Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing two dedicated community leaders and friends to many throughout Alabama. I know their family, their children, and their many friends join me in praising their accomplishments and extending thanks for their outstanding service over the years on behalf of the First District and the state of Alabama.

Majors David and Pat Waite will surely enjoy the well deserved time they now have to spend with family and loved ones. On behalf of a grateful community, I wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING MISSISSIPPI SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 667

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mr. PICKERING. Madam Speaker, today I submit into the RECORD Concurrent Resolution No. 667 adopted by the Mississippi Senate and House of Representatives. The resolution urges the United States Congress to accept the decision of the United States Air Force concerning the award of the jet tanker contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation and EADS North America. Each day we delay approving this contract, we prevent the Air Force men and women from receiving the equipment necessary to ensure our national security. I encourage my colleagues to review this resolution.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 667

Whereas, after an extensive evaluation process, the United States Air Force awarded a $35 Billion jet tanker contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation and EADS North America; and

Whereas, these vital military aircraft will be built at Mobile Brookley Field Industrial Complex, creating more than 2,000 new jobs for workers in the States of Mississippi and Alabama; and

Whereas, efforts to overturn the decision of the United States Air Force concerning its detailed analysis are irresponsible and a true threat to our national security; it is imperative that elected officials support the decision makers whom they entrust with these important determinations; and

Whereas, Mississippi workers are ready, able and eager to begin constructing the aircraft that the Untied States Air Force has rated as superior in five-out-of-five categories, and the interest of national defense should clearly rule over regional political posturing: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of Mississippi, the House of Representatives concurring therein, That the United States Congress is respectfully encouraged to accept the decision of the United States Air Force concerning the awarding of the jet tanker contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation and EADS North America, refrain from turning this vital national security matter into a political free-for-all, and allow the competent and capable workers of Mississippi to immediately begin work on this critical contract. Be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to members of Mississippi's congressional delegation and to the Secretary of Defense and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE FILL SUSPENSION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protection Act, H.R. 6022, which suspends the acquisition of oil for the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for the rest of this year, unless the average price of oil over a 90-day period drops below $75 a barrel. Earlier the Senate adopted an identical amendment, by a vote of 97–1.

As Memorial Day approaches and the summer driving season begins, there is little relief in sight for Americans from high prices at the pump, as gasoline prices quickly climb close to $4 a gallon and diesel fuel prices reach over $4 a gallon. Suspending acquisitions to the SPR, presently at 96 percent capacity, will free up 70,000 barrels of oil per day for supply and could reduce gasoline prices by 2–5 cents per gallon. Last month I was pleased to join Republican colleagues in calling on House leadership to temporarily suspend acquisitions to the SPR, and while such action will only free up a fraction of world oil supplies, I am pleased to lend my support to this first step in easing the financial pinch for families and truck drivers across the country.

The laws of supply and demand are real and high gas prices are one aspect of the bigger picture, and the fact remains that oil dependence affects our economy, security, and environment. In my view technology will take us to the next level in clean and alternative transportation fuels, and this requires robust investments now. Congress should address the cost-crunch today and act to ensure we have a comprehensive, clean, and secure energy policy for tomorrow.

In addition to the temporary suspension of acquisitions to the SPR, I believe we should also consider increasing refining capacity in the United States, without compromising environmental permitting, as well as ask transparency from oil producing countries to help verify available oil reserves and production capacity. Individual consumers too can take action by driving 55 miles per hour or less and proper tire inflation, which will slow gas consumption and save money. Looking forward, long-term extensions for renewable energy and energy efficiency tax credits are paramount; I have repeatedly supported efforts in the House to extend these important incentives and believe solutions to the present logjam over oil and gas subsidies are long overdue. I recently joined colleagues in the House as a supporter of the Clean Energy Tax Stimulus Act of 2008, which would provide for the limited continuation of clean energy production incentives and incentives to improve energy efficiency that would otherwise lapse under current tax law legislation.

There will be ongoing discussions about energy policies in Congress, and proposals will range from domestic drilling to lowering demand. As demand for world oil continues to climb, supply concerns are real. I support looking for alternatives before drilling in some of our most sensitive coastal areas, however Congress did open an additional 8.3 million acres in the eastern Gulf of Mexico, "Lease 181," to new oil and gas leases in December 2006, and I read with interest the oil discovery in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico that was just announced by Chevron.

Last year, Congress worked in a bipartisan manner to reduce our demand for oil by increasing the fuel economy standards for cars and trucks. It is my great hope that members on both sides of the aisle will continue to work on policies to reduce consumption, encourage innovative technology development, and promote energy self-sufficiency. I am pleased to support this temporary suspension to the SPR and hope it begins a meaningful dialogue about energy policy in this country, which is so important not only for national security but also for tackling global warming.

THE PASSING OF CONGRESSWOMAN BONO MACK'S FATHER CLAY WESTERFIELD WHITAKER, M.D.

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness we share the news of the passing of Clay Westerfield Whitaker, M.D., father of Representative MARY BONO MACK, on May 13th after a long and valiant battle with prostate cancer. It was an honor to have known Dr. Whitaker and it is a privilege to serve with Congresswoman BONO MACK who is a testament and tribute to her father. From the talks I had with Dr. Whitaker, I know how proud he was of her great work.

Born in Greenville, Kentucky on April 17, 1924, Whitaker was the son of Eva Nell Hunt Whitaker and Levi Whitaker. The youngest of six siblings, all of whom preceded him in death, he was only five years old when his father, a physician, died at the age of thirty. Whitaker's mother, now a single parent, worked hard to make ends meet during the years of the Great Depression. When speaking of those years, Whitaker often said, "We didn't think we were poor; we just didn't have any money." His mother understood the importance of a good education, and along with his sisters, he was admitted to Berea College in Kentucky. At Berea, he met the love of his life, Karen Lee Taylor. Together, they enjoyed music and an active campus life until his college education was interrupted when he entered the Army Air Corps during WWII. Assigned to the 8th Air Force, 95th Bomb Group, 334th Squadron stationed in Horham, England, Whitaker served as a B–17 waist gunner and flew 19 missions over Germany. After victory had been achieved, Whitaker wrote to his college sweetheart asking for her hand in marriage when he returned to Berea College.

Upon returning home, Whitaker was greeted at the train station by his sister and future bride, Karen. As he stepped off the train, his

sister informed him that his wedding was scheduled for the very next day, June 30, 1944. So began a lifetime of mutual devotion. Whitaker completed his college education at Berea with a degree in chemistry and applied to Western Reserve medical school where he earned his M.D. in otolaryngology (ear, nose & throat) and then set-up his medical practice in Cleveland, Ohio. While living in Cleveland, he and Karen had four children, Stephen, David, Katherine and MARY.

In 1963, Whitaker moved the family west to Los Angeles where he accepted a position as co-chair of the ENT department at L.A. County—USC Medical Center. As professor of ENT, he remained at USC until 1983 when he moved to Asheville, North Carolina, to chair the ENT department at the VA hospital and establish an ENT program at that facility for Duke University. He held that position until his retirement from the practice of medicine.

Whitaker loved the outdoors, especially hiking, camping and the Land Rovers that transported him to the backcountry. He loved classical music, the arts, sciences, literature, cars and vintage war planes. But most of all, he loved his family. Known by family and friends as a man of immense generosity and compassion, he was a remarkably selfless and humble individual. His quick wit and keen sense of humor enlivened many family and social gatherings, and he was deeply respected in the communities in which he lived.

Preceded in death by his beloved Karen, Whitaker is survived by his four children, Stephen Whitaker and his wife, Teri, of Bruceville, Indiana; David Whitaker and his wife, Carol, of Sealy, Texas; Katherine Whitaker of Asheville, North Carolina; and Congresswoman MARY BONO MACK of Palm Springs, California, and her husband, Congressman CONNIE MACK. He is also survived by eight grandchildren, Laura Kenney and her husband, Doug; Daniel and Christopher Whitaker, Cameron and Ian Whitaker, Teresa Shuford, and Chesare and Chianna Bono, and one great grandson, Thomas Kenney.

Our deepest condolences go out to our colleague MARY BONO MACK and the entire Whitaker family.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD USE ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO END COMMERCIAL WHALING

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States, through the International Whaling Commission, IWC, should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its existing or potential forms and seek to strengthen whale conservation and management measures.

Whales cannot be humanely killed, according to Dr. Peter Singer, a professor of bioethics at Princeton University. As Dr. Singer said, causing suffering to innocent beings, without an extremely weighty reason for doing so, is wrong. Beyond subsistence needs, it is difficult to think of a reason weighty enough to cause such suffering to one of God's most magnificent creatures.

As such, the purpose of my resolution is to send a strong message to the Administration as it prepares for the June 2008 meeting of the International Whaling Commission, IWC, in Santiago. The message is simple: now is not the time to capitulate to calls to weaken or undermine the IWC ban on commercial whaling. The American people care deeply about protecting whales, and the U.S. should continue to be an international leader in whale conservation.

Established in 1946, the IWC's initial focus was the allocation of whaling quotas among member countries. Unfortunately, whalers from many countries routinely exceeded these quotas, and whale populations plummeted. In response, the IWC instituted a moratorium on the commercial killing of whales in 1986.

Despite this moratorium, significant whaling has continued. Norway officially objected to the moratorium and resumed commercial whaling in 1993. Japan and Iceland have been using a provision in the Convention—which allows countries to issue themselves permits for ''scientific whaling''—to kill whales under the guise of science, and later sell the meat commercially. More than 11,000 whales have been reportedly killed in lethal scientific whaling programs since the adoption of the commercial whaling moratorium, even though the IWC Scientific Committee has repeatedly stated that such lethal takes are not necessary for scientific research.

At the same time, Japan is calling for the IWC to once again sanction commercial whaling in the form of ''coastal'' whaling, ''community'' whaling, or some other iteration of small-scale commercial whaling that will effectively eviscerate the moratorium.

In contrast, the anti-whaling nations want the IWC to look to the future—a future in which whales are protected and their nonlethal use is promoted. With its 75-plus members almost evenly divided between anti- and pro-whaling, it is imperative that the U.S. make clear its strong stand against the resumption of any form of commercial whaling, including community whaling, and that we press for the end of ''scientific'' whaling that is anything but scientific.

Therefore, the resolution I am introducing today calls on the U.S. delegation to the IWC to remain firmly opposed to commercial whaling in all its forms. The resolution urges the U.S. to not only initiate or support efforts to oppose the unnecessary lethal taking of whales for scientific purposes, but also seek to end the sale of meat and blubber from whales killed for scientific research in order to remove this perverse incentive. The resolution also calls on the U.S. to reject proposals that would weaken or lift the moratorium on commercial whaling by creating a new category of whaling deceptively called coastal or community whaling.

It is more critical than ever that the U.S. remain firmly opposed to any proposals to resume even a limited level of commercial whaling and to maintain its leadership role in shaping global whale conservation policies through the IWC. The administration must not undo more than 20 years of whale conservation and capitulate to Japan's demand for a sanctioned resumption of coastal commercial whaling. Instead, the U.S. should again demonstrate leadership in whale conservation and promote nonlethal uses of whales—such as whale watching—a far more benign and profitable venture. Worldwide, tourists spend an estimated $1.5 billion on whale watching each year.

Whales constitute a vital component of the world's marine ecosystems and are some of the largest and most intelligent mammals on Earth. Conserving them requires us to uphold strong international agreements and maintain an unwavering commitment to protecting these species from killing for commercial gain. I thank my colleagues for cosponsoring this resolution, and I urge all Members to support it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to explain both my leave of absence from the House of Representatives on May 8, 2008, and how I intended to vote with respect to the legislation that was before the House on that day. I was unable to be in Washington on May 8 because I was serving as a pallbearer at the funeral of Thomas Boggs—a close friend of mine for over 30 years and an outstanding citizen of Memphis, Tennessee—at the request of his widow.

While Thomas made a name for himself by rising from humble roots to become a highly successful restaurateur in Memphis, his mark on the city goes much deeper. He used his success in business to contribute generously, both in terms of his money and his time, to causes that have enriched Memphis. His contributions to the community have benefited all Memphians, and his death leaves Memphis in grief. As a reflection of how much esteem the Memphis community held him in, the Memphis Commercial-Appeal ran a front-page, above-the-fold article concerning his death, an almost unprecedented tribute.

I agonized over whether I should remain in Washington to vote on the bills that the House was to consider on the day of Thomas' funeral. I take my responsibilities as a Member of Congress very seriously, particularly with respect to voting on legislation. In the end, I decided that I needed to join the rest of the Memphis community as our dear friend was eulogized and honored for one last time.

Had I been able to be in Washington on May 8, I would have voted for final passage of H.R. 5818, the ''Neighborhood Stabilization Act of 2008,'' as amended. This legislation requires the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide loans and grants to States, metropolitan cities, and urban counties to carry out housing stimulus activities. Such activities include the purchase of or financing the purchase of foreclosed homes for resale as housing, rental of such homes, or rehabilitation of such homes. These measures are designed to ensure that neighborhoods do not deteriorate as a result of a high foreclosure rate caused by predatory lending. In short, this bill will help to mitigate some of the negative effects of the foreclosure crisis.

I also would have voted in favor of agreeing to the Senate amendment, with House amendments, to H.R. 3221, the ''Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008.'' This bill helps homeowners