he eliminates grants to States to provide employment services for job seekers and employers cutting one-stop career centers. These are all programs that my constituents benefit from that get heavily used in western Pennsylvania. We have had manufacturing losses, and we are trying to find ways to retrain those workers so they can move into other careers, educate themselves so they can stay in western Pennsylvania, and what are we doing? The President is proposing cutting these job training programs. It is just inexcusable.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. It doesn't make sense. It wouldn't make sense even in good economic times, Mr. ALTMIRE, because you know even in the so-called boom years of the 1990s and earlier in this decade, those jobs were still leaving Pennsylvania. Those jobs were still leaving the northwestern part of Connecticut. And you always need to have just that safety net, just enough help for people to bounce back, because the folks that live in our districts, as they do across the Nation, these are proud, proud people. They want a job. They want to work hard. They do not want to be out of work. They do not want to be undertrained. And they are going to take the opportunities that we give them just to be able to bounce back and reenter the economy. That is all we are talking about with these programs. This isn't permanent job assistance. This isn't the welfare state. This is just, listen, your company went out of business, shipped their jobs over to China, shipped their jobs down to Mexico. We're going to help you for a certain period of time learn a new skill so you can get back and be a productive member of society. That is an important project to undertake in any economic time but most critical now when more and more people need that help, Mr. ALTMIRE, that is critical right now.

Mr. ALTMIRE. And the gentleman knows there is another thing that our regions in the country share and that is that we have harsh winters. We have been known to have harsh winters. And another thing that gets cut in this budget inexcusably is home heating assistance. And with regard to energy generally, we have a time where we have all time record energy prices. Families across the country are struggling with finding a way to pay their bills directly related to the price of oil and gas.

And at that time, you would think that the President would view that as a priority in his budget. But instead, it severely cuts assistance to seniors and to families with children in paying their home heating bills through the LIHEAP program, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, very important in my area in western Pennsylvania. He cuts it by \$570 million nationwide, \$19 million of which comes from the State of Pennsylvania. And this is going to force States to reduce the number of households getting help through the LIHEAP program nationwide by 1.2 million people. These are low-income families with children. These are senior citizens that simply don't have the financial ability to pay their heating costs, and we are going to knock, with this budget, 1.2 million of them off the rolls.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Let's view this through a broader prism, and I think if you do, you see that this cut, in particular, is even crueler because we were set up for this moment. I mean, this has been 7 years of an energy policy which has been designed to

do only one thing, a cynic might say, put more money into the hands of the big international oil companies, run by a lot of the friends of the folks that are in this administration. We have had an energy policy which has done nothing, has done nothing, essentially, to decrease the amount that people are paying to gas up their car or heat their homes. We have profits of record magnitudes coming from ExxonMobil and Chevron and BP and all of these major multinational oil conglomerates. We have had a Federal policy, led by this President and probably more accurately led by this Vice President, Vice President CHENEY in his secret, closed-door meetings that have constructed most of this energy policy, that have stolen millions of dollars from American consumers with the tax breaks and regulatory giveaways to the oil industry that have allowed them to continue with no abandon to rip off American consumers. The LIHEAP program is just an added insult to an energy policy which has been taking money out of American taxpayers' pockets and putting it into the oil companies' treasuries.

The LIHEAP program simply says this, this has been the policy of this administration and the Republican Congress for the last 8 years, for the last 6 years, they have said, we're going to do nothing to help you with prices, we're just going to continue to watch energy prices spiral and spiral and spiral and have no short-term or long-term strategy to do anything about it. But on the back end, we're going to help you a little bit with some subsidy dollars for the people in your community that are so hard up they are going to need some help to pay those bills or else they would freeze in their houses, which is what you're talking about. You're talking about people who would potentially freeze in their houses if they don't get a little bit of help from their government to pay for their heating oil bills, largely seniors on fixed incomes in our community. And now not only do we have an administration that is not willing to work with us on reforming our energy policy to break our addiction to foreign-produced oil, to finally get a grip on these spiraling oil prices because we have got an administration that cares more about the pockets of their oil company friends than the pockets of the regular, average, everyday consumers, now also we are taking away that small, tiny little subsidy that prevents people from freezing in their homes because they can't afford to heat it.

When you step back a little bit, when you are right in that budget, everybody here should make it one of their top priorities, whether you live in a cold weather State or a warm weather State, to put the money back for the LIHEAP program. Put the money back for the heating assistance for low-income people. But let's also understand that it is even more egregious given

the fact that we could have done something 10 years ago, 5 years ago, to prevent ourselves from getting into a position where we are continuing to subsidize these big energy companies and have to be reliant on low-income heating assistance to keep people warm in the winters.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I think this is exactly why it is important to have this discussion, to walk through these programs in the budget and talk about what exactly are we talking about when we talk about these draconian cuts that we are facing? And as I said earlier, I have people in my district that say, cut it, cut it, Federal spending, we need to cut it. And we do have an enormous deficit. We have an all time record debt, and we do need to find a way to reduce the Federal deficit. Nobody can disagree with that.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Just to make one point there, the Democratic budget that we passed last year balances the Federal budget in 5 years. For the first time since the Clinton administration, we are going to have a balanced Federal budget. This isn't pie-in-the-sky rhetoric that you are putting out there, Mr. ALTMIRE. The Democratic budget found a way that we passed at the end of last year to invest money in education, in environmental protection, in health care and do it in a responsible way that provides for a balanced budget in 5 years. There is a way to do it, and we are finding it here. We can do it again.

Mr. ALTMIRE. That is exactly where I was going to go. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I'm in your head, Mr. ALTMIRE.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I appreciate that. The fact is the Democrats in this Congress have made the tough decisions. We submitted a budget last year, and I am sure we will do so again this year that achieves balance for the first time since the previous administration. Nobody can disagree that there is room for more cuts. There is room for more reductions. But what we want to do here tonight in this 30-Something Special Order is to talk about the programs that shouldn't be cut, the programs that are critically important to this country that the President has made a decision to reduce.

We talked about Medicare. We talked about life-saving medical research. We talked about the Centers for Disease Control, infectious disease prevention. We talked about education. We talked about the LIHEAP program, home heating energy assistance, and unfortunately the list doesn't end there. It is incredible to think that at a time when we are facing a recession in this country driven by a lot of different factors, but nobody can dispute perhaps the number one driving factor over the past several months and maybe the past few years has been this subprime mortgage issue and home foreclosures and people struggling to afford their mortgages, finding a way to make that

monthly payment. Despite the growing problems in the subprime mortgage crisis, inexplicably this budget that we are talking about tonight cuts loan counseling for those at risk of losing their homes. The name of the program is the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. It cuts it by 87 percent, at a time when we are struggling as a Nation with a subprime crisis that the world has never seen before, or at least America has never seen before. At a time when the crisis is at its most acute point, we are going to cut by 87 percent the program that helps those most at risk, 2 million people in this country at risk of losing their homes. The people most at risk of losing their homes are facing an 87 percent cut. It is ludicrous.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I know we have our freshman colleagues coming in after us, so we are going to give them some room here.

But I want to turn for a few minutes to a subject that you alluded to earlier, and I know you may have some more areas here in which we want to talk about what the devastating cuts are going to do, but I want to talk for a second before we hand it off to some of our other freshman colleagues about what is not in the budget, and you alluded to it before, most importantly, the cost of the war isn't truly reflected in this budget.

In fact, some staff members on the Republican side made a comment earlier today that they even admit that the \$70 billion that is put in this budget is essentially just a downpayment on what we are going to need to perpetuate the costs of this war in Iraq for the rest of the year. And it is just I think becoming impossible for our constituents to really understand why we can't include the costs of this war, whether you agree with it or disagree with it. We will save that for another day. Mr. ALTMIRE, you know where I am on this question. I believe that we should get ourselves out of this mess sooner rather than later in a planned-for way. But while we are there, and while we are still spending money, let's pay for it. Let's budget for it responsibly.

Now, I think you could probably make the argument in the first year or 2 years of this conflict that it was emergency spending, and that there was an argument to be made in the first few years of the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan that we were going to need to borrow some money for that. I have no problem understanding that in emergency circumstances, we are going to have to do some deficit spending. Nobody likes that. But with regard to the economic stimulus package that we are passing, it makes sense in very narrow circumstances to borrow some money in order to get some short-term gain when the spending is on an emergency basis. But we are 5 years into this war now, both in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is not catching us by surprise anymore. It

is not an emergency expenditure anymore. We can plan years in advance for the money that we are spending on this war. There is no justification for this money not being in the budget. What happens is it is just hidden. When you get these figures about how big the deficit is going to be when we pass the President's budget, which we obviously won't do, but if we were to pass the President's budget, that doesn't even take into account the real costs of this war. If I were a taxpayer out there that was for this war, or if I were a taxpayer out there that was against this war, I would be greatly aggrieved, and I think they are greatly aggrieved by the fact that we are not paying for it. Well, we're going to. We're going to. Because these bills, whether they are on the tab of the war or whether they are on the tab of the domestic programs that haven't been paid for for years, they are going to be paid at some point. Those bills and those promissory notes are going to come due, and they are going to be paid for by your children and my future children, and your future grandchildren and my future grandchildren. We are hamstringing generations to come to pay for the costs of this war, and we should account for it.

The second thing that is not covered, Mr. ALTMIRE, is this thing that we keep on talking about down here called the alternative minimum tax. Now, I know there are still a lot of people out there that don't understand what the alternative minimum tax is because year after year, Congress has done the right thing and has held in abeyance the adjustment to the alternative minimum tax that would essentially make it cover most middle-class taxpayers in this country. In my district in Connecticut we have about 20,000 people that pay the alternative minimum tax that was initially set up just to cover the richest of the rich who weren't paying any tax through deductions or were paying very little tax through deductions and credits.

□ 2130

If we don't fix the Alternative Minimum Tax again this year, in my district it is going to go from like 19,000 people paying it to like 80,000 people paying it. It is going to be a huge problem, thousands of additional dollars in tax obligations for millions of Americans. Well, the President doesn't say anything about that in this budget. I think he just assumes that we are going to fix it again, but he doesn't put the cost of doing that in the budget.

So, if you tack on the costs of the war that aren't in this budget, if you tack on the costs of once again fixing the Alternative Minimum Tax which we should do and put that in the budget, this deficit is enormous, is enormous. I think we should be having a real argument over the real cost of this budget. Through all this sort of gimmickry that we see, all this trickery in how the numbers are accounted for, the

war is not in there, the Alternative Minimum Tax fix isn't in there.

I know this sort of goes over the head of a lot of people out there, because they say this is just the logistics of a budget. This is just numbers, where you put one number, where you put another number. It matters, because you can't hide money that we have to spend. Whether you put it in the budget or out of the budget, if you spend the dollar, somebody is going to have to pay for it. Maybe not now, but in 10 years or 20 years.

Mr. ALTMIRE, part of the reason that the 30-Something Working Group talks so much about deficit spending is because we are going to be around when those bills come due. We have an obligation, I think a special obligation as some of the younger Members of this House, to cry bloody murder when this President tries to do more deficit spending than he is even telling us here, because it is going to be our generation and our kids' generation that are going to have to pay for it.

Mr. ALTMIRE. That is right. The gentleman talked about the assumption in the budget being submitted. Because the gentleman wasn't here when I showed this, I want to show the gentleman, as he knows, what \$3.1 trillion looks like. This is what it looks like. This is what the President dropped on your desk and mine on Monday. This is the budget we are talking about. So for our colleagues who are joining us late, this is the budget that we are discussing tonight.

The assumption that was made in putting this budget together by the administration, by President Bush, was that Congress would act on the Alternative Minimum Tax, and, of course, we will. We are not going to allow that to lapse, which would result in an increase for 23 million people in the country, a tax increase, 70,000 in my district, I think the gentleman said 80,000 additional in his district. So, of course, we are going to deal with the AMT.

It is tough. It is a difficult way to have to do policy, to do it year-to-year. It is probably not the best way. We made a tough decision in December, we will make another tough decision at the end of this year, and the President knows we are going to have to do it and we are going to have to pay for it, because that is what we have to do. It is not included in the cost of this \$3.1 trillion budget.

I know we are running short on time, so I did want to just summarize a few of the other programs, saving one in particular for the end that near and dear to my heart, that are cut in this budget. Because, again, people say what are we talking about when you talk about all these cuts?

We talked earlier about the subprime mortgage funding and so forth. How about highway funding? Is there anyone in the country that can disagree that we have a national crisis with infrastructure? We had the unfortunate

situation last fall with the bridge collapse in Minnesota which highlighted a problem that many knew but really in a very tragic way shined the spotlight on the incredible need that exists in this country for infrastructure improvement, for bridge repair, for highway repair. We simply do not have anywhere near close to the amount of money necessary to fix the roads and bridges that need fixing right now, let alone all the new construction that needs to take place.

The district that I represent, we are talking about funding for bridges and roads and docks and dams along the riverways. Well, with highway funding in particular, the President's budget unbelievably proposes to cut funding for highways by \$800 million below the amount guaranteed by the previous transportation reauthorization bill that we did several years ago.

Every \$1 billion in new infrastructure investment creates 47,500 jobs in this country and a shortfall in highway revenue is projected in fiscal year 2009, which is what this budget covers. So we have a projected shortfall, yet the President still recommends a \$800 million cut. And at a time when we lost jobs in January, who knows how many jobs we are going to lose in the months ahead as we face what may turn out to be a recession, we are talking about a problem that can create nearly 50,000 jobs for every \$1 billion in new investment, and we are going to cut \$800 million. It makes no sense.

Homeland security, the gentleman from Connecticut talked about the importance of homeland security, which nobody can dispute, perhaps the number one issue facing the country today. Well, so what does the President's budget do? The calculation of his budget excludes \$2.7 billion in border emergency funding from Congress, which was approved in fiscal year 2008. When this is taken into account, the President is only proposing to increase less than \$100 million for fiscal year 2009 for homeland security needs for the entire agency.

In addition, the budget slashes funding for State Homeland Security Grant programs, first responders, police, firefighters, EMTs, people right out there on the front lines in our communities, many of them volunteers. This President's budget cuts \$750 million, 79 percent below the current year's funding level. For firefighter grants, \$450 million, 60 percent below, just for firefighter grants, and 79 percent below for all first responders.

It is incredible that this is the budget that was put before us. Who could possibly argue that that is a good policy decision, to cut funding for first responders by 79 percent?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. This is all sort of hard to take in. As you said, that massive budget document gets dropped on us, and the parade of horrors is endless in terms of all of the commonsense programs, whether it is homeland security, whether it is law

enforcement, whether it is health care, whether it is research spending. It is just hard to handle. It is like it gets your brain going in overdrive. Then you got to step back for a second. I think it does make sense to step back and have a little bit of faith that now cooler and calmer heads can prevail.

It used to be when that budget was dropped on Congress' desk in January or February that it basically was the law of the land, that with a few changes here or there, the Republican-led Congress was going to rubber stamp that President's budget.

As much as Mr. MEEK and Mr. RYAN and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ before we got here would come down and try to expose all of those damaging harmful cuts to middle-class families throughout this country, to people trying to make their way in this world, that it didn't matter, because so long as Republicans controlled this place, there was going to be essentially a rubber stamp on all of those cuts and more massive deficit spending, the most fiscally irresponsible set of Congresses in our lifetime.

That has changed now. That is different. And, listen. We are all fallible. We don't get every single choice right, even on our side of the aisle, Mr. ALTMIRE. But the good news is, is that we are going to find a way to push back most of those cuts, if not all of them. We are going to find a way to pass another budget which gets us a little bit closer to a balanced budget.

Now, the way we do that is sit here and expose all of the very harmful cuts and all the very harmful spending in this President's budget. But the American people should have some faith that you sent a new Democratic Congress here. You sent this new freshman class that we are a part of to pick apart that budget for the first time, and decide not only how to more compassionately spend American taxpayer dollars, but to more smartly spend them so that we are not racking up those huge deficits, so that we are starting to balance budgets again.

So this is all very damaging news, and I know we are probably going to close on some of the worse news in the budget, but I think people should have faith that we now have leadership in charge of this Congress that is going to be able to pull apart that budget and start setting us on a commonsense and compassionate course again.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I thank the gentleman. I am going to talk about the most egregious, in my opinion, of all these cuts. And I know it is hard to believe having walked through them that there could be one in particular to point to. There is one that is particular to my constituents and to something that I support. We are going to turn it over momentarily to our freshman colleague, Mr. YARMUTH from Kentucky, who I am sure is going to talk more about some of these issues.

As Members of Congress, we are all given the opportunity to testify before

the Budget Committee and say here are our priorities. These are the one or two or three at the most things that we care about that we really want to see addressed in the budget.

I was asked over the break that we had in between the first session and the second session during the holidays, somebody came up to me in a shopping center and recognized me and said, hey, you know, how has the first year been? What are your experiences? What are you most proud of?

Without hesitating, for me, what I am most proud of that this Congress did last year was we had the highest funding increase for veterans health care in the 77 year history of the VA. We had to fight tooth and nail. We had to do it over multiple opportunities throughout the year. But in the end, the budget that we passed exceeded even the recommendations of the service organizations. The VFW, the American Legion, the Vietnam Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, those organizations every year present to Congress their recommended funding levels for what they feel that they are going to need. For the first time ever, this Congress exceeded that.

So I am very proud of the work that we did as a Congress on veterans. And it was a bipartisan effort. It is something we can be proud to have worked together on.

Well, what does this budget do for veterans, something that I have made my number one priority in this Congress. And I think we as Congress have a good record so far on veterans, and I want to keep that good record going, and I want to prevent the cuts that the President's budget talks about.

It cuts veterans health care by \$20 billion over 5 years. Let me repeat that. This budget cuts veterans health care by \$20 billion over 5 years and cuts funding for constructing, renovating and rehabilitating medical care facilities in 2009, for which this budget is authorized.

Now, for me, that is very parochial, because I have \$200 million of VA health construction going on in Western Pennsylvania, a lot of which is in my district. Two different projects, \$200 million. So the President is coming in here at a time when we have the opportunity in Western Pennsylvania to be the preeminent health care system in the entire VA, top notch facilities, he is going to cut the construction funding, and he is going to cut funding even more egregiously for veterans health care by \$20 billion.

I am sure the gentleman can agree, there is no group that should stand ahead of our Nation's veterans when it comes time to make funding decisions.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. It just begs the question, Mr. ALTMIRE. What was going through the minds of the Bush administration budget negotiators when they were sitting at the table last year negotiating with us as we were insisting on the biggest increase in veterans funding in the his-

tory of the program? I mean, we pushed that and pushed that and pushed that. You were courageous from the very first day that you got here in making that a priority.

It is just so terrible to think that, well, the Bush administration was sitting there finally saying yes to that enormous and important increase in veterans funding, that all the while they were drafting that budget. All the while as they were agreeing just 60 days ago to the biggest increase in veterans funding since the VA program began, they were drafting secretly a budget that was going to reverse everything they just agreed to. That just speaks to the worst of what happens in Washington, D.C., Mr. ALTMIRE.

Mr. ALTMIRE. That is right. I thank the gentleman. We are going to wrap it up as our time has expired. I would only point out on that note that this is the sixth year in a row that this budget raises health care costs on 1.4 million veterans, imposing \$5.2 billion in increased copayments on prescription drugs and new enrollment fees on veterans over 10 years. I wish I had more time to talk about that.

At this time I am going to thank the Speaker for the opportunity to address the House this evening with my colleague Mr. MURPHY from Connecticut.

□ 2145

THE BUDGET AND NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARCURI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. I want to thank my freshman colleagues for the very insightful and compelling arguments they raised concerning our budget, the budget proposal by the President for the 2009 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I will say that what we are dealing with here is a situation in which those of us who were elected in 2006, freshman Members, so known as the majority makers, came to this Congress because the American people in that election of 2006 thought that the country was going in the wrong direction, and it wasn't so much one thing, I know a lot of people think that we were elected because of the war in Iraq, and certainly that was a factor.

I think more than anything else, the American people collectively decided that the priorities that have been established by the administration that was in office, beginning in 2000, we were taking the country in the wrong direction, that we were spending money, that we were emphasizing things that did not represent the best interests of the majority of the American people. They sent us here, therefore, to set a new pattern of doing business, a new way of setting priorities.

They wanted us to put the American people first. They wanted us to recog-

nize the true needs of this society, to recognize that government is a way of reorganizing and organizing our responsibilities to each other, that we could, as a government, actually create an economy that worked for everyone and not just for a very few, but that we could, again, set the country on a different direction, that we could use the tax revenues that were flowing to the Treasury to empower all people to make the best of their lives, to contribute to a more dynamic society. We really have set a different direction in this Congress, and I think we need to do much more.

But let's think back to 2006 and think about what the American people were confronted with when they looked at Washington. They looked at Washington and they said, we have a government there that is arrogant, that tends to favor the richest people in the country, that tends to favor global corporations, that thinks that if we allow the wealthiest and most powerful people to do as well as they possibly can financially, that there will be a trickle-down effect and it will, quote-unquote, float everyone's boat, and that this is what the proper role of government should be.

The American people said, no, we don't buy that. We've tried that. We tried it under the Reagan administration. We saw then that trickle-down economics does not work. We tried that for a few more years under the Bush administration. We found that, no, that doesn't work because, in fact, what we have seen is that from 2001 to 2006, 100 percent of the income growth in this country accrued to the benefit of the top 5 percent of the population, that, in fact, 95 percent of the people in this country did not see their standard of living increase despite the fact that they are working harder, they are working longer.

The average family has been working, the average household, 95 hours a week. That's two people working more than full time and still not getting ahead. So the American people said to us, we want to go in a different direction. We think that government can be a tool for progress, it can be a tool to create a society that distributes its benefits more broadly, and that we ought to take the position that rather than trying to let this trickle-down theory flow to everybody's boat that we ought to make a society in which everybody has a really good boat, and that everybody can swim on their own. In fact, the way to create a society that truly works over the long term is to empower every individual to be productive, to contribute to society and to have the power and the freedom and the support to improve his or her way of life.

Now we are confronted, once again, with a budget from the President of the United States which does exactly the same thing that they have been trying over and over and over again with very

little success. We have a budget, deceitful in many ways because it pretends to reach a budgetary balance when it really doesn't, and they do it by very deceitful mechanisms, but it sets the wrong priorities.

It takes the money away from programs and policies that actually do empower individuals to improve their lives, to make a better society, to make a stronger economy, and it sends the money once again to basically non-productive activities. We have, once again, a budget that minimizes and disguises the cost of our involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of us differ very strenuously on our priorities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We all understand that we have some serious problems in Afghanistan, and we need to focus there. We also understand that we are spending \$3 billion a week in Iraq, most of which we will never see. It never represents any investment in our future. It is money that is down the drain.

When you try to compare the benefits of our tax dollars being spent again to promote a vibrant and healthy economy and to help people who need to get their feet on the ground to become productive citizens versus spending money overseas in ways that do nothing to enhance our own standard of living, that we know we have a skewed sense of priorities.

That's what we are going to talk about for the next few minutes, and I am very proud to be here with one of my freshman colleagues, someone who is passionate about the need for this country to work for everyone, someone who is as passionate about working for working families as anyone in this Congress, JOHN HALL from New York.

I am proud to be his colleague, and I would like to recognize Congressman HALL to further this discussion.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Congressman. It's my pleasure to join you tonight.

I wish I had as much pleasure looking at the budget the President submitted as I do discussing it with you, and all of us, of course, earlier this week received a copy of the President's budget. Like all of us, I was disappointed by the questionable accounting and fiscal irresponsibilities contained within this budget. I wish I could say I was surprised, but unfortunately it represents the same missed opportunities and misplaced priorities that have highlighted this administration.

First of all, I would have to say for a President and an administration that claimed to be fiscally responsible and who constantly accuse Democrats of being fiscally irresponsible, it's really shocking and deserving of mention that this President, George W. Bush, has been responsible, his administration, responsible for the five biggest deficits in American history. Here they are. We all remember, of course, at the end of the 1990s when President Bush took over from President Clinton that we had a surplus, and we were, in fact,

paying down some of the national debt for a change.

But due to his tax policies and his overspending and his penchant for borrowing, our President and his administration have run up, in 2003, a deficit of \$378 billion; in 2004, a deficit of \$413 billion; in 2005, \$318 billion; 2008 actually is the next figure here, \$410 billion; and for 2009 is a projected \$407 billion budget.

We can't keep this up. Any family knows that they can't keep spending. In fact, too many families are finding this out, that the chickens eventually come home to roost. I, as a former school board president and school board trustee who had to balance the budget every year know that you can't go on spending more money than you take in without some kind of disaster befalling you.

Unfortunately, what's happening in terms of the value of the dollar, in terms of our exporting jobs, in terms of foreign interests buying up pieces of the United States or corporations or infrastructure in the United States, in terms of our weakened markets, and volatile and declining markets, all these things have to do with the basic foundation, the underpinning of our country being massive debt.

The other thing about the President's budget that I was surprised to see and disappointed to see, it does nothing to fix the alternative minimum tax, or the AMT, a tax which was originally designed, when it first took effect in 1970, to affect only 155 households, the most wealthy, the most affluent households in America who were using tax loopholes to avoid paying any tax at all. Congress wrote, in the late 1960s, this bill which the AMT took effect in 1970, to hit the very top of the most wealthy people in the country.

Now because it was never indexed to inflation, it was never given a cost-of-living increase, it was never allowed to float as the cost of living and the average salaries and income in the country changed, that AMT has dipped every year deeper and deeper and deeper into the American tax-paying public and dramatically increasing the tax rate paid by millions of middle-class families who were never intended to be hit by the AMT, over 20 million of whom will be forced to pay it next year.

Without a permanent fix, half of all taxpayers in this country will pay this AMT that was originally designed to hit 155 of the wealthiest households in the country.

But the President does nothing to stop this. Instead, he calls for more than \$1 trillion in tax cuts for the top 1 percent of all Americans.

Once again, we have 5 years in a row of record increases in the poverty rate, we have record increases in personal debt, we have record increases in national debt, we have record increases in our balance of trade deficit. Strangely enough, at the same time, I read in the paper that ExxonMobil has declared 40

point some billion dollars in profit, the largest single yearly corporate profit in the history of the world, breaking the previous record which was held by ExxonMobil themselves.

Some people in this economy and in this current fiscal and business financial scheme are doing very, very, very well and will continue to do very well. There are others, mainly the middle class and lower income Americans, who are being squeezed from all sides. Believe me, they are not being squeezed up, they are being squeezed down.

The middle class is having their options and their opportunities cut, whether it's the cost of sending their children to college, whether it's being the cost of purchasing health care for their families, the cost of property or property tax, the cost of fuel for their cars or for their homes. I mean, even the fact that the President in this budget slashed the low-income heating assistance program, LIHEAP, is scandalous.

At a time when we have families and seniors who are struggling to heat their homes in the northern parts of this country, I wouldn't have expected the President, a so-called compassionate conservative, to be so discompassionate as to cut heating assistance for low-income people in this current climate of economic uncertainty and astronomical fuel costs.

I would just say that I am happy to be here to discuss this, and, more importantly, to talk about how we are going to move to a real budget, not a fake budget that's based on some platitudes and some kind of ideological belief, some faith-based budgeting that has nothing to do with reality and nothing to do with the well-being of the American people.

Mr. YARMUTH. I want to thank my colleague.

He referenced the annual profit of ExxonMobil that was reported last week. And I was struck last week on February 1, when I looked at The New York Times on the online version, the list of the headlines of the day, and I thought it was striking because I think it painted a vivid picture of where we are in this world and in this country. The first story was, "Microsoft Bids \$44.6 Billion for Yahoo," a lot of money, two corporations vying for each other.

The next story, "U.S. Economy Unexpectedly Sheds 17,000 Jobs," the worst jobs report in several years. Then, "Dozens Killed in Worst Baghdad Attack in Months," then "Kurds' Power Wanes as Arab Anger Rises" and, then, finally, "ExxonMobil Profit Sets Record Again."

I think that was just an incredibly vivid picture of where we are in this world and where this economy stands and how out of whack the priorities of this administration have become. That's why I am so thankful that we are, at least, in control of this House of the Congress so that we can help to set the priorities of this country on a much more sound course.

I know that I have had so many opportunities to stand on this floor and discuss these issues with my colleague from Florida (Mr. KLEIN). I am proud to recognize him now.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky and the gentleman from New York. I certainly agree with all the statements you have made and would just share a few of my own thoughts on the budget.

A budget is a statement of our values, as Americans, collectively. We are not Democrats, we are not Republicans, we are not independents, we are Americans. We all are putting a lot of money, hard-earned money into the government. The question is what's going to be done with it. What is the best value that can be used to help people achieve a better life, help our economy, help job creation and all those things that are important to our communities.

□ 2200

The biggest concern that I have with the budget that is being proposed by the administration is to me it is more of missed opportunities. We know that we have a difficult economy right now. Certainly in Florida where we have had tremendous growth over the last number of years, all of a sudden things have stopped. The real estate market and all of the various businesses that are affected, and homeowners that are affected by a real estate market that has slowed to a standstill, we need to help people through the foreclosures and various other things. But what does this budget do, something that all of us said we were going to change.

In this body we have PAYGO, pay as you go. We can only pass legislation that is paid for in advance. My two friends here are fiscal hawks. We believe in a deficit that has to be brought down and a balanced budget. That is the way we live our personal lives. In the State legislature, we had balanced budgets. That is the way you run your business.

What does this budget do? First of all, it is over \$3 trillion. The amount of money going into the Federal Government is extraordinary from an administration that said they wanted smaller government and less spending.

Put that issue aside for a second, this continues the budget deficit and increases it by another \$400 billion. This is after, as the gentleman from New York said, this does not stop the biggest tax increase, the alternative minimum tax, which we tried to fix. We had a very good way of fixing it this year, and the President refused. Some people on the other side of the aisle in the Senate refused to do it. It has to be fixed.

The President in his proposal cuts Medicare and Medicaid. I don't know about you; I am sure you are hearing the same thing I'm hearing. Our doctors, our hospitals, our providers, they are taking care of our Medicare population in our communities, and they

are feeling it. They have been cut and cut and cut, and it is not keeping up with the cost of operating a practice. We know that they need to receive fair compensation. That is unacceptable. I don't think that is something that this Congress is going to support. So again, an assumption that doesn't have any bearing on where things are going.

The President, who has been a big supporter of the Iraq war, as we know, and has continued to ask for more and more money, hundreds of billions of dollars, interestingly enough, in this budget sets it up for \$70 billion of additional expenditures only through January 20. Now, what is January 20? That is Inauguration Day of a new President, whoever that may be.

But boy, is that an unrealistic way of looking at it, particularly after he has been criticizing Members of Congress saying that you can't put a date at the end of funding because you are going to cut off our troops, cut off funding of the bullets and all of the necessary support, which we are not prepared to do, but he is doing.

He is saying on January 20, if you pass this budget, there is no more money after that date to fund the Iraq war, not because he doesn't want to fund the Iraq war, but that is how he is creating a smaller amount of a big deficit. Instead of \$400 billion, it would be \$500 billion or something like that.

So the question is what can we do, because I think there are a whole lot of assumptions here that are incorrect.

I have a chart here that I have talked about before, and I think this is totally unacceptable. The lack of fiscal discipline of this administration over the last 6 or 7 years has resulted in increasing debt to an unacceptable amount in terms of us bringing our budget in line.

So, although the financing of the war, which has been off the books, the financing of all of these various things that the President wanted to fund, instead of cutting spending or being a little more fiscally responsible, we have been borrowing, and borrowing from foreign investors. Those are foreign countries. We are a debtor country to China and Mexico, and the list goes on and on.

Under this administration, in trillions of dollars we are talking about, in 2001 the amount of foreign-held Treasury securities was \$1 trillion. That is a massive amount of money. In the last 6 years, it has now doubled to \$2.3 trillion. Just to put it in perspective, the amount of interest that we are paying this year, strictly interest, not principal, not amortizing of the principal and interest together, just interest is over \$300 billion. To me, that is money we are just flushing down the drain.

If there was some fiscal discipline like the House leadership has been pushing, we could take that money and do a number of things. We could take care of Americans first. How about all of us, whether it is health care, job creation, job training, so many infrastructure issues in our communities; these are the issue of our day.

And instead of sending that money overseas to pay interest, not even principal, that is \$300 billion that is being thrown out the door offshore to some other country because we don't have the wherewithal, as we do in this House, because the President hasn't been willing to work with us in bringing this budget in line.

Mr. Speaker, there are many Republicans as well, but certainly the Democrats have stood together on this, and we welcome everyone as Americans to focus on this together. We have to get the budget in line. The budget that is being proposed by the President right now is something that is relying on a lot of unrealistic assumptions that will never pass because the American people don't want them to be cut, whether Medicare and a number of other things, and we have to find a way to get the budget deficit under control. That is essential. We can't mortgage the future of our country. We cannot allow our children to have to pay and our grandchildren to have to pay for something that this generation wasn't prepared to stand up and say, Yes, we can live within our means. Yes, we can have a strong economy and fight wars when necessary. And yes, we will take care of Americans when there are natural disasters, and it can all be done under a fiscally responsible way, and that has not been the record of this administration. We are going to work hard in a bipartisan way to get this under control.

I appreciate the fact that the gentleman from Kentucky brought this to us, and I look forward to working with him and the gentleman from New York on fixing this problem.

Mr. YARMUTH. One of the things that is most disturbing to all of us is when you hear deceitful discussion of the financial situation of this country. We sat and listened to the State of the Union address in which the President said if we were to not renew the tax cuts that went into effect in 2001 and 2003, that the average tax increase for an American would be something like \$1,200 a year. That is a very clever way of saying what the average tax increase would be. The problem is that the average tax increase would be very large because you are taking all of the people who are making a million, \$5 million, \$10 million a year, and if we re-instituted those tax rates prior to 2001, the 39.6 percent tax rate, some people at the very highest level would pay \$40,000, \$80,000, \$100,000, \$2 million a year more in taxes. So when you average that with the normal taxpayer, yes, it comes to about \$1,200 a year.

If you phrased it another way, and that would be the average American taxpayer would have his or her taxes increased by, it wouldn't be \$1,200, it would be like \$40 or \$50, because the average American working family earns \$55,000 a year. And that family, if we did not extend the Bush tax cuts, would see their taxes raised by a very small amount. The people at the higher end would pay a lot more taxes. So the average tax increase, yes, it would be a

lot, but the average taxpayer would not see his or her taxes increased. Of course, we are not proposing that in any event.

We have been talking that when we do revisit those tax cuts that we look at the highest income levels. But the point is, when we are getting all of these projections from the administration about what would happen in future years, as my colleague said, if we fix the alternative minimum tax and don't pay for it, and we don't have that additional revenue, yes, we can underestimate the deficit that we will be experiencing during those times. We can make the projections look good 4, 5 years out into the future, but that will not be the case.

One of the things I would like to talk about because Mr. KLEIN mentioned this, the cost of interest on the national debt, which has increased by an extraordinary amount. According to this budget, it would be \$4 trillion just since 2001; \$4 trillion based on a \$5.7 trillion starting point. So we basically have almost doubled the national debt, the entire history, 220 years of this Nation, we have almost doubled the national debt just in the last few years.

But here is where we really get a vivid depiction of what this means. We are talking about interest on the national debt of \$300 billion a year. The entire expenditure on education from the Federal budget is \$100 billion a year. Veterans care is less than that, and homeland security even less than that. This is what has happened to the priorities in our budget because of the irresponsibility of this government over the last 7 years.

So this is what we are talking about. This is what we are confronting, and this is why I think all of us in the majority party in the Congress say we need to speak honestly, openly, and intelligently about what confronts us, about the challenges that we face, but also about what has happened over the last few years.

All we ask of the administration is be honest about what you are saying, what you are telling the American people. We will have a legitimate debate with you and discussion about where our priorities should be. But first and foremost, we need to be talking about things in absolute terms and be honest and transparent as we discuss how we are going to spend the taxpayers' dollars.

I am also proud to be joined tonight by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), the president of our freshman class and a great spokesman for the working families of America.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to be at home and watch some of our colleagues speaking on this earlier. I think last night I saw in my State of Minnesota where we had caucuses, and we had four times the record number of people turning out. The American people are starting to listen. They start to understand the consequences of what we

have been living under, and I think all of what has been highlighted has been spectacular.

I will also say that each of us who have read this budget have no problem being up here late at night because it is hard to sleep after you see it. Each of you have highlighted critical issues and the things that we are getting done and prioritizing.

The idea of government is the collective will that we can do together, and our job is to prioritize the things that this country needs to do. I think Mr. YARMUTH's chart that he just showed shows that this Nation under this President has not prioritized. This President has set out an agenda that told us we could have something for nothing. He told us we can give tax cuts, and I appreciate you clearly illustrating the President's creative use of facts and statistics which he quite often does to theatrical effect but to huge detriment to this Nation.

I want to talk about this for a couple of minutes. We have done a wonderful job of highlighting the overall principles. I want to talk about how this impacts individuals. I want to talk about the idea of fiscal discipline and the incredibly shortsightedness of this administration, even in cases where they may be able to cut something to save a little bit, the incredible cost not just in the suffering and what it is doing to the Nation, that aside, what it is doing in terms of just plain poor financial decisions.

In my southern Minnesota district, which stretches from the plains of South Dakota over to the Mississippi River, and Minnesota as the Land of 10,000 Lakes is very diverse. The southwest corner of my State that borders Iowa and South Dakota was the place where the glaciers never reached, and it is one of the few places where you don't find a lot of the prairie potholes and lakes, and the shortage of water is important and on people's minds. This is the area of Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Little House on the Prairie." This is the land where people want to raise their children. We have prosperous communities that are incredibly diverse that are leading the Nation in things like biofuel production. We are the fifth leading district in wind production. These are innovative people, but the one thing that they are missing and what makes life so difficult is the lack of drinking water.

We have places where people are living in 2008 where they have cisterns to collect water in order to drink good water. Well, these communities got together in Iowa, South Dakota, and Minnesota and they came together with a creative solution. They were going to use, where the abundance of water was along the Missouri River in South Dakota, they were going to use the engineering skill of this Nation to provide drinking water and the lifeblood of communities for 300,000 people in a bipartisan manner.

□ 2215

They got together and they started doing this. It is incredibly important. In fact, it was so important that in 2001, on White House stationery that I might have, President Bush himself went to South Dakota and said, a priority is to work with States on important development projects, and the Lewis and Clark rural water project is a project that will be in my budget, and something that we can work on together.

Well, it sounded good, especially in South Dakota. The reality has been we have fought tooth and nail every step of the way. The good news on this is, whether it be Republican or Democrat, the bipartisan commitment to this has been absolutely unbreakable. The local communities have even done something that I think our constituents are asking us. We always hear when we're spending money, oh, you tax and spenders and all that. I think something that's important for people to know, Mr. Speaker, is that those of us who are here have paid taxes before, too. I'm a school teacher, and 2005 was the first year in my life that I filed taxes right at the \$50,000 a year range. I'm the person who takes pencils when they're available to make sure I can use them in my classroom. I use both sides of every sheet of paper. I want to see us get our money's worth, too. This project did that. Seventeen of these communities and municipalities and States decided what they would do is they would pay ahead to cut down on the inflationary value of this project. The project was scheduled to last approximately 15 years. It's a major reconstruction project, a major thing that's happening.

Well, the project got off and going, started running. People are very excited about it. Everything is going great, until we started running into the last 7 years of the Bush presidency. Last year in President Bush's budget he cut the funding for this project down to \$15 million a year. To give you an idea of what that would do, instead of the completion date of 2016 that was scheduled, and remember, States, municipalities have paid ahead. They have asked their taxpayers to pay taxes ahead to save money in the long run, and overwhelmingly they said that. And President Bush promised them that he would be there every step of the way. By the way, this is when he was sending off South Dakota's soldiers to go fight the war in Afghanistan. He promised them that he would be there for their families. By his budgeting cutting back to \$15 million last year, it meant that the project would not be finished until 2051, and the cost would go from about \$527 million to nearly \$900 million.

Now, this was the President that came to us with an M.B.A. He was the CEO president. And what he's saying is that he is not going to be able to make the same fiscally responsible decisions to keep these communities alive.

Well, what we did, as a joint delegation, between Iowa, South Dakota and Minnesota, Republican and Democrat, said that is wrong. And we went and asked, guess what, one of those awful earmarks appropriations to put the Federal Government's responsibility back to where it was supposed to be or near where it was supposed to be at \$27 million.

So now we're approximately 5 years from completion of this, and this wonderful document that the President sent out this week set his budget for the Lewis and Clark rural water project, zero dollars. He shut the project down. So I guess what he's telling us is, the \$300 million we've spent, the 300,000 people, communities, where, in my district, they cannot issue another building permit in their cities because they don't have enough water. He is telling them, leave the pipes half finished. Let the people move elsewhere. And you know what I said in 2001, I didn't really mean it because I've got other priorities.

Now, remember, this is the same President that told us that our fiscal crisis now is simply being caused by our inability to make permanent the tax cuts on 1 percent of Americans that actually aren't expiring until 2011.

Now I stand here in front of the people, Mr. Speaker, and with my colleagues to ask in a totally bipartisan manner, what sense does this make? What sense is this about prioritizing? What do these mayors tell their people when they made this decision based on what good government is? And if this President is going to think you're going to do this alone, who's going to dig the 400-mile long trench from the Missouri River to feed these areas of Iowa and Minnesota and South Dakota?

I guess the President's message has been what it's been all along, whether it's been SCHIP, whether it's been our veterans, whether it's been anything. I'll be there until it comes time to make some prioritizing decisions. At that point you're on your own. He's given us his ownership society which truly does mean you're on your own, and now we have a situation where we're going to go as a delegation and have to fight for every dollar of something as basic as infrastructure to deliver water.

So I will have to tell you on the sacredness of this House floor, it's been an overwhelming challenge to keep my tongue on some of this, and I applaud my colleagues in the same way.

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and tell my colleagues, I will not rest for 1 minute until this budget starts to reflect the priorities of this Nation. There is nothing in this budget that reflects the priorities of this Nation. There is nothing in the people of my district, and I don't care what political party they belong to, that reflects their values. And there is absolutely no vision in this. I don't know if maybe this is just a cruel joke on the way out,

leaving the White House; we'll see what can happen if we do this. But I can tell you this: The people of Iowa and South Dakota and Minnesota aren't laughing about it. And I can darn sure guarantee you that each of us is going to fight to make it right.

I thank you for indulging me on this, Mr. YARMUTH. You've done a fantastic job. You always lead a very important discussion. And I thank you and my colleagues for their open-mindedness.

I agree with you. I'll have this discussion. I will debate with any member of this administration or this House of Representatives on why, after the investments that we've made, the importance of this project and the agreement of constituents and the promise that was made by the President, why I'm just supposed to accept this, and why people say, can't you all just get along and get something done?

If there was some sanity coming from the administration, I would say yes. But right now at this point I think the answer is no because this is going to be fought tooth and nail until this wrong is corrected.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank my colleague and want to yield again to Mr. HALL from New York. But before I do, I just wanted to add that, again, sitting and listening to the State of the Union address and talking about the honesty that we need to have when we have this discussion, and all of a sudden the President for the first time in this State of the Union address takes on the question of earmarks. And all of a sudden he's critical of the Democratic Congress because we had 11,000 or something earmarks. But he never said a word for 6 years while the earmarks expanded to somewhere in the realm of 16,000.

Now we can have debates over earmarks. I happen to think, as my colleagues mentioned, that there are some very valid reasons to have earmarks. And I think they have been demonized probably unreasonably. But all of a sudden the President finds fiscal religion this year under a Democratic-controlled Congress when he was silent for 6 years. And the same is true of his passion now for balanced budgets when over the first 6 years of his administration with the Republican-controlled Congress, he never issued a veto, never threatened a veto of any spending bill as we accrued \$3.7 or so trillion more in debt, and he was silent.

All of a sudden now you have to suspect that the only reason is partisanship. That's what we're trying to get away from in this country, and that's what we are trying to get away from as we discuss the priorities of the country. Because, as you said, we're interested in where the rubber meets the road, programs that help the American people, doing the best for the American people and not necessarily what means doing the best for a particular party.

I think what we're seeing, as you mentioned, in the turnout in voters in primaries throughout the country is

that's what American people want. They want people who are going to deal with our problems and not deal with partisanship.

With that, I will once again recognize my distinguished colleague from New York (Mr. HALL).

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. YARMUTH. I appreciate your leading this discussion. I also want to acknowledge my colleague from New York (Mr. ARCURI). Thank you for serving as Speaker pro tem during this period of time.

I'd just like to respond to Mr. WALZ's comment about what kind of sense does it make for this cut in the water program in your district. Well, I can say it makes about as much sense as the President's completely eliminating the Byrne Grant program and the COPS program, both of which are vital to my district to provide cops, additional policemen on the streets in the 19th District of New York. It makes about as much sense as cutting the important programs that provide local and State law enforcement agencies with funds to fight terrorism and crime, including almost \$140 million that were cut from bioterrorism preparedness. They make as much sense as the President cutting Medicare and Medicaid at a time when health insurance costs are skyrocketing, when more and more Americans are forced to live without health insurance. This budget cuts \$200 billion out of health insurance from Medicare and Medicaid. At a time when we're facing one of the most damaging housing crises in our history with foreclosures and evictions due to the subprime mortgage crisis, it makes as much sense as this President cutting the Nation's largest rental assistance program. It makes as much sense, as I mentioned before, as cutting the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program by almost 25 percent, preventing people in the lower income segment of our economy from being able to heat their homes during the winter.

We were talking about your district. I'll talk about something specific to mine. We have, many of us think due to climate change, suffered from three 50-year floods in the last 3 years in the 19th District, the Delaware River, the Walkkill River, the Ten Mile River, all flooding farms, homes, businesses, golf courses, which might not sound too important, except they do employ people and they're a source of economic input into the local economy. And, but as importantly, lives were lost. In Congressman HINCHEY's district in Sullivan County, there was a drastic, catastrophic flood shortly after the April 29 nor'easter, which was the third in 2007, the third in a row of our 50-year floods that came within 3 years.

So last year, when I was new, I was a freshman, wet behind the ears, just been sworn in for my first term, we got into the appropriations process. And you know what it's like. People come into your office from different departments of the government asking to

have funding restored to these different important programs that have been cut by the administration. One of those who came to my office was the general who is the Army Corps of Engineers director of the Philadelphia district, which includes the Delaware watershed. Now, the Delaware Corps of Engineers offices go by watersheds, not by State lines or any kind of political jurisdictions. Her district, the general's, ran from Philadelphia up to Delaware and into New York from Pennsylvania and all the way up to the reservoirs that feed New York City's drinking water system. This is one of the rivers that has had, at that point in time, three 50-year floods in a short span. She came in to ask if I could help restore funding. And I said, well, what was it cut to? And she showed me in the President's budget it was cut to zero. It was a goose egg.

Now, flood control, in the days after Hurricane Katrina, we all know is a serious matter. This obviously is not a serious document any more than last year's budget was a serious document. This document is a fictitious document that is aimed at pretending to balance the budget in 2012. And we all know that can't be done. And, in fact, the general and others who have come from different departments to my office and others have said, off the record, that it's done with the knowledge that the Democratic majority will restore some of these funds at least to be able to keep the programs going and to protect people, and then we'll get blamed for being big spenders.

Well, in terms of being big spenders, I just want to bring out this chart which I happen to have here which shows the surplus that was the United States budget surplus when, in 2001, the Bush administration began its term. There was a \$5.6 trillion surplus. In the time since then, there's red ink of \$8.8 trillion, so that at this point in time we're at a \$3.2 trillion deficit, including omitted items.

Now, we all know there are items that are not included in this. For instance, the war is off budget. We fought wars in the past, World War II or the Korean War or the Vietnam War, World War I, during which time people were asked to sacrifice. People were asked to pay for the war as they went.

This is a war that we're borrowing money to pay for, and Congressman KLEIN's chart that he showed before, of the increasing foreign ownership of our debt, I think, is really important and really interesting for several reasons. Obviously it's not healthy for us to have this much debt and to accumulate an ever-growing interest payment that eclipses anything we can do for education or for housing or for veterans or for homeland security and that we're going to pass on to our children and our grandchildren.

□ 2230

That's really unconscionable.

But the other thing that that does to have that kind of huge debt to the Chi-

nese or to the Saudis or to the Mexican or Japanese Governments or investors from other countries is it loses our sovereignty when we can't talk to China about Darfur or when we can't talk to China honestly about human rights violations in their country or about the obliteration of the history of Tibet or about whether they're being as tough with North Korea about their nuclear problem as we want them to be or about lead in toys that are being imported for our children to play with or about contaminated food or animal feed or contaminated medicine. When we can't talk to the Saudis honestly about human rights violations in their country or about their funding of the madrasas, we have suffered what I call a loss of sovereignty. When you no longer can make honest, diplomatic, economic, military, international decisions or really state what is in your best interest because you are afraid that your hands are tied for want of getting a commodity from one place or the money to pay the debt off from another place, then you have lost some of your sovereignty.

And I'm telling you, in this country, the American people are not aware of the extent of it yet, but they better get aware of it because this is already a major factor in our foreign policy, but it will be more and more of a problem and restrict our options more and more in the future if we do not get back to a surplus in terms of our budget, if we don't get back to a surplus in the balance of trade, if we don't start producing things here. I, personally, am especially fond of the options of renewable energy technologies and high tech and computer and medical advances and so on that we have traditionally led the world in.

But we need to invest in education, we need to invest in these innovation approaches to technologies and especially to invest in new forms of energy to get us away from the billions of dollars a day that go to import oil.

But all of these things are our freedom, and they equate our future sovereignty. And I hope we make the right decisions, as opposed to the wrong decisions, that are embodied in this budget that the President just released so that our children and grandchildren will enjoy being a truly sovereign country and a leader in the world in these things rather than being subservient to whatever foreign interests happen to own our debt.

Mr. YARMUTH. I appreciate him mentioning the field of education because you can have, as I mentioned earlier, two forms of expenditure in government. You can have expenditures that are nonproductive, and one of those, I think, is the war in Iraq. Interest on the debt is another one, because there is no long-term payback to those expenditures. Education, investment in infrastructure, as Mr. WALZ was discussing, those are the types of things that over the long run do produce increased revenues for society

productivity, and they are the type of investments we need to be focusing on.

And when we look at this budget, the field of education, and I'm on the Education and Labor Committee and we are dealing with trying to decide whether to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act which is already \$55 billion below its authorized levels in funding. And the President, once again, has no increases in funding for education in this budget, which means we fall further and further behind.

So while he called his act No Child Left Behind, where, in fact, we are leaving more and more children behind because we are not meeting our obligations to make the kind of investments in people and in an infrastructure that really will pay off over the long run.

And I know this is something that is an entire range of topics that Mr. KLEIN has dealt with and has had to set priorities in his own legislature in Florida, and I would like to yield to him to advance the discussion.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Thank you. I think both of you were talking about two priorities of our country and the shortfalls and where we need to be, where we've been, and where we are going as a country. And I think we look at ourselves, and you hear this in the Presidential debates right now about the vision. And any Presidential candidate that comes forward and talks about the vision of what our country needs to be, where we need to go, the heritage of our country, the legacy of all of the great innovation that's happened and the fact that maybe we've missed a couple of steps. Not to say we can't regain and continue to move forward, because that's exactly what we are going to do. But it is going to take some new leadership through the Congress, through the Presidency and through the American people, and through our business community as well. It is a cooperative effort.

And I think about a few of the things that are the priorities that help us get there. Education, as you just said, is one of them. And one of the things that concerned me about the budget was the fact that the President had dropped the amount of college grants and the tuition assistance programs in the budget. And again, once again, this Congress, bipartisan, came forward and increased the Pell Grants and increased the college tuition, because if there's one thing I think we can all agree on as Americans, every student, every teenager, every adult who wants to get a higher level of education and create a greater level of workforce training which will only make their lives more productive and make their country more productive, that's a good thing. It always has been. Education has been the great equalizer in the United States, and we ought to be doing everything we can to make sure that we are giving that access and that opportunity for every student.

So, again, a misdirection in this budget which needs to be corrected.

Another thing that I think is extremely important, and all of us have some family history of illness whether it is Alzheimer's, whether it is kidney disease, or whether it is cancer or heart disease. And one of the things that our government has consistently done working with the private sector is research, basic research, which will hopefully find cures.

I know my mother passed away at a young age of 52. She was a very vibrant person and developed cancer, and after she went through some treatments over a period of time, we lost her. But it certainly gave me that commitment, and I know I fought along with many Members of the Congress, and the people who are listening tonight have their own family histories. And we know that collectively, we have to find ways of curing diseases.

Cuts in this budget to the grants for research, wrong direction. Really wrong direction. I feel extremely strong about this that we need to have the National Institute of Health grants to work with scientists or universities in our health institutions to find the therapies, to find the cures, to help make people's lives better. It's also a wonderful way of expanding our economic opportunity in exporting and licensing and creating technologies to help people around the world and selling those products around the world as well. So, again, something we need to fix in this budget.

I think the gentleman mentioned the COPS program, which is something that is very much on our streets, and that's, of course, the ability to have safety and public safety and security in our communities. I know in my local community, \$8.5 million in our area would be cut from that funding. That's real dollars that affect real people in terms of putting police and security on our streets. It is one of the most important things our government can do to provide for the public safety.

These are the kinds of things that are misdirections. They can all be fixed. It is a question of all of us coming together, putting a budget together, hopefully persuading the President that these were mistakes and we need to come back and fix them.

And lastly, of course, I just want to touch on the fact of our economy, and the people back home are hurting right now. And we hear it every day, whether it is subprime, whether it is foreclosures, any number of things; and the Congress is working right now, and we will be passing, in the next number of days, an economic stimulus, which is designed to be short term. It's designed as a little bit of a prop up and a support of people. It will give them some cash and hopefully retire some of those responsibilities and pay for some of the necessities.

But long term, we have got to work together on energy issues. It's already been discussed. Paying \$50, \$60 for a tank of gas on someone who is earning \$30,000 a year is a real issue. And at a

time, as we already talked about, when energy companies are making incredible, historic amounts of money, we need to work together to substitute those resources for renewable energy programs, which I know the Congressman from New York has been all over and all of us feel very strongly about.

This is our moment. This is our time. This is our "Sputnik" moment. This is our putting-the-man-on-the-moon moment. This is the time for the American people to work together with the business, private sector, and government to create the markets and to do it. But we have to do it and start that process now.

So I think there are long-term and short-term issues on our economy. I look forward to working on infrastructure issues with everyone else, recognizing, as our Speaker said last week, in 1806 you had the Louisiana Purchase period of time, and that was a moment when President Jefferson said, This is the time we are going to start building our country: the Erie Canal and the canal systems, the road systems that got our country going in the industrial revolution.

A hundred years later, 1908, President Roosevelt coming forward and saying, This country is building and developing. Let's preserve some of our great areas, and we developed the National Parks System.

Now 100 years later, to her credit, Speaker NANCY PELOSI saying this is our time to now focus on rebuilding this country: our road systems, sewer systems, bridge systems, all of those kinds of things. It has everything to do with the economy. It has everything to do with the quality of life. Our commerce, people's quality of life, these are the things that we need to be working on together. Where there's a will, there's a way is my attitude, and I know we are going to do this all together.

Mr. YARMUTH. It's always wonderful to discuss these issues with my colleague on the floor.

And we have just a few minutes left. We have a fundamental decision to make in this country, and it is a basic choice, and that is what the role of government is, what the role of the Federal Government is. And on the one side, I think we have those that believe the role of the Federal Government is to get out of the way and to let whatever happens happen. And the other side, and I think most of us in this room would agree, that there is a legitimate role for the government to try to promote the type of progress through investments and the proper priorities that will make this a better country, and, basically, whether you believe government has a role in setting the direction of the country or whether it is basically just to get out of the way and let the most powerful people and the biggest corporations decide what is going to happen and let kind of a Darwinian atmosphere prevail.

So I would like to allow everyone to close briefly to whatever they have to say kind of related to that fundamental choice we face or to talk about the issue of priorities as we look forward to this budget process again this year.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I so enjoy listening to the eloquence and thoughtfulness of this. The gentleman did sum it up about the priorities, and both gentlemen from Kentucky, Florida, and New York focusing on education and seeing it as an investment.

Of course, being a high school teacher, every chance I get to get into a classroom, I jump at it. And Monday I had the chance to teach a government class in a small town actually in the area served by the Lewis and Clark Rural Water Project. And I will just leave you this, and you can decide, again, what sense does this make.

The teacher was very excited about their first-year teaching job. They started out making \$28,500 a year. Because of the decisions that have been made here and the decisions that have been made in St. Paul, the insurance for that family for him to provide for his wife and children was \$14,100. So before taxes, our schoolteachers are making \$14,400. If you take taxes out of this, we probably have a violation of minimum wage that's happening. That's the decisions that have been made.

But I go back to, once again, the President is not talking about that. The President is asking for how can we make tax cuts permanent for millionaires, and this Nation needs to decide what is our next generation going to do if we're not willing to invest.

Mr. YARMUTH. I would like to yield to my colleague from New York.

Mr. HALL of New York. I would like to close by saying as college costs rise, this President eliminates programs to help pay low-income students for higher education. As health care costs rise, this budget proposes a significant cut in both Medicare and Medicaid. It actually cuts funding for the Environmental Protection Agency, which would endanger the health and welfare of all Americans.

So to quote from this President Bush's father, the first President, Herbert Walker Bush, when he was responding to the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, This will not stand. I will say, as far as this budget being brought to this Congress, this will not stand. It will be changed, and I hope the next time around on the floor of the House we will be talking about the positive changes that we've made to reflect the priorities of the American people which we were elected to espouse.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I'd like to call on Mr. KLEIN from Florida for closing remarks.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I am an eternal optimist, like everyone in the Chamber, Democrats and Republicans.

I feel the American people are up to the challenge. We are up to sacrifice. And we're going to do this. And we will convince the administration along the way here that it's the right thing to do. And we're going to continue to rebuild our country and be successful. But let's put our nose down and work hard. And I look forward to working with all my colleagues to accomplish that.

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank all my colleagues. And I'd like to end where we began, and that is that when these majority makers, our freshman class, was elected in 2006, we were elected because the country thought that the government of the United States had the wrong priorities, that we needed a new set of priorities, we needed a new direction. We've committed ourselves to that new direction. I think as we approach this budgetary process and all areas that we have to do, we will seek a new direction for the American people.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2007 AT PAGE H16940

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reported that on December 13, 2007, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.J. Res. 69. Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes.

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House also reported that on December 18, 2007, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 6. An act to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2007 AT PAGE H16954

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reported that on December 19, 2007, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills.

H.R. 797. To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve compensation benefits for veterans in certain cases of impairment of vision involving both eyes, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1585. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2408. To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Green Bay, Wisconsin, as the "Milo C. Huempfer

Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

H.R. 2671. To designate the United States courthouse located at 301 North Miami Avenue, Miami, Florida, as the "C. Clyde Atkins United States Courthouse".

H.R. 2761. An act to extend the Terrorism Insurance Program of the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3648. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude discharges of indebtedness on principal residences from gross income, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3703. To amend section 5112(p)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code, to allow an exception from the \$1 coin dispensing capability requirement for certain vending machines.

H.R. 3739. To amend the Arizona Water Settlements Act to modify the requirements for the statement of findings.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BOUCHER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

Mr. TANNER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week on account of tornado devastation in the district.

Ms. WOOLSEY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week.

Mr. WYNN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 6 p.m. on account of a family emergency.

Mr. GINGREY (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. KUHL of New York (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. PETRI (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of severe winter storms in Wisconsin preventing him from making votes.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of severe winter storms in Wisconsin preventing him from making votes.

Mr. WHITFIELD (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of surveying tornado damage in the First Congressional District of Kentucky.

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. SUTTON) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SUTTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BISHOP of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today and February 7, 8, and 12.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today and February 7, 8, 12, and 13.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today and February 7, 8, 12, and 13.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and February 7 and 8.

SENATE BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A bill and a joint resolution of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 550. An act to preserve existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

S.J. Res. 25. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Ms. Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker on Thursday, January 31, 2008:

H.R. 5104. An act to extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 15 days.

On Monday, February 4, 2008:

H.R. 4253. An act to improve and expand small business assistance programs for veterans of the armed forces and military reservists, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced her signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 2110. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office."

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reports that on January 30, 2008, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 5104. To extend the Protect America Act of 2007 for 15 days.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 7, 2008, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5183. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Minimal-Risk Regions; Identification of Ruminants, and Processing and Importation of Commodities [Docket No. APHIS-2006-0026-3] (RIN: 0579-AC45) received January 22, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

5184. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on U.S. military personnel and U.S. individual civilians retained as contractors involved in supporting Plan Colombia, pursuant to Public Law 106-246, section 3204 (f); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5185. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — FHA Appraiser Roster Requirements [Docket No. FR-5112-F-01] (RIN: 2502-AI53) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5186. A letter from the Legal Information Assistant, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Identity Theft Red Flags and Address Discrepancies Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 [Docket ID OCC-2007-0017] (RIN: 1557-AC87) received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5187. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Rules of Practice and Procedure (RIN: 3064-AD22) received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5188. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Electronic Shareholder Forums [Release No. 34-57172; IC-28124; File No. S7-16-07] (RIN: 3235-AJ92) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5189. A letter from the Attorney, Office of Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulatory Law, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Workplace Substance Abuse Programs at DOE Sites (RIN: 1992-AA38) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5190. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Mgmt. Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Index of Legally Marketed Unapproved New Animal Drugs for Minor Species [Docket No. 2006N-0067] (RIN: 0910-AF67) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5191. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluopicolide; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2006-0481; FRL-8341-6] received January 25, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5192. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Boscalid; Denial of Objectives [EPA-HQ-OPP-2005-0145; FRL-8347-3] re-

ceived January 25, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5193. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Health and Safety Data Reporting; Addition of Certain Chemicals [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2007-0487; FRL-8154-2] (RIN: 2070-AB11) received January 25, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5194. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Michigan; Oxides of Nitrogen Regulations, Phase II [EPA-R05-OAR-2007-0024; FRL-8519-4] received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5195. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maine; Ozone Maintenance Plans [EPA-R01-OAR-2007-0963; A-1-FRL-8522-1] received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5196. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Connecticut; State Implementation Plan Revision to Implement the Clean Air Interstate Rule [EPA-R01-OAR-2007-0399; FRL-8517-4] received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5197. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — State Operating Permit Programs; Ohio; Revisions to the Acid Rain Regulations [EPA-R05-OAR-2007-1198; FRL-8521-3] received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5198. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Massachusetts; Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions [EPA-R01-RCRA-2007-1171; FRL-8521-8] received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5199. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Iron and Steel Foundries [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0034; FRL-8522-4] (RIN: 2060-AM85) received January 24, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5200. A letter from the Deputy Chief, CGB, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities [CG Docket No. 03-123] received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5201. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Carriage of Digital Television Broadcast Signals: Amendment to Part 76 of the Commission's Rules [CS Docket No. 98-120] received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5202. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commis-

sion, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Amendment of Section 73.202(b) FM Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Charlo, Montana) [MB Docket No. 07-143 RM-11381] received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5203. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Live Oak, Florida) [MB Docket No. 07-131 RM-11377] received January 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5204. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5205. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting the FY 2007 annual report in accordance with Section 655 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5206. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the manufacture of military equipment to the Government of Colombia (Transmittal No. DDTC 093-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5207. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report pursuant to Section 3 of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, detailing an unauthorized retransfer of U.S.-granted defense articles; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5208. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 565(b) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 1994 and 1995 (Pub. L. 103-236), certifications and waivers of the prohibition against contracting with firms that comply with the Arab League Boycott of the State of Israel and of the prohibition against contracting with firms that discriminate in the award of subcontracts on the basis of religion, and accompanying Memorandum of Justification; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5209. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's 2007 Annual Report on U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia and the Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report on U.S. Government Assistance to Eastern Europe under the Support for East European Democracy Act, as required by Pub. L. 101-179, Sec. 704(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5210. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report pursuant to Paragraph (5)(D) of the Senate's May 1997 resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty Flank Document of May 31, 1996; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5211. A letter from the Chair, J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, transmitting the annual report of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for 2006-2007; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5212. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a report including matters relating to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2291-4; (H. Doc. No. 110-91); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

5213. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-256, "Bicycle Registration Reform Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5214. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-257, "Enhanced Professional Security Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5215. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-258, "Appointment of the Chief Medical Examiner Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5216. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-259, "Health Services Planning Program Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5217. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-261, "Frank Harris, Jr. Justice Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5218. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-263, "Tregaron Conservancy Tax Exemption and Relief Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5219. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-265, "Fiscal Year 2008 Supplemental Appropriations Temporary Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5220. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-273, "District Funds Reserved Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5221. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-274, "Wax Museum Project Tax Abatement Allocation Modification Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5222. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-276, "Presidential Primary Ballot Access Temporary Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5223. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-277, "Child Support Compliance Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5224. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-279, "Downtown Retail TIF Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5225. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-275, "Constitution Square Economic Development Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to

the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5226. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-272, "Small Business Commercial Property Tax Relief Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5227. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-271, "Public Education Personnel Reform Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5228. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-264, "Closing of Public Alley in Square 696, S.O. 07-8302, Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5229. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-262, "Arthur Capper/Carrollburg Public Improvements Revenue Bonds Approval Amendment Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5230. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-260, "Effi Slaughter Barry HIV/AIDS Initiative Act of 2008," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5231. A letter from the Chair, CPB Board of Directors, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, transmitting the semiannual report of the Office of the Inspector General for the period ending September 30, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5232. A letter from the Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's report on the use of the Category Rating System, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3319; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5233. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive and Director, Office of Acquisition Management and Procurement Executive, Department of Commerce, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-08-02, the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2007; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5234. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5235. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5236. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2007; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5237. A letter from the Deputy Associate General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Minimum Standards for Drivers' Licenses and Identification Cards Acceptable by Federal Agen-

cies for Official Purposes [Docket No. DHS-2006-0030] (RIN: 1601-AA37) received January 14, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5238. A letter from the Deputy Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2007; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5239. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Mgmt., Department of Labor, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5240. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Mgmt., Department of Labor, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5241. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2007; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5242. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Agency's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2007; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5243. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's report entitled "Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of Public Law 106-107"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5244. A letter from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act covering the calendar year 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5245. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's report entitled, "Accounting for Laws that Apply Differently to the United States Postal Service and Its Private Competitors," pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 101; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5246. A letter from the Director, Financial Management, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the FY 2007 annual report of the Comptrollers' General Retirement System, pursuant to Public Law 95-595; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5247. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council's Report to Congress covering FY 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 1401 note Public Law 107-296 section 1303(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5248. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Fishery; Final 2008-2010 Fishing Quotas for Atlantic Surfclams and Ocean Quahogs [Docket No.

070717342-7713-02] (RIN: 0648-AV42) received January 22, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5249. A letter from the Assistant Secretary Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Visas: Documentation of immigrants under the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended. — received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5250. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a redesignation pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5251. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program (RIN: 0970-AC27) received January 25, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5252. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Intermediary Transaction Tax Shelter [Notice 2008-20] received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5253. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Application of Section 338 to Insurance Companies [TD 9377] (RIN: 1545-BF02) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5254. A letter from the Acting Regulations Officer of Social Security, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Private Printing of Prescribed Applications, Forms, and Other Publications [Docket No. SSA-2007-0009] (RIN: 0960-AG36) received January 22, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5255. A letter from the Acting SSA Regulations Officer, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Methods for Conducting Personal Conferences When Waiver of Recovery of a Title II or Title XVI Overpayment Cannot Be Approved [Docket No. SSA-2006-0096] (RIN: 0960-AG40) received January 23, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5256. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisit User Fee Program for Medicare Survey and Certification Activities [CMS-2278-IFC3] (RIN: 0938-AP22) received January 18, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and 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:

Ms. SLAUGHTER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 955. Resolution waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules (Rept. 110-522). Referred to the House Calendar.

Ms. SUTTON: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 956. Resolution providing for con-

sideration of the bill (H.R. 4137) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-523). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

[The following action occurred on February 1, 2008]

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII the Committee on Armed Services discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3111 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII the following action was taken by the Speaker:

[The following actions occurred on February 1, 2008]

H.R. 275. Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than February 8, 2008.

H.R. 275. Referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce extended for a period ending not later than February 22, 2008.

H.R. 948. Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means extended for a period ending not later than March 31, 2008.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CAMPBELL of California (for himself, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. CARTER, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. POE, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. BROWN of Georgia, Mr. ISSA, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. PITTS, Mr. HERGER, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. MACK, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. KELLER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. GINGREY, Ms. FOXX, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. CANNON, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HENSARLING, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 5222. A bill to rescind funds appropriated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, for the City of Berkeley, California, and any entities located in such city, and to provide that such funds shall be transferred to the Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps account of the Department of Defense for the purposes of recruiting; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. BOSWELL (for himself, Mr. HAYES, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. ORTIZ, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 5223. A bill to provide for the enhancement of the suicide prevention programs of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BONNER:

H.R. 5224. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Hexane, 1,6-dichloro-; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BONNER:

H.R. 5225. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Propanedioic acid, diethyl ester; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BONNER:

H.R. 5226. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Butane, 1-chloro; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BONNER:

H.R. 5227. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 1,3,5-Triazine, 2,4,6-tris(2-propenyloxy)-; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ANDREWS (for himself and Mr. PETRI):

H.R. 5228. A bill to protect employees from invasion of privacy by employers by prohibiting video and audio monitoring of employees when in an area where it is reasonable to expect employees to change clothing; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland (for

himself, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. CARTER, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GORDON, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KUHLMANN of New York, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. FOXX, Ms. GIFFORDS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GILCHREST, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. HILL, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. WOLF, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. SAXTON):

H.R. 5229. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to remove certain limitations on the transfer of entitlement to basic educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill, and for 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 Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

H.R. 5230. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to grant to the House of Representatives the authority to bring a civil action to enforce, secure a declaratory judgment concerning the validity of, or prevent a threatened refusal or failure to comply with any subpoena or order issued by the House or any committee or subcommittee of the House to secure the production of documents, the answering of any deposition or interrogatory, or the securing of testimony, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, 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:

H.R. 5231. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the credit for electricity produced from certain renewable resources; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 5232. A bill to provide that no Federal or State requirement to increase energy efficient lighting in public buildings shall require a hospital, school, day care center, mental health facility, or nursing home to install or utilize such energy efficient lighting if the lighting contains mercury; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Mrs. DRAKE:

H.R. 5233. A bill to extend for two years the exemption of returning workers from the numerical limitations for H-2B temporary workers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN:

H.R. 5234. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, and the Social Security Act to limit the misuse of Social Security numbers, to establish criminal penalties for such misuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. GALLEGLY (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

H.R. 5235. A bill to establish the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN (for herself, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. ROSS, Mr. PICKERING, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5236. A bill to promote the use of certain materials harvested from public lands in the production of renewable fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT (for himself and Ms. GRANGER):

H.R. 5237. A bill to amend the U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. HELLER, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. CANNON, and Mr. SALI):

H.R. 5238. A bill to repeal a requirement to reduce by 2 percent the amount payable to each State in fiscal year 2008; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PORTER (for himself and Ms. SCHWARTZ):

H.R. 5239. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the proceeds of qualified mortgage bonds may be used to provide refinancing for subprime loans, to provide a temporary increase in the volume cap for qualified mortgage bonds used to provide that refinancing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. SALAZAR):

H.R. 5240. A bill to restore equitable sharing with affected States of revenues from on-shore Federal mineral leases; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado:

H.R. 5241. A bill to amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to take expedited action to reduce the increased risk of severe wildfires to Colorado communities, water supplies, and infrastructure in or near forested areas most severely affected by infestations of bark beetles and other insects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. YOUNG of Florida:

H.R. 5242. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the de-

duction of State and local general sales taxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GILCHREST (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. REYES, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H. Con. Res. 288. Concurrent resolution expressing the need for a more comprehensive diplomatic initiative led by the United States, Republic of Iraq, and international community; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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 Mrs. JONES of Ohio (for herself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. WATSON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. SUTTON, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. NORTON, Mr. EMANUEL, and Ms. CLARKE):

H. Res. 957. A resolution expressing support for the second annual America Saves Week 2008 from February 24, 2008 through March 2, 2008; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KLINE of Minnesota (for himself, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. CANNON, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KELLER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CARTER, Mr. ISSA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. FORBES, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SALI, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, and Mr. WOLF):

H. Res. 958. A resolution reaffirming the commitment of the House of Representatives to the patriotic and professional men and women serving in the United States Marine Corps in defense of the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. MUSGRAVE (for herself and Mr. MURTHA):

H. Res. 959. A resolution supporting the Adopt-a-Platoon program, which encourages support to deployed soldiers through letters, care packages, pen pal campaigns, and monetary donations; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ROTHMAN (for himself, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. McHUGH, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CLARKE, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. SIRES, Mr. WEINER, and Mr. PALLONE):

H. Res. 960. A resolution congratulating the National Football League champion New York Giants for winning Super Bowl XLII and completing one of the most remarkable postseason runs in professional sports history; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. ORTIZ, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. TERRY, Mr. WAMP, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr.

COURTNEY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. PITTS, Mr. FORBES, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. HAYES, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. SALI, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. MCCOTTER):

H. Res. 961. A resolution commending the Alaska Army National Guard for its service to the State of Alaska and the citizens of the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. WATERS:

H. Res. 962. A resolution congratulating the city of Inglewood, California on its 100th anniversary and commending the city for its growth and resilience; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. REYES introduced a bill (H.R. 5243) for the relief of Kumi Iizuka-Barcena; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 25: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
 H.R. 37: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota.
 H.R. 96: Mr. ANDREWS.
 H.R. 154: Mr. LAMPSON.
 H.R. 241: Mrs. EMERSON.
 H.R. 248: Mr. MORAN of Kansas and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.
 H.R. 321: Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 333: Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 369: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 402: Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 406: Mr. CLEAVER and Ms. HARMAN.
 H.R. 549: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
 H.R. 581: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 618: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.
 H.R. 621: Mr. MCKEON.
 H.R. 643: Mr. SPACE.
 H.R. 661: Mr. SIRES.
 H.R. 677: Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
 H.R. 685: Mr. BACA and Mr. SHAYS.
 H.R. 706: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CARDOZA, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. HONDA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. COOPER, Mr. WU, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 715: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 748: Mr. JONES of North Carolina and Mr. MARKEY.
 H.R. 758: Mrs. MYRICK.
 H.R. 768: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
 H.R. 861: Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. JONES of North Carolina.
 H.R. 913: Mr. WHITFIELD of Kentucky.
 H.R. 983: Mr. ROSS.
 H.R. 992: Mr. SIRES, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee.
 H.R. 997: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.
 H.R. 1017: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 1023: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GILCHREST, and Mr. KAGEN.
 H.R. 1029: Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut.
 H.R. 1032: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 1070: Mr. CONYERS.
 H.R. 1078: Mr. FARR and Mr. WAMP.
 H.R. 1093: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN and Mr. POMEROY.
 H.R. 1110: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Ms. RICHARDSON.

- H.R. 1172: Mr. CARDOZA.
H.R. 1192: Ms. SOLIS and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 1225: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 1229: Mr. WALSH of New York.
H.R. 1261: Mr. CAMP of Michigan.
H.R. 1279: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1293: Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 1386: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DINGELL, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1418: Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 1420: Mr. INSLER and Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1439: Mr. YARMUTH.
H.R. 1481: Mr. GINGREY.
H.R. 1507: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1527: Mr. CAMP of Michigan.
H.R. 1553: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. BUCHANAN.
H.R. 1560: Mr. LATOURETTE.
H.R. 1589: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 1619: Mr. BOUCHER.
H.R. 1650: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
H.R. 1665: Mr. COHEN, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.
H.R. 1731: Mr. STARK.
H.R. 1750: Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 1783: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 1820: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 1823: Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. SESTAK, and Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 1846: Mr. MEEK of Florida.
H.R. 1927: Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 1937: Ms. FALLIN and Mr. LUCAS.
H.R. 1975: Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 2021: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. FILNER, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. FARR, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. LAMPSON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. MEEK of Florida, and Mr. REYES.
H.R. 2032: Mr. DUNCAN.
H.R. 2040: Ms. WATSON, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 2053: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2067: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H.R. 2131: Mr. BUCHANAN and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2164: Mr. PORTER.
H.R. 2188: Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 2189: Ms. NORTON, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 2231: Mr. SESTAK, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 2312: Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 2353: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 2384: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2452: Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 2469: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2470: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 2526: Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 2564: Ms. FALLIN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. YOUNG of Florida.
H.R. 2578: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 2604: Mr. MOORE of Kansas and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 2620: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2634: Ms. CLARKE and Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 2694: Ms. CLARKE.
H.R. 2702: Mr. DELAHUNT.
H.R. 2712: Mr. STEARNS.
H.R. 2744: Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. ETHERIDGE.
H.R. 2805: Mr. POMEROY, Mr. FARR, and Mr. OBERSTAR.
H.R. 2820: Mr. PAYNE, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 2859: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 2866: Mrs. SCHMIDT.
H.R. 2885: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 2915: Mr. BERMAN, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 3010: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 3054: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 3080: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. MCINTYRE.
H.R. 3132: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 3223: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 3257: Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. HOOLEY.
H.R. 3298: Mr. HILL.
H.R. 3327: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
H.R. 3329: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico and Mr. BACA.
H.R. 3345: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 3347: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3357: Mr. WAXMAN.
H.R. 3378: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3404: Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 3423: Mr. TOWNS and Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 3430: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 3438: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 3439: Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. HARE, Mr. ETHERIDGE, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H.R. 3452: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 3457: Ms. RICHARDSON.
H.R. 3464: Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 3466: Mr. WILSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3498: Mr. SPACE.
H.R. 3543: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.
H.R. 3546: Mr. ROSS and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 3548: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 3645: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3652: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. LEE, and Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 3660: Mr. GRAVES and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3681: Mr. BOUCHER.
H.R. 3691: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 3711: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN.
H.R. 3724: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 3748: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H.R. 3753: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3774: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3797: Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 3819: Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. GOODE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 3829: Mr. BERMAN.
H.R. 3846: Mrs. JONES of Ohio.
H.R. 3852: Mr. GORDON.
H.R. 3876: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H.R. 3896: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SUTTON, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3905: Mr. TOWNS and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3934: Mr. ROSS, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. MCINTYRE.
H.R. 3938: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 4001: Mr. ETHERIDGE.
H.R. 4048: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4054: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 4063: Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H.R. 4102: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 4105: Mr. EHLERS and Mr. COSTELLO.
H.R. 4107: Mr. HINCHEY and Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 4116: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. KELLER, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4130: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 4139: Mr. CHANDLER.
H.R. 4149: Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. CARDOZA, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4202: Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 4205: Mrs. CAPPES.
H.R. 4206: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.
H.R. 4207: Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 4221: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4251: Mr. PASTOR and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4264: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 4266: Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 4279: Mr. WATT.
H.R. 4280: Mrs. BONO MACK.
H.R. 4296: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4308: Mr. BOUCHER.
H.R. 4318: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. MCINTYRE.
H.R. 4335: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4336: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4449: Mr. EHLERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MATHESON, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 4611: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 4831: Mr. HAYES.
H.R. 4838: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. OLVER, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
H.R. 4848: Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. EMANUEL.
H.R. 4882: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4900: Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. CANNON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. SCHMIDT, and Mr. COBLE.
H.R. 4915: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4926: Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. ROSS, Mr. WYNN, and Ms. WATSON.
H.R. 4930: Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 4934: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. HOLT, Ms. LEE, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. WATT, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. TOWNS.
H.R. 4936: Mr. TOWNS and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4959: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4995: Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MANZULLO, and Mr. PUTNAM.
H.R. 5036: Ms. CLARKE, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. COHEN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARROW, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 5038: Mr. WEXLER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 5056: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 5057: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SEN-SENBRENNER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. FARR, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H.R. 5058: Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. CLAY, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. CLARKE, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Mr. MITCHELL.
H.R. 5060: Mr. MEEKS of New York.
H.R. 5087: Mr. SESTAK, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.
H.R. 5107: Mr. HODES, Mr. SPACE, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. GIFFORDS, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND.
H.R. 5109: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 5110: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FARR, and Mr. WILSON of Ohio.

H.R. 5128: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HOLT, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 5130: Mr. JEFFERSON and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H.R. 5148: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. CARTER, Mr. GOODE, Mr. GORDON, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mrs. Christensen, and Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 5161: Mr. CHANDLER and Ms. HOOLEY.
H.R. 5167: Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 5172: Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HODES, and Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 5178: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 5179: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 5181: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.J. Res. 70: Mr. SALL.

H.J. Res. 76: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 137: Mr. LUCAS.

H. Con. Res. 163: Mr. PORTER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. FALLIN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H. Con. Res. 244: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. NUNES, and Mr. RANGEL.

H. Con. Res. 253: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 263: Mr. DREIER, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. SHAYS, and Mr. HALL of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 276: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 280: Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BACA, and Ms. CASTOR.

H. Con. Res. 283: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHN-

SON of Texas, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. WATT, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. WYNN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. LEE, Mr. WOLF, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Ms. WATERS.

H. Con. Res. 285: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H. Con. Res. 286: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. LEE, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. WYNN.

H. Con. Res. 287: Mr. ROHRABACHER and Ms. GIFFORDS.

H. Res. 49: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. WILSON of Ohio.

H. Res. 76: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. CONYERS.

H. Res. 102: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H. Res. 146: Ms. SUTTON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut.

H. Res. 185: Mr. FORTUÑO and Mr. TOWNS.

H. Res. 212: Mr. SHAYS.

H. Res. 339: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HILL, and Mr. DEFazio.

H. Res. 783: Mr. ELLSWORTH.

H. Res. 848: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H. Res. 854: Mr. FORTUÑO and Mr. MCCOTTER.

H. Res. 892: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.

H. Res. 896: Mr. TOWNS.

H. Res. 907: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland and Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H. Res. 909: Ms. LEE and Mr. MCCOTTER.

H. Res. 929: Mr. JONES of North Carolina.

H. Res. 930: Mr. WILSON of Ohio and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H. Res. 931: Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 934: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, and Mr. LAMPSON.

H. Res. 939: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Res. 942: Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mr. BACA.

H. Res. 943: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. HARE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. WELDON of Florida, and Ms. GIFFORDS.

H. Res. 946: Mr. MCHUGH.

H. Res. 947: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. SIRES.

H. Res. 951: Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CULBERSON, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. FORTUÑO, Ms. FOX, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MACK, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. PENCE, Mr. POE, Mr. PORTER, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. WYNN, Mr. WELLER, and Mr. SHADEGG.

H. Res. 953: Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. GORDON, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SPACE, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Mr. PICKERING.

H. Res. 954: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. HARE, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. SHAYS.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative George Miller of California or a designee, to H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI.